Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust

Academy Improvement Board – Duke's Secondary School

Terms of Reference

Northumberland Church of England School Trust (NCEAT) have appointed a School Improvement Board (AIB) for Duke's Secondary School, under the circumstances set out in Section 5 of the Scheme of Delegation.

The main function of the AIB will be to secure governance of the school, developing a sound basis for improvement and will be in place until the trigger is removed. NCEAT do not adopt a one size fits all approach and is committed to appointing AIB's which are small, focused groups. Members will be chosen on a case by case basis in accordance with the skills and knowledge and the needs of individual academies.

The AIB of NCEA Duke's School was appointed by NCEAT trustees with effect from September 2019.

Membership

The membership of the AIB from September 2020 is:

John Marshall - Chair	Jeff Hope
Russ Atkinson (non-voting)	Rachel Mays
Richard Bishopp	Mina Munns
Dave Cookson – Northumberland LA	Stephen Purvis
Alan Hardie	Paul Rickeard – JET, Newcastle Diocese

Constitution, Terms of Office and Proceedings

- Members of the AIB will hold office for the period that the AIB is in existence, although individual members may resign at any time.
- NCEAT may appoint additional members of the AIB at any time to support the continued development of the school and may remove existing members to ensure the committee remains small and focused.
- The chair of the AIB shall be appointed by NCEAT. NCEAT may remove or replace the chair as it sees fit for the efficient discharge of its functions.
- The AIB may make such arrangements as it sees fit for the discharge of its functions by any other person.
- It is for the AIB to determine the regularity of meetings, although it is anticipated that the board will meet approximately every four weeks during term time, to ensure the pace of improvement is maintained and to closely monitor improvement. Meetings may be virtual or in person and will be minuted.
- AIB members will commit to attending all meetings, unless due to personal circumstances – in which case the clerk will be informed in advance of the meeting.
- All AIB members and the principal, unless the principal is being discussed, and a shadow local governing body, once established, may attend meetings of the AIB and its committees although non-members will not have voting rights.
- Other individuals and observers, including other representatives of NCEAT, may attend with agreement of the AIB.
- Where confidential matters are being discussed it will be for the AIB to determine if non-members can be present.
- The quorum for all meetings of the AIB will be three members.

Responsibilities of the AIB

The AIB will be responsible for monitoring the quality of provision and standards of achievement within the school by:

- Monitoring performance against targets set by the AIB with support from an external advisor
- Monitoring the implementation of the policy framework set by the AIB and its impact on standards of achievement.
- Monitoring the school self-evaluation and satisfying itself to the accuracy of this, including via external support as determined by the AIB.
- Ensuring the school complies with statutory requirements.
- Providing robust challenge and support to the principal and SLT.
- Monitoring and evaluating progress towards post-inspection or review action points.

Financial matters shall remain within the remit of the Trust Board and Finance, Operations and Risk Committee (FORC). However, the AIB may make requests for additional funding and refer issues where finance is restricting the pace of improvement to the Trust Board or FORC as appropriate.   Requests for additional funding from the Endowment Trust will be made directly to the Endowment Trust Committee.

Accountability

The AIB will hold the principal and SLT to account and be accountable to any interested party for the school's performance by:

- Receiving regular information from the principal and SLT on the performance of all aspects of the school.
- Monitoring the implementation of the performance management policy
- Supporting the performance management of the principal and monitoring progress towards agreeing targets.
- Ensuring that the website meets statutory requirements.
- Receiving appeals on issues relating to staff grievance, capability, complaints and exclusions.
- Determining how the school's relationships with key stakeholders will be managed including what will be communicated, in what medium and how frequently.

The role of the principal

The principal will remain responsible for the internal organisation, the leadership and management and control of the school, and for advising on the implementation of the AIB's strategic framework. The principal will provide the AIB with regular information on the performance of all aspects of the school and will comply with any reasonable request from the AIB for information. It is for the AIB to determine the range, content and regularity of these reports. The AIB may request any member of the SLT to attend its meetings to provide information on the performance of any aspect of the school for which they are responsible. Where the AIB delegates any function to the principal, the AIB has the power to give reasonable directions in relation to that function and oblige the principal to comply with those directions.

Conduct of the AIB

- The AIB will conduct its business in an open and transparent way at all times.
- No individual AIB member has the power to act alone, unless delegated to do so by the AIB.
- Where functions have been delegated to an individual, or a group, they must report back to the full AIB on actions taken under delegation at the earliest possible opportunity. The AIB remains responsible for any action undertaken on its behalf under delegation.

- Individual members of the AIB must respect confidentiality. It is for the AIB to determine which parts of meetings, and the associated minutes, should remain confidential. Serious breaches of confidentiality may result in NCEAT removing an individual member from the AIB.
- Any agreed dialogue with press agencies will be through close liaison with the principal, the CEO and the chair of the AIB. No member of the AIB should have contact otherwise with press agencies, unless authorised by the chair.
- Clerking of the meetings will be arranged by NCEAT. The appointed clerk will also be bound to confidentiality.

Procedural Responsibilities
- AIB minutes will be collated and sent to the chair within one week for approval unless exceptional circumstances prevail, before wider circulation to the members of the AIB, by email.
- The agenda for AIB meetings will be determined by the chair of the AIB in the first instance, at least seven days before the meeting. This will then be circulated by the clerk to other members for additional items to be considered for the agenda. All papers will be circulated to members giving five clear days before the meeting.
- On request the principal will present a report to the AIB on progress against each of the key issues. The report will also include relevant data and student tracking information, and including behaviour and attendance data.
- Urgent decisions that need to be taken by the principal in the period between AIB meetings will be with the approval of the chair of the AIB and in consultation with the CEO.
- The decision making processes of the AIB will be open and transparent, and in partnership in the best interests of the school and its progress towards addressing the key issues for the school.
- Each member shall have one vote. In the event of a split decision, the chair of the AIB will have the casting vote.

Disbanding the AIB
The AIB will be disbanded once the trigger for its appointment has been removed. This decision will be made at the right time for the school and only when stability has been restored and there is confidence in the sustained progress of the school. A planned disbanding of the AIB will take place alongside the induction of the newly formed LGB.

Owner: AIB Chair
Reviewed: 9/12/2020
Approver: Trust Board
Next review: September 2021