

School Advisory Board Terms of Reference

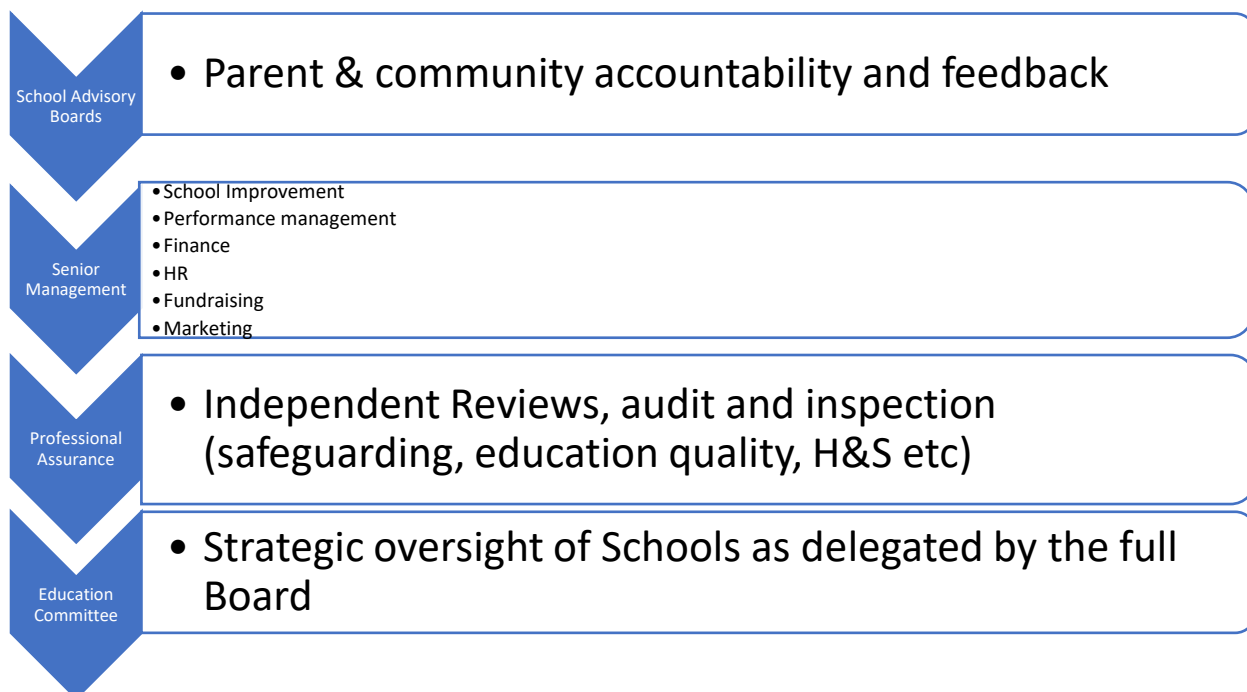
1. Constitution

1.1. The Speech and Language UK Services Ltd. Board of Trustees ("Board") hereby resolves to establish a School Advisory Board for each school within the Charity. School Advisory Boards are non-executive assurance and advisory committees of the Board and have no executive authority, unless specifically delegated in these terms of reference.

2. Scope, purpose and authority

2.1. The School Advisory Board exists within the overall governance framework. It is important that the members of the School Advisory Board understand the logic and efficiency of this professionalised model of multi-school governance, and how and why it differs from a 'standalone' school governance model.

2.2. Schools' Governance Framework



2.3. Avoiding any unnecessary duplication of the work of the SMT, professional assurance and the Education Committee **the School Advisory Board's primary role** is to provide independent non-professional assurance to the Board based on the 'lived experience' of pupils, staff, parents and members of the community, and to promote stronger relationships between Speech and Language UK, the school and its community. This includes School Advisory Board members:

- 2.3.1. understanding, and providing **feedback** on, the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school, and on members' perceptions of the school's performance in relation to its goals.
- 2.3.2. acting in an **ambassadorial role**, representing Speech and Language UK to parents, the community and others.
- 2.3.3. validating and championing the **strengths and achievements** of the school, recognising that success breeds success, and that it is in everyone's interests to promote the reputation of the school and its pupils.

- 2.3.4. acting as a link to ensure children benefit from **local opportunities** for learning, development and employment.
- 2.3.5. being an **independent channel and voice** to express local concerns in ways which promote constructive solutions, thereby reducing the likelihood of formal complaints.
- 2.4. The School Advisory Board will meet once per term and be provided with appropriate information on the performance of the school. This includes summary information produced by Speech and Language UK's assurance functions (e.g. safeguarding and educational standards and outcomes) and summary information regarding the key priorities of the school and the impact of school improvement initiatives for which the school Principal is formally accountable to the Director of Education.
- 2.5. The School Advisory Board is expected to review such information, to make observations and to ask questions of the school leadership. In particular, assurance should be sought from members that the information presented is consistent with their direct experience of the school i.e. as parents and staff or as community members with knowledge or interactions with the school. This is the guiding principle which should focus the scope of questioning and discussion.
- 2.6. Subject to coordination by the school Principal, and to prevailing safeguarding and other protocols, School Advisory Board members will be given appropriate access to the school from time to time for informal observation of the school in action and to meet with staff and pupils.
- 2.7. The meetings will be formally minuted and the Chair should highlight key issues which they would like to bring to the attention of Speech and Language UK. This may include positive assurances about the experiences of pupils, staff and parents, as well as material unresolved concerns which require Speech and Language UK's support to resolve.
- 2.8. To facilitate the flow of information, Chairs will also be invited to attend **Chairs' Forums** at least once a year to share their experiences with each other, members of the senior management team and the Board. The members of the senior management team will be expected to respond to concerns raised.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The School Advisory Board will be comprised of a mix of parents (or elected representative), staff and community members, including the following, with numbers dependant on the needs and circumstances of the school:
 - 3.1.1. At least one member elected by, or appointed to represent parents of the children at the school
 - 3.1.2. Up to four community members, including a local authority representative
 - 3.1.3. At least one member elected by teachers at the school from among their number
 - 3.1.4. The school principal (ex officio)
- 3.2. The SAB should nominate a Chair (ideally a community member) to be approved by the Board. The Chair will be approved annually and may not be removed without the approval of the Board.
- 3.3. A Vice-Chair will be nominated who may occasionally act as Chair in the absence of the Chair, though this should not be a regular or long-term arrangement.
- 3.4. School Advisory Board members will be designated by the Chair as "champions" for areas. This is compulsory for certain roles, such as safeguarding and residential.
- 3.5. Being a champion does not imply that such members need to be experts in their designated areas, nor will they have formal monitoring responsibility. They should,

however, care about their areas and promote greater awareness of them amongst Council members.

- 3.6. Champions may be provided with guidance and training, as appropriate, by Speech and Language UK safeguarding and residential professionals at both central and school level.
- 3.7. The SAB may decide to have additional “champions” they see fit, within the remit of the Scheme of Delegation.
- 3.8. Select council members may be trained and invited to sit on recruitment, complaints and resolutions panels, but the use of parents and staff will not generally be appropriate on complaints, exclusions or HR panels relating to their own school.
- 3.9. Terms of office for staff, parent and community SAB members is four years. Individuals will be eligible for re-election or re-appointment.
- 3.10. The Board may remove a staff, parent or community member of the SAB at any time (even during their term of office) if they believe that the person has not adequately fulfilled the role of or if their actions bring the school and/or Speech and Language UK into disrepute.

4. Meetings and attendance

- 4.1. Additional attendees at School Advisory Board meetings will include the:
 - 4.1.1. Speech and Language UK CEO (attending at least one meeting per year)
 - 4.1.2. Director of Education
 - 4.1.3. Members of the school leadership team, Speech and Language UK's finance, marketing, fundraising and HR managers, as required by particular agenda topics.
- 4.2. Meetings will be held termly, typically towards the end of the working day (3pm-6pm), with some members potentially visiting the school earlier in the day for individual meetings and walk-arounds where valuable. Virtual (online) attendance is allowed if it will encourage participation.

5. Quorum

- 5.1. The School Advisory Board will be quorate if the Chair, Principal and at least one member of the SAB is present.

6. Agendas and minutes

- 6.1. Agendas will follow an annual agenda cycle, with headings determined by the Director of Education. Chairs should, in consultation with the Principal and their clerk, flex the content within those headings to reflect locally-significant topics, and the concerns of School Advisory Board members, within the remit of the Scheme of Delegation.
- 6.2. Meetings will be arranged and supported by a clerk. Minutes should highlight key issues which the School Advisory Board would like to bring to the attention of the Speech and Language UK. This may include positive assurances about the experiences of pupils, staff and parents, as well as any material unresolved concerns which require Speech and Language UK's support to resolve. These issues will inform the agenda of the Chairs' Forum.

7. Ofsted

- 7.1. In an Ofsted inspection, the Director of Education attends the inspection as the primary delegated representative of organisation's governance, a member of the Education Committee may also be in attendance.

8. Other duties of the School Advisory Board Chair

- 8.1. The School Advisory Board Chair will be listed by name on the website and may receive correspondence and other approaches. The School Advisory Board Chair should seek clarification from the Director of Education if they are unclear how to respond to such communications.
- 8.2. Chairs will be invited to:
 - 8.2.1. provide input to the annual appraisal of the school Principal.
 - 8.2.2. attend Chairs' Forums to share their views and learn about Speech and Language UK strategies and initiatives.
 - 8.2.3. Become a member of the Education Committee
- 8.3. Unlike a Chair in a maintained sector or "standalone" model of school governance, the School Advisory Board Chair does not have any formal duties beyond those described above.

9. Monitoring and effectiveness

- 9.1. In order to support the continual improvement of governance standards, each School Advisory Board is required to complete an annual self-assessment of its effectiveness. The Clerk should submit this self-assessment to the Director of Education before the end of the summer term.