

Elliot Foundation Academies Trust

Membership Services Document

2022-23

Document control

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Purpose and principles

The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust (TEFAT) is an established medium sized business with 2,000 staff in 32 schools serving almost 13,500 children. It is part of our ethos that we will never be 'established'. We will innovate continuously and develop our services with a view to improving overall outcomes for our children and staff. Consequently, this document may be subject to revision as our offering evolves.

TEFAT has established a set of principles that govern the relationship between the corporate functions of TEFAT and its academies. These are in line with the Trust's [vision and values](#).

1. **Subsidiarity**; if something is best controlled at school level then it should be. Principals are responsible for the management of staff, finances, buildings and equipment in their academies. The centre should only intervene where there are clear benefits, clear legal obligations or where risk is obviously reduced in doing so (e.g. as the common employer to all staff and as the accountable body)
2. **One Trust many children**; all stakeholders are part of one Trust and encouraged to think of the benefits to all children not just the closest children
3. **Minimal change**; the only changes that TEFAT requires of converting academies are:
 - a. To adopt Trust's systems: finance, HR & payroll, safeguarding, Google platform and MIS
 - b. To adhere to the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and central policies
4. It is **not our intention to re-create a local education authority**; the pattern of services supporting each academy will vary from region to region and from academy to academy
5. **Partnership working**: TEFAT central staff will work constructively with academy principals, staff and community councillors to develop and refine arrangements for monitoring, support and challenge that best suit each academy
6. **Presumption of support**: there is no distinction between the Trust and its academies. When a new issue arises, academies should assume that the Trust will aim to support within the limits of available resources and not to the detriment of other academies

This document should be viewed in conjunction with the [Scheme of Delegation](#) that is shared on the TEFAT website.

Membership services breakdown

TEFAT retains **5.8% of total GAG funds** at the centre to pay for the services provided to its academies that are outlined in this document. This does not include pupil premium or any other funding which is passported directly to the academies themselves.

This percentage was lowered from 6% in September 2022 and remains under review

The education team

Regional directors



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Purpose of the regional function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing all their schools and their respective contexts

- Identifying regional priorities that transcend individual schools
- Shaping a regional common purpose with their school leaders towards those priorities
- Setting expectations, based on a shared understanding of current reality, of each school leader
- Signposting school leadership and staff to support networks inside and outside the Trust
- Commissioning additional support where existing support networks are insufficient to achieve desired outcomes at sufficient speed
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes
- Schools are organised into 3 groups dependent on their level of need, Group 1 schools receive the most support followed by Group 2. Group 3 schools work together on an area of development for the trust.

Curriculum & Development Director



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Purpose of curriculum and development function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing all schools' curricula and ensuring that they are fit for purpose
- Ensuring that Trust's Virtual Learning and remote education is fit for purpose
- Supporting Regional Directors in setting expectations of school leaders
- Signposting school leadership and staff to support networks inside and outside the Trust and commissioning additional support where required
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes
- Driving innovation in digital pedagogy
- Nurturing and maintaining regional and national programmes, projects and workgroups which actively develop their members and build capacity for the future

Education support services provided

- Developing a local hub of academies supported by an education team that knows them
- Providing quality assurance against common rubrics for safeguarding and education
- Procuring systems which enable the efficient and meaningful analysis of data
- Ensuring that teachers and leaders are supported to make accurate assessments so that next steps are identified for pupils and wider trends are identified at school and trust level
- Monitoring progress against priorities, brokering support where necessary
- Commissioning and deploying resource to support school improvement, such as expert teachers
- Ensuring that leaders are supported to develop an excellent curriculum which is relevant for the context of the school, aspirational and in line with Trust values
- Signposting leaders to support networks for curriculum development at a local and national level - providing appropriate strategic leadership of curriculum design; curriculum support materials including toolkits, shared resources and templates to review and develop practice
- Subject leader and other staff professional development and support in order to improve practitioner knowledge and skills
- Supporting and developing the leadership of SEND and the early years
- Innovation and research led curriculum opportunities, including Arts Council England funded programmes and university partnerships
- Exciting technology led development programmes through support from Regional Innovations Leads, including access to a central Virtual School as well as virtual tuition
- Ensuring national and regional training needs are reflected in the Learning and Development Offer
- Providing professional development opportunities regionally and nationally to develop leadership at all levels to support retention of staff and build capacity
- Providing fortnightly updates on school improvement and education policy issues
- Annually assess the school's performance to determine the level of support required
- Carry out the annual appraisal of the Principals
- Supporting the evaluation of the impact of money spent in schools on outcomes for all pupils
- Ensuring a coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing policy changes as they occur

Finance



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Purpose of the finance function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the current and expected financial position of the Trust and its schools
- Ensuring that operational decisions by directors and school leaders are informed by likely financial reality
- Challenging the organisation towards greater coherence and sustainability
- Ensuring statutory compliance
- Protecting the assets of the Trust
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Finance services provided

- Strategic financial planning, including provision of data to allow benchmarking between schools and highlighting areas where efficiencies may be achievable
- Budget support, production of year end financial statements & liaison with external audit, compliance with all external regulatory reporting requirements
- Administration of group-wide financial accounting system to enable all schools to input and access data on a common platform
- Administration of group-wide payroll system, including set up and contract management
- Administration of group-wide budget system, including supporting the annual and multi year budget process and ensuring budgets are submitted to ESFA within deadlines
- Treasury and local and group-wide cash flow planning
- Day to day transactional finance support
- Day to day payroll and pensions administration support
- Month end closure and preparation of management accounts support
- Bank reconciliation support
- Advice & emergency assistance

- Submitting [financial](#) reports to ESFA and other agencies, e.g. BEIS, in required formats and within timescales and
- Procurement and supplier management of common finance, budget and payroll systems
 - Gaining feedback on such systems to help drive product development roadmap, integration and functionality
 - Managing system provider performance
- Setting group-wide financial policies, where they go beyond the ESFA handbook.
- Production of annual accounts for the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust
- Arrange external audit of The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust which includes the accounts for all Elliot Foundation Academies Trust academies
- Procurement service and insurance support
- Finance staff recruitment support and training
- Oversight of the Trust's Apprenticeship Levy pot and systems for its use and monitoring

HR



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Purpose of the HR function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the Trust's workforce
- Developing and improving the Trust's workforce
- Supporting and quality assuring school based transactional HR and building local capacity to do so
- Ensuring statutory compliance
- Risk managing strategic and contentious HR issues
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

HR services provided

- Strategic HR support, including leading Trust wide initiatives
- Production of Trust wide HR policies, including appropriate stakeholder consultation and supported by the provision of associated toolkits, templates and training

- Provision of HR demographic data
- Contribution to high quality learning and development opportunities for all staff, tailored to Trust and school improvement priorities
- Management of National Joint Council for trade unions
- Employee relations casework support
- Oversight and support for the Trust's Wellbeing Award for Schools
- Administration of HR system to enable all schools to process HR transactions and contractual documentation
- Day to day transactional HR support, including the coaching of and communication with school based HR Leads
- Support for compliant safer recruitment practices, including the provision of formal procedures, templates and training
- Submission of HR related statutory returns and reports and support for schools to complete relevant returns
- Procurement and supplier management of Trust wide occupational health and employee assistance programme provision and other HR services as appropriate
- Representation of TEFAT's interests at appropriate forums eg Local Government Association
- Active support for the recruitment processes for Executive Principals/ Principals and school based HR leads
- Procurement and management of legal representation for particularly complex and/or employment tribunal cases
- Advice & emergency assistance

Legal, SEND and Governance



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Purpose of the legal, SEND and governance function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the legal position of the Trust and its schools
- Developing and improving the Trust's strategic approach to SEND
- Developing and improving the Trust's governance model ensuring effective delivery
- Developing policies in line with the above, the Trust's charitable purpose and its educational priorities to balance organisational risk
- Supporting and quality assuring school based legal issues and developing local capacity to support the same
- Risk managing strategic and contentious legal issues working with other directors and/or school leaders as appropriate
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Legal, SEND and governance services provided

- Ensuring that those with responsibility for governance across the Trust are supported to provide effective strategic leadership and to deliver robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance
- Direct support for governance at a local level by providing; appropriate strategic leadership of an effective local governance model, namely Community Councils; appropriate toolkit, templates and training alongside attendance at meetings to review and develop practice
- Legal advice and support for the development of both formal and informal provision offers, namely ARP, SRP, SLCN, ASD and Nurture provision
- Legal advice and support for all aspects of access to education; admissions, attendance (focus on severe absence), part time timetables, CME, exclusions (suspension and P/EX) and SEND / EHCP from assessment through to First Tier tribunal

- Legal advice and support for all aspects of statutory and regulatory compliance; complaints, Trust and local website compliance, LA liaison and general legal challenges
- Attendance at panels as required including acting as Chair and / or advisor to panels
- Developing, managing and reviewing of all Trust policies (bar Finance and HR) alongside providing appropriate toolkits and templates for local level policy development
- Support with understanding and application of policies at both local and trust wide level
- Oversight of Trust wide systems, processes and policy to ensure that personal data is processed and kept safe in line with GDPR data controller requirements
- Advice and support to schools on their obligations as data processors under GDPR; FOI / Subject Access Requests, data breaches, impact assessments
- Membership of The Key (access to management advice and resources)

Estates, Health & Safety and Compliance



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Purpose of the estates function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the Trust's estate and the risks associated with it
- Developing and improving the Trust's estate with particular attention to improving the learning environment for children
- Securing external capital funding and prioritising all capital investment to meet the greatest needs across the Trust
- Supporting and quality assuring school based facilities work
- Risk managing of strategic and contentious estates issues and projects
- Ensuring statutory compliance of facilities and estates
- Developing school premises to reduce energy consumption and revenue costs
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Purpose of the health & safety function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the Trust's risks in respect of Health and Safety

- Developing and improving the Trust's approach to the management of H&S
- Ensuring statutory compliance
- Providing guidance, support and monitoring of H&S management to schools

Estates & Health and Safety services provided

- Strategic management of the Trust's estate and capital funding
- Prioritisation and management of major capital works across the Trust's estate and oversight of academy funded building works
- Brokering external funding opportunities including government initiatives, LA capital expansion and other partnerships
- Representation of the Trust with external bodies on all estates and Health and Safety matters (eg DfE, ESFA, HSE. LAs)
- Management of major insurance claims via RPA
- Procurement, supplier management and quality assurance of external estates support such as technical advisors, statutory compliance contractors, contractor and plant & equipment insurance providers
- Annual strategic review with academy leadership of estates needs and priorities for local asset management plan
- Development of site management capacity, knowledge and skills
- Support, guidance and management of Health and Safety policy application across the Trust including accident and incident monitoring and investigation, HSE liaison, H&S audits, asbestos management and activity risk management
- Interpretation and translation of national government policies and protocols for significant national crises - eg Covid19, into a TEFAT approach, including policies, protocols and template documentation

TEFAT Central



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Purpose of the CEO function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the political, financial, educational and operational context of the Trust, its schools and the education sector as a whole
- Setting the tone for the organisation
- Shaping strategic direction for the Trust with Trustees, Directors and stakeholders
- Ensuring the Trust operates towards its charitable objects and within its legal constraints
- Promoting the Trust's purpose and work internally and externally
- Continuously improving the systems for management and mitigation of risk throughout the organisation
- Problem solving and capacity building where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Purpose of the IT function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the Trust's and its schools' IT estate and associated risks
- Developing and improving the Trust's IT estate in line with educational priorities
- Providing strategic technical advice to schools
- Supporting schools in budget planning and IT procurement

- Supporting and quality assuring school IT support and developing local capacity to support the same
- Problem solving and capacity build where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Purpose of the programme function

To improve educational and social outcomes for all children in all schools by:

- Knowing the organisation's operational processes and risks
- Developing and improving the organisational design and process in line with charitable objectives
- Driving efficiency through effective procurement
- Supporting organisational growth through managing conversion and other programmes
- Problem solving and capacity build where the above is not achieving desired outcomes

Corporate services provided

- Anything else not covered in the above in line with the "presumption of support" within the Introduction to this document
- Strategic direction and continuous improvement (see below)
- Ministerial and DfE representation and lobbying, representing the Trust and the Trust's Academies' point of view to key Governmental stakeholders
- PR, marketing and communications support, representing the Trust and developing positive PR for the Trust and our Academies
- Crisis management support
- Project management support
- Risk management, managing the risk profile for the Trust and our Academies
- Contingency fund

Innovation and education technology services provided

- Driving the effective use of Education Technology to improve outcomes for all pupils across the Trust
- Growing the opportunities for collaboration between children and teachers across the trust
- Google Tenancy management (through RM contract)
- Support helpdesk (through RM contract)
- Trust Systems Management
- Central management of the wired and wireless infrastructure (through RM contract)
- Development of the TEFAT IT strategy and delivery of the IT Transformation Programme

- Hosting and facilitating the online TEFAT community, providing a portal to share resources, create forums for specialist areas, and provide regular CPD opportunities e.g. webinars
- Support for schools' development of IT estate refresh plans
- Support for significant technology purchases
- Supplier management of RM contract
 - Gaining feedback on RM to help drive product development roadmap and functionality
 - Managing RM performance

Continuous improvement

The Elliot Foundation has established a model for reflection and critical self-assessment that is built into our governance framework and is driven by the following agents:

The Sponsor: The Elliot Foundation

- is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity
- is governed by a board of trustees which meets at least three times a year and is appointed by the members
- is custodian of the vision and holds the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust to account for its performance
- raises money to support its charitable objectives
- appoints the majority of the Trustees to the board of the Trust

The Trust: The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust

- is a company limited by guarantee with charitable objects
- is a Multi Academy Trust governed by company law, charity law and education law
- is the responsible body accountable to the DfE and its agencies for the provision of education in the academies it controls
- is governed by a board of trustees which meets at least every eight weeks
- delegates authority to its Officers, the Operations Group and those with local governance responsibilities according to its Scheme of Delegation

The Operations Group

- is made up of the executive directors of the Trust (the CEO, FD, HR, Legal, SEND and Governance, Regional Directors, Estates Director, Programme Director, Director of Curriculum and Virtual Learning and other invitees)
- meets fortnightly either face-to-face or via teleconference and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Trust
- is chaired by the CEO

Community Councils

- Each academy or federation has a Community Council whose make-up is determined by the Articles of Association of the Trust
- The majority of Councillors are appointed by the Trust
- The Community Council's authority is delegated to it from the Trust Board in line with the SoD
- Community Councils are advisory only and are responsible for supporting and challenging the school on behalf of the children and communities which they serve

Principals

- Are employees of the Trust responsible for the provision of education in their schools

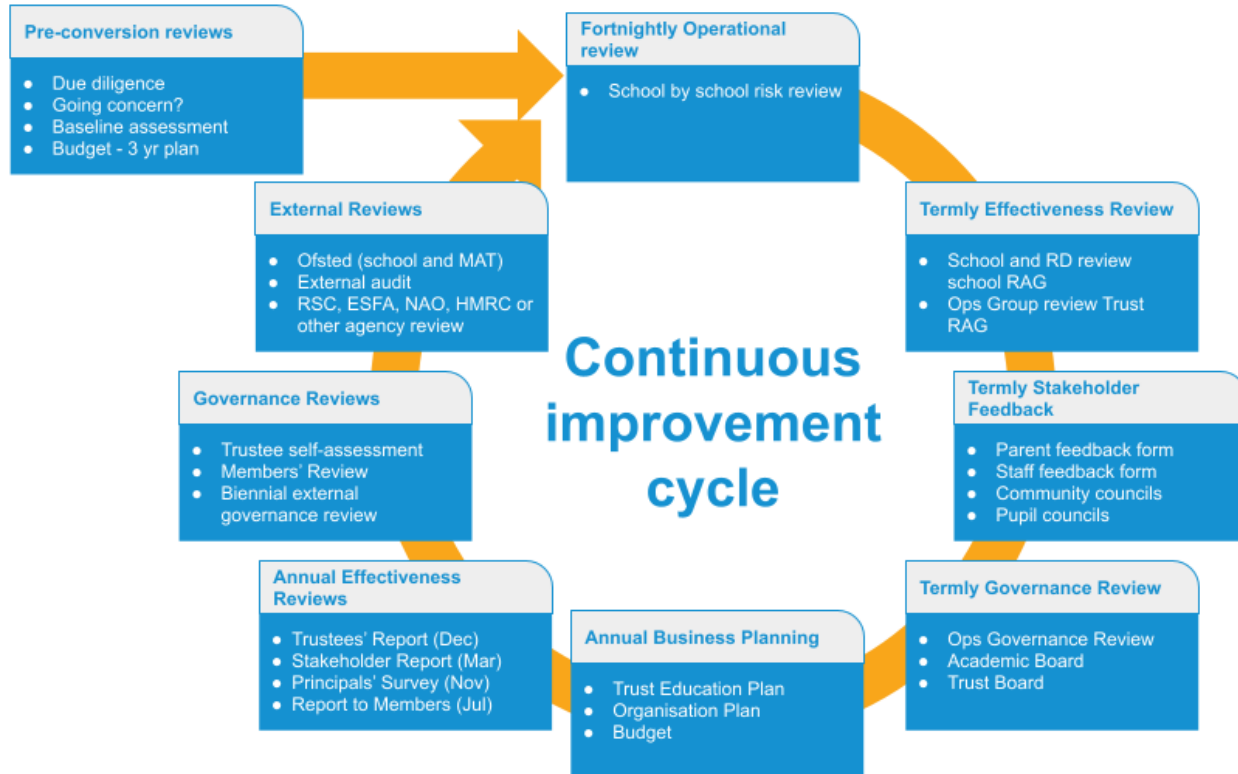
- They are accountable to the Regional Director of their cluster for pupil outcomes and are supported and challenged by their Community Council for the ethos, vision and curriculum on behalf of the community that the school serves

Children, Parents and Staff

- Are Stakeholders in that their lives are shaped by the actions of the Trust
- Their feedback is integral to the Trust's continuous improvement process

Review process

The continuous improvement process is viewed through the lens of its impact upon outcomes for all children in the Trust's schools. This ensures that it is aligned with the Trust's charitable objects and the contractual obligations of its funding agreements.



Annual review of schools

- Each year the Academic Board assesses the performance of all schools in the Trust and allocates support and challenge in line with outcomes
- Consistent high performers with capacity to support will be encouraged to apply for "Centre of Excellence" status
 - COE status is reviewed biennially by the Academic Board

- The Academic Board also oversees the Research School, Apprenticeship provision and the Expert Teacher Programme
- Schools requiring support and all new schools joining the Trust are designated as “Governance Review +” and receive additional support
 - GR+ status is reviewed annually by the Operations Group
 - GR+ schools that are ‘threshold’ will be assessed in line with baseline principles before exiting the process
 - Schools that require GR+ support over a longer period may have additional leadership support seconded to them
- The overall school support matrix is reviewed by the Academic Board annually

Annual review of the Trust

- Each Autumn the Trust commissions a survey of all of its Principals
- This report goes to the Operations Group as an input to their annual Strategy Review
- Draft strategy is presented back to the Principals’ Council in the Spring
- The recommended strategy is then presented to the Trust board and to the Trust Sponsor
- Stakeholder engagement has been extended to include children, parents and staff so that all affected by the work of the Trust have the chance to influence its priorities

Biennial governance review

- Although the Trust is run along the principle of subsidiarity, the Trustees bear ultimate responsibility for its actions
- Each year the Members of the Trust will review the strategic plan and assess the quality of governance
- Trustees conduct annual self-assessments
- The Trust alternates between external reviews of governance (conducted by appropriate external organisations) and internal reviews of governance (conducted by Legal, SEND and Governance Director)

Systemic external reviews

Multiple external agencies review and assess the work of the Trust which provide inputs to this process, these include:

- Ofsted inspections of schools and the Trust itself
- RSC annual reviews
- ESFA/NAO/HMRC other agency reviews