



NEWHAM COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS TRUST

NCST - SoD - Part 2: Governance Principles

Last updated: June 2020

**Applies to: NCST, NCST Federation, Lister Community School
Rokeby School, Sarah Bonnell School**

1. Part 2 - Governance Principles

The Schools have a shared commitment to working together to provide a world-class education for young people in Newham, and to further developing as centres of excellence for teaching and learning. The Schools are highly ambitious for their students, and keen to develop their passion for learning. The Schools seek to do this within calm, safe learning environments, where all members of the community treat each other with kindness and respect. The Schools believe that no child should be left behind, that every child can succeed regardless of their starting point, and that every child should have access to a broad and rich range of experiences at school which will support their development as an active member of our community. The Schools are highly ambitious for their staff, developing a strong culture of continuous professional development. The Schools want the Trust to attract and retain the best teaching and non-teaching staff, and be recognised as an organisation where staff at all levels receive outstanding support in developing their careers.

1.1. Founding Principles and Principles for Effective Partnership

The Trust has been established in light of a number of “founding principles”, which reflect a steadfast commitment to:

- maintain each of the Schools’ comprehensive values, inclusive practices and non-selective admissions policies;
- ensure that the governance of the Trust Federation and the Schools will continue to reflect the Schools’ close links with the local community;
- recognise and value the contribution of staff to the success of the Trust Federation, and in particular to doing so through:
 - formally recognising the Trade Unions that support staff in the Schools; and
 - securing for all staff terms and conditions which at least match and in some important respects (such as the Living Wage) improve on those prevailing in Local Authority maintained schools;
- that all Schools are equal partners and will protect and support each others’ distinctiveness; and
- mutual respect and distinctiveness

The Schools, and those responsible for the governance and management of the Trust and the Schools, have committed to working in partnership, supporting one another. There are clear underlying principles around how that partnership will work.

1.2. Principles for Effective Partnership

Each School is unique and serves its community. The Trust Federation will seek to preserve and protect each School’s distinctiveness and will be respectful of each School’s respective ethos and mission. The Schools will work collaboratively with each other, sharing resources, knowledge and best practice, to fulfil the Trust Federation’s mission, vision and values, recognising that each School has both strengths

and weaknesses. In so far as practicable, those with leadership and governance responsibilities will strive for consensus in decision making.

1.3. Transparency

All those involved in the running and oversight of the Trust Federation and the Schools will be open and honest in their dealings with each other, at all times acting in good faith and recognising the value of independence and separation in relation to decision making.

1.4. Subsidiarity

Decisions are to be taken at the level nearest to those affected by those decisions which is compatible with the principles of solidarity and support for the common good, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy and aiming in so far as possible to make changes to established practices only where it can be demonstrated there is a reasonable need and in order to learn from experience or adapt to changing circumstances. The Trust Federation adopts a policy of earned autonomy and where governance responsibility is delegated appropriate decision making authority will be given. The parameters of such authority will be clear and those to whom responsibility is given will be required to report to those who retain overall responsibility and accountability.

1.5. Solidarity

All those with responsibility for the Trust Federation and the Schools share a particular commitment to the mutual support of all Schools for whom the Trust Federation is responsible, especially those that are in need of assistance at any particular time.

1.6. The Common Good

All recognise their responsibility towards the common good, not just of the Schools for whom the Trust Federation is responsible, but of all of the families and communities in the areas served by the Trust Federation.

1.7. Scheme of Delegation

The Scheme of Delegation will reflect these founding principles, which underpin the governance structure and how responsibilities are delegated and performed. The effectiveness of the Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is appropriate for a dynamic education environment and evolves to reflect developing good practice.