



Tees Valley Education Trust

Trustees' Handbook **September 2018**





Table of Contents

1	Tees Valley Education Trust (TVED) Chair's Introduction	3
2	Welcome to TVED	4
3	TVED governance plan	4
4	TVED vision and values	4
5	Trustee code of conduct	5
6	Trust board principles	5
6.1	Decision making, risk and control	7
6.2	Board effectiveness	7
6.3	Diversity	7
6.4	Openness and accountability	7
7	TVED members, trustees, committee members	8
8	Governance terms of reference	9
8.1	Members	9
8.2	TVED trust board	9
8.3	Academy standards committee	10
8.4	Finance, audit and risk committee	11
8.5	Challenge board	12
8.6	Local academy committees (LAC)	12
9	Scheme of delegations	13
10	Trustees' annual work programme	14
11	Policies and policy review	14
12	Trustee support and training	14
12.1	Induction programme for new trustees	15
12.2	Support and training for all trustees	15



1 Tees Valley Education Trust (TVED) Chair's Introduction

Welcome to the first edition of the TVED Trustees' handbook. Since TVED was established in September 2015, we have continued to grow and develop both in terms of the quality of teaching and learning in our academies and to ensure that the trust's governance is compliant, robust, fit for purpose and forward thinking. Indeed, our aspiration is to be a model of what multi-academy trust (MAT) governance should be. The production of this handbook, which will now be reviewed and updated annually, marks an important milestone on this improvement journey.

The purpose of the handbook is to provide an easily accessible guide to TVED's governance arrangements both for current and recently appointed trustees and for our partners and stakeholders to understand how the trust operates and works to fulfil its vision and purpose.

At the same time as drafting this handbook, we have taken the opportunity to review TVED's website and further develop the governance section so that all governance related documents, including the documents referred to in this handbook and the handbook itself are posted on the web site.

The trust's focus during 2017/18 on ensuring the strongest possible governance arrangements was particularly important for this stage in TVED's development. We are very excited that the three years of planning and preparation for the opening of Discovery Special Academy as a free school came to a successful conclusion. The academy opened in September 2018 in temporary accommodation with a view to moving to the newly built school during 2019/20. At the same time, TVED is pleased to welcome Wilton Primary Academy to the TVED family. We are also in active discussions with at least one further academy that is likely to join the trust during 2018/19. As these developments are ongoing, we need to ensure that TVED's governance arrangements remain fully fit for purpose so that the trust board can be assured that, as we continue to grow, we ensure the full commitment to our vision and our aspiration for all TVED's pupils and staff.

I hope you find this handbook informative and helpful. As the commitment to continuous improvement is one of our founding principles, the trust is always happy to receive constructive feedback about this handbook and our governance arrangements.

Jason Brine

Chair of Tees Valley Education Trust Board

2018



2 Welcome to TVED

Tees Valley Education is a multi-academy trust (MAT) and sponsor that originally comprised three academies across Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. The two founding academies, Brambles and Pennyman, formed a dedicated partnership in 2010 underpinned by a passionately shared commitment to improve outcomes for all children and their communities. Over the eight years we have worked together, there have been a number of significant events that led to the formation and development of the trust.

- Brambles and Pennyman were two of the first primary schools in Middlesbrough to become academies in September 2012.
- Since 2012, both academies have also worked closely with Dormanstown Academy in Redcar and Cleveland.
- TVED was established as a MAT in September 2015, comprising Brambles, Dormanstown and Pennyman academies.
- Wilton Primary Academy joined TVED in September 2018.
- In April 2017, the DfE approved TVED's application to set up a primary special academy as part of the free schools' programme. Discovery Special Academy opened in temporary accommodation in September 2018. It is anticipated the academy will move into a new purpose built school building in Middlesbrough in 2019/20.
- In line with the trust's growth strategy, TVED is committed to welcoming additional schools into the trust where there is a shared vision and clear capacity to support school improvement for all academies in the trust.

Within the trust, there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise across both mainstream and specialist provision. We pride ourselves on our inclusivity: currently, we have over 1000 mainstream places and 110 specialist unit places across the three academies. These units, currently located at Dormanstown and Pennyman, offer places to pupils with a range of moderate, complex and, in some cases, significant medical, physical, learning, sensory and communication needs.

We also offer a range of outreach for both mainstream and specialist settings as well as leadership development and individual curriculum areas as a teaching school and as national support schools.

As a group, we have constantly demonstrated our commitment and ability to nurture, share and encourage outstanding educational practice in a range of settings. We firmly believe that excellence happens, not in isolated moments, but when we strive to achieve it on a daily basis: an aspiration we have for all.

3 TVED governance plan

Full details of TVED's governance arrangements can be found in the [trust's governance plan](#).

4 TVED vision and values

TVED's vision and mission is to provide outstanding learning environments where the highest levels of aspiration and achievement for all pupils are the norm.



The trust's ethos is to be fully inclusive, recognising and celebrating the achievements of all pupils and staff, underpinned by a commitment to work effectively with a wide range of agencies. TVED has a culture of co-production and growth, where professionals and agencies from a variety of settings work together to support the holistic development of all pupils. This outstanding inclusive practice has been the primary driver for the evolution of TVED's provision and infrastructure.

Whilst signing up to the trust's vision and values, each academy is encouraged to develop its own individual culture and ethos, reflecting the particular needs and interests of the pupils who attend each school and the communities they serve.

The trust is fully committed to continuing this way of working and enhancing the lives of all the pupils in its care in order to enable them to secure the best possible life chances as they move through their educational career and life.

5 Trustee code of conduct

The trust board has agreed that, on appointment, all trustees are asked to sign up to the [National Governors' Association \(NGA\) code of conduct \(2018 edition\)](#).

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from TVED trustees and committee members in order for the trust board to properly carry out its work within the MAT and the community. This code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and the trust's articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

6 Trust board principles

Collectively, the TVED trust board and committees espouse the principles [Charity Governance Code](#).

Organisational purpose

The board is clear about the trust's aims, vision and values and ensures these are being delivered effectively and sustainably.

Leadership

The trust is led by an effective board that provides strategic leadership in line with the trust's aims and values. The DfE's multi-academy trusts good practice guidance and expectations for growth document December 2016 outlines 10 ways effective MATs make sure they have a strong team.

1. Have a strategic plan which turns your vision in to reality for the organisation as a whole rather than for individual schools. This will help you be clear about the workforce you need.
2. Build staffing structures at the MAT level as well as the school level. The trust's workforce needs to think of itself as one team if it is to make the most of the talent and resources within the trust.
3. Develop your strategic plan collaboratively, involving those who will be charged with delivering it. This helps to ensure every employee understands their role in delivering the plan and feels valued for their wider contribution.



4. Trust leaders, chief executives or executive leaders, need to be able to lead, performance manage and develop the team of academy principals and senior leaders.
5. Executive leaders need support too, both from good people and good structures. It helps them be better able to deal with pressure and unforeseen problems. It can also make the difference between incremental and transformational improvement.
6. Create a culture, systems and processes that promote ongoing development and progression of both individuals and the organisation.
7. Identify skills (and skills gaps) across the trust and all schools through a trust-wide skills audit.
8. Establish a programme for continuous professional development involving staff across the trust.
9. Grow and develop the next middle and senior leaders by deploying them across a group of schools, with the expectation of movement between schools within the trust. This helps to create a healthy environment for promotion.
10. Ensure succession planning is part of the trust's overall strategic management, not as a response to crisis. This enables the trust, or schools within the trust to withstand a change of leadership or a sudden or unexpected departure of a member of staff.

Integrity

The board acts with integrity, adopting values and creating a culture that helps to achieve the organisation's purposes. The board is aware of the importance of the public's confidence and trust in state funded school academies and trustees undertake their duties accordingly.

The 7 principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, education, social and care services

These principles also apply to all those in other sectors that deliver public services. They were first set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 and they are included in the Ministerial code.

1. **Selflessness:** holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. **Integrity:** holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. **Objectivity:** holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.



4. **Accountability:** holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness:** holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty:** holders of public office should be truthful.
7. **Leadership:** holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

6.1 Decision making, risk and control

The board makes sure that its decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely and that effective delegation, control and risk assessment and management systems are set up and monitored through committees such as audit, risk and finance.

6.2 Board effectiveness

The board works as an effective team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions. This skills based approach aims to increase effectiveness ensuring that it sets the vision and direction for the future and holds the CEO to account for its academies' standards and conduct. The role of the board is critical to the effectiveness of the trust.

There are eight main principles needed to transform the team of diverse people with a range of skills, experience and knowledge into a highly effective board:

- the right people around the table;
- understanding roles and responsibilities;
- good chairing;
- professional clerking;
- strong relationships based on trust;
- knowing the data;

- commitment to asking challenging questions; and
- confidence to have courageous and, when needed, challenging conversations in the interests of the pupils/trust.

6.3 Diversity

The board's approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership and decision-making.

6.4 Openness and accountability

The board leads the organisation in being transparent and accountable. The trust is open in its work unless there is good reason for it not to be.

Link to DfE Good Practice guidance to be put on web site.



7 TVED members, trustees, committee members

Members	
Norma Newell Richard Hodges Sister Anita Smith	
Trust board	
Trustee	Lead responsibility
Jason Brine	Chair, Legal and compliance
Patrick Scott	Vice chair; education/strategic development
Richard Hodges	Compliance, health and safety, risk management
Katrina Morley	TVED CEO
Andy Taylor	Education/school improvement
Jenny Vickers	Education/leadership development/SEND
Michelle Sanderson	Safeguarding
Paul Swalwell	TBC (Marketing)
Neil Harrison	TBC (Finance and financial compliance)

Trust board committee membership

Trust Board	Audit, Risk and Finance Committee
Chair - Jason Brine	Chair - Michelle Sanderson
Vice Chair - Patrick Scott	Katrina Morley, CEO (reports to Committee)
Katrina Morley	Emma Chawner, Trust Business and Resource Manager
Andy Taylor	James Christian, Consultant Financial Director
Jason Brine	Vacancy
Jenny Vickers	
Michelle Sanderson	
Paul Swalwell	
Neil Harrison	



Academy Standards Committee	Challenge board
Chair - Patrick Scott, Andy Taylor Jenny Vickers Katrina Morley, CEO (reports to Committee)	Independent chair – Carol White, NLG 1 trustee - Andy Taylor (External special school leader as required especially to challenge Discovery Special Academy) Katrina Morley, CEO Academy headteachers in attendance Chairs of local academy committees invited as observers Deputy headteachers to attend as part of leadership training programme.
Local academy committee	
Trust board appoints chair Head teacher Up to 2 x parent governors Staff governor Community governor	

8 Governance terms of reference

8.1 Members

- Appoint trustees with the exception of the CEO who is, ex officio, a trustee.
- Approve changes to master funding agreement, trust articles of association and academy supplemental funding agreements.
- Receive annual auditor’s report.
- Meets once a year for an annual general meeting including receiving the auditor’s report.

8.2 TVED trust board

- Sets TVED’s vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Reviews trust wide academic and financial performance.
- Ensures governance compliance (web site, information, safeguarding, SEND, PREVENT, audit, Academies Finance Handbook, etc.)
- Approves annual pupil premium plan and spend based on review of pupil outcomes.
- Approves early intervention actions and budget allocations to address high risks and deterioration in performance.



- Approves TVED's strategic one and three year development plans.
- Approves proposals for trust development including recommendations for brokering additional schools/academies and free school development.
- Appoints CEO, and trust finance director. Represented on appointment boards for headteachers.
- Sets up annual pay review committee. Approves recommendations for pay progression.
- Receives annual reports from trustees undertaking CEO performance management discussions and recommendations for pay progression.
- Receives bi-annual TVED safeguarding audit from external auditor and approves actions as appropriate.
- Ensures secure financial management and probity.
- Receives the annual external audit report and considers recommendations for action from finance and audit committee.
- Appoints the trust's external and internal auditors on recommendation from the finance and audit committee.
- Sets the annual budget for each TVED academy.
- Agrees capital allocations for each academy.
- Reviews trust's HR/employment related policies and procedures.
- Reviews schedule of delegations (financial and decision making) annually.
- Ensures full legal compliance across the trust.
- Sets and reviews trust policies in accordance with trust review timetable.
- Reviews TVED risk register and, by exception, agrees intervention action plans both trust wide and in individual academies.
- Reviews progress to implement trust wide projects and developments.
- Agrees the terms of reference and membership of trust task and finish working parties to address specific issues identified in the trust development plan and/or in response to changes in the level of risk.
- Meets four times a year.

8.3 Academy standards committee

- Reviews reports on individual academies from challenge board to approve recommended actions and consider any trust wide implications.
- Considers emerging trust wide performance and improvement issues and determines recommendations to be made to trust board.
- Considers implications of national, regional and local strategic education related developments for TVED, how the trust should respond and makes recommendations as appropriate to the trust board.
- Considers CEO proposals for trust-wide CPD, staffing and staffing structures and makes recommendations to trust board.
- Ensures a robust trust-wide annual safeguarding self- audit is undertaken, supported by an external audit at least every three years; considers the report and makes recommendations to the trust board as appropriate.
- Considers trust wide finance implications and priorities to address academic performance issues and makes recommendations to trust board.



- Considers possible future strategic developments (eg free school application; schools to join TVED; teaching school alliance developments) and makes recommendations to trust board.
- Reviews annual and three year draft trust improvement/development plans before they are submitted to the trust board for consideration and approval.
- Receives challenge board minutes and RAG reports from individual academies.
- Meets three times a year.

8.4 Finance, audit and risk committee

- Lead responsibility for ensuring robust trust financial management, policies and procedures that conform to Academies Financial Handbook recommendations and requirements.
- Reviews termly budget monitoring for each academy and makes recommendations to trust board about any in-year adjustments above officer delegations.
- Reviews annual budget allocation for each academy and makes recommendations to the trust board.
- Reviews trust financial surpluses and potential deficits and makes recommendations to trust board to ensure compliance with Academies Financial Handbook and the best interests of TVED pupils.
- Reviews medium and long term financial planning and makes recommendations to the trust board about one and three year financial plans.
- Reviews HR policies and procedures and makes recommendations to the trust board as appropriate, including performance management and appraisal processes for all staff.
- Reviews CEO recommendations for salary structures and pay scales for all staff and makes recommendations to the trust board as appropriate.
- Delegated responsibility from the trust board to act as the pay review committee and approve CEO recommendations for pay progression.
- Makes recommendations to the trust board for CEO, finance director and headteachers' pay progression.
- Lead responsibility for maintaining the trust's risk management policy and at least termly review of the risk register with recommendations for action to the trust board.
- As part of termly risk register review, reviews current safeguarding and Prevent risks and makes recommendations to the trust board as appropriate;
- Considers the trust's annual external and academy internal audit reports in detail and makes recommendations to the trust board and members for consideration when the annual external audit report is considered.
- Makes recommendations to the trust board about the appointment of external auditors.
- Makes recommendations to the trust board about internal audit arrangements at both trust and academy level.
- Ensures appropriate and compliant arrangements for managing and monitoring external grants are in place, reviews expenditure against these grants and makes recommendations as appropriate to the trust board.
- Ensures an annual trust health and safety self-review is undertaken with an external review every three years, review the health and safety report and make appropriate recommendations to the trust board, including implications for capital spend priorities.
- Reviews the trust's 3 year capital plan and priorities and make recommendations to the trust board.

- Reviews web-site compliance and makes recommendations to the board as appropriate.
- Meets three times a year.

8.5 Challenge board

- Reviews each academy's headteacher report, any external audit reports, updated school evaluation (SEF) and data analysis to inform challenge questions and lines of enquiry for the SLT.
- Reviews pupil attainment, progress and targets in detail for each mainstream academy, including pupils with SEND, both in-year against TVED data and projections and annually against national outcomes for mainstream schools/academies.
- Reviews pupil attainment, progress and targets in detail for the specialist unit provision attached to TVED academies and Discovery Special Academy using PIVATS and CASPA to monitor against regional and national performance.
- Reviews in-year RAG ratings and risk assessments for each academy, and make recommendations as appropriate to academy standards committee.
- Reviews and challenges each academy's SEF and implementation of current review and development (RAD) plan.
- Makes recommendations about ongoing in year updates to academy SEFs and RADs and ensures that all ongoing updates are mapped and contained in the academy RADs.
- Monitors the impact of the pupil premium plan and spend at individual academy level.
- Reviews and challenges individual academy safeguarding arrangements and make recommendations to the standards committee or the trust board as appropriate.
- Makes recommendations to the TVED standards committee for trust wide strategic developments emerging from in-depth analysis to be taken to TVED board.
- Draws attention to the standards committee to issues to be celebrated and of concern at individual academy and trust level in terms of KPIs.
- Reviews academy staffing structures against evidence from integrated curriculum financial planning (ICFP), the SEF and RAD and data outcomes to ensure these structures remain fit for purpose and affordable.
- Makes recommendations to TVED's standards committee about implications for trust wide staffing structures from evidence of performance at individual academy level.
- Ensures that ongoing finance and audit outcomes and projections are effectively triangulated with academy outcomes to ensure best value for every pupil in terms of outcomes, well-being and achievement.
- Draws attention to finance and audit committee of issues of financial and risk concern at both individual academy and trust level.
- Where required and approved by TVED's standard's committee, meets as the interim management board (IMB) for an individual academy with revised terms of reference to focus more on the agreed leadership and management priorities needed to bring about rapid improvement.
- Meets half termly over two consecutive days (six times a year) with an independent chair who is an education and governance expert to ensure sufficient external validation and challenge: day one to focus on academy mainstream performance, progress and priorities; day two to focus specifically on inclusion and SEND in the trust's learning support units and Discovery Special Academy; and

- Enhances the challenge board membership with further specialist expertise in SEND and special school provision.

Local academy committees (LAC)

- Provides the parent and staff voice for each academy, in particular about academy ethos and culture.
- Reviews effectiveness of communication with parents, carers and academy stakeholders.
- Reviews parent/carer feedback and makes recommendations to trust board as appropriate.
- Reviews out of school activities, including breakfast clubs, start and end of school and after school activities.
- Reviews school visits and makes recommendations for future visits.
- Makes recommendations to the trust board about community activities and community use of TVED academy premises.
- Consulted on key trust policies (eg behaviour, bullying, attendance, community use).
- Consulted on proposals for building projects.
- Consulted on budget proposals and spending priorities;
- Task and finish working groups set up or invited to join wider working groups as appropriate.
- Meets once a term.

9 Scheme of delegations

TVED's scheme of delegation is designed to:

- ensure the executive leadership is clear about the decisions for which the trust board remains responsible;
- ensure that the role of the executive leadership is fully understood throughout the MAT;
- promote a culture of honesty, transparency and accountability;
- identify responsibility for key strategic appointments and performance management (eg CEO, Head Teachers, Deputy Head Teachers);
- identify responsibility for policy and practice (Trust/academy);
- identify responsibility for setting and management of each academy's budget;
- identify responsibility for assessing, managing and pre-empting risk in each academy and across the trust; and
- identify responsibility for pupils' outcomes and educational entitlement.

TVED's scheme of delegations is founded on the principle that, decisions should be made the appropriate level of governance and not automatically referred to a higher level. This not

only ensures the most effective way of working and rapid decision making but also ensures an appropriate referral hierarchy where this is required.

The scheme of delegation supports trustees to clarify the key decisions for which they have responsibility and which should be referred to the appropriate committee, trust board or members.

The scheme of delegation will also assist leaders at all levels to fulfil their roles throughout the trust. This will in turn help the trust to enable all of our pupils to be the very best learners, citizens and community advocates they can be and ensure they can play a fulfilling and productive role in the future economy.

TVED's full scheme of delegation is available from the trust [website](#).

10 Trustees' annual work programme

The trust board and committee annual work programme can be viewed from the trust [website](#). While most of this work programme is generic and will be repeated annually unless otherwise indicated, in September each year, at its first meeting, the trust board reviews the work programme, identifies any workstreams that are specific to current priorities and ensures they are included and referred to the appropriate governance level for both scrutiny and decision making.

11 Policies and policy review

The trust board is responsible for reviewing and approving all trust policies. Usually, policies are reviewed every three years and will not require changes unless there have been changes in national policy or the trust wants to make changes. However, it is important that the trust has a review programme so that trustees can be confident that all policies are up to date and meet statutory requirements.

A list of trust policies and their review dates can be found on the trusts' [website](#).

12 Trustee support and training

All trustees refreshed their skills audit using the NGA's updated skills audit for MAT trustees in September 2017. Analysis of this audit together with discussions with individual trustees and the recent trustee appointments evidence that education and school improvement expertise is strong, including strategic improvement planning, analysis of pupil performance data, safeguarding responsibilities, SEND, and pupil well-being. All trustees recognise the importance of keeping up to date with recent DfE legislation and expectations about trust governance. This is already built into the trust board training and development programme (see below). Recent trustee appointments have strengthened governance expertise in:

- financial monitoring and strategic planning, especially in terms of education finance and new national funding formula proposals, including high needs funding;
- risk management;
- corporate legal and compliance responsibilities; and
- building and capital planning.

While no trustee is a human resources professional, three of the trustees either run their own companies or are senior managers in large companies with both knowledge and experience of staff related matters. The former education professionals all held senior school and local authority posts before they retired and therefore have considerable experience of education HR related matters and the involvement of school governance in these issues. Link to pen portraits here.

Through its in-house training programme for trustees, TVED ensures that trustees are fully supported to keep up to date with key national policy developments and expectations of governance. Individual trustees are also supported to attend relevant local, regional and national training programmes for governors. The trust subscribes to NGA, The School Bus and The Key and supports and encourages trustees to undertake appropriate on-line training such as the EduCare safeguarding support programmes. (See below).

12.1 Induction programme for new trustees

At its meeting in September 2017, the board agreed trustee roles and responsibilities, including committee membership and lead responsibility for 2017/18. The chair of the trust board and CEO meet with each trustee to agree their individual training needs. These are addressed through a combination of mentoring and coaching, support and training for all trustees and bespoke internal and external training to meet individual trustee needs, including the induction of new trustees and governors.

The TVED trustees' handbook (May 2018) is designed to help recently appointed trustees to familiarise themselves with the trust's vision, values and governance procedures. The handbook will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it is kept up to date.

12.2 Support and training for all trustees

Currently, all TVED members and trustees attend an annual training day, usually scheduled for March/April each year in which members and the board are updated on national developments for trust governance expectations and requirements.

Trustees with lead responsibilities are supported by:

- regular briefings from the CEO and finance director;
- briefings from externally commissioned consultants as appropriate;
- membership of the NGA, School Bus and The Key for governors and the associated briefings; and
- external governor training.