



Infinity Academies Trust

Ready to learn; Prepared to flourish.



Governance at Infinity Academies Trust

Welcome from the Chair of Trustees and CEO

At Infinity Academies Trust, children are at the heart of everything we do. We strive every day to add value to our academies, to enable them to be even better places for our children and young people to learn and grow.

We are driven by a passion to do our very best for our children and we know that by working together we can achieve things that we could not do alone. One way in which we do this is through our governance structure.

We firmly believe that governance is the cornerstone of our commitment to improving the outcomes and opportunities of every pupil and every colleague working in our academies. Our dedicated Governance team contributes significantly to the strategic direction and overall well-being of our academies and are not just valued; they are invaluable. Their passion, commitment, and diverse expertise bring a wealth of perspectives to the robust decision-making processes that drive our academies forward.

Our governance model, reviewed and reshaped in 2022, is designed to foster collaboration, transparency and accountability at all times, providing a strong foundation upon which our academies can thrive from the moment they join the Trust.

If you would like to find out more or are interested in discussing what joining Infinity Academies Trust would mean for your school, please do get in touch.

Mr Gavin Booth
CEO

Sir Steve Lancashire
Trust Chair



“He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

Ephesians 4:16



Our Governance Structure

At Infinity we recognise the importance of local governance and the role it plays in being the public face of our Academies alongside the Headteachers.

In the 2022-23 academic year, our local governing groups became “Academy Monitoring Committees” (AMCs). Academy Champions (ACs) are local governance volunteers who form the AMC under the guidance of the AMC Chairs.

All ACs have a role in monitoring and reporting on aspects of an academy’s work as developed alongside the Central Team. AMC members are supported through regular training sessions and through key documentation to effectively carry out their work with their academy. Their activity is focussed on seeking views, monitoring impact and building relationships with stakeholders across an academy and less on scrutiny of reports and policies.

Upon joining the Trust, all local governors remain in post and the Chairs continue to actively represent their academy and champion its needs within the community and within the Trust.

Governance within Infinity is constantly under review to ensure that we are making the most of the contributions of our governance volunteers, the support of the Trust Central Team and ensuring that Trustees are able to:

- Access and evaluate the performance of all Infinity academies
- Ensure we avoid duplication between the roles of local governors and the Central Team
- Ensure clarity for academies and external agencies on the lines of responsibility
- Support our governance volunteers in having the biggest impact

The new governance approach was fully evaluated at the end of the 2022-23 academic year through an External Review of Governance. This revealed that the new governance structure reflects the vision, values and ethos of the Trust and the governance structure is robust.



Structure of the Trust

In a multi-academy trust like ours, governance consists of the Members, Trustees and local governance.

Five Members

(3 Diocesan Board of Education appointees, Chair of Trust and one independent)

Members have ultimate control over the academy trust, with the ability to appoint some of the Trustees and the right to amend the trust’s articles of association.

Nine Trustees

(appointed by Members)

In trusts, the purpose of governance is to provide:

Strategic leadership

Accountability and assurance

Strategic engagement

The board has collective accountability and strategic responsibility for the trust. It has a focus on ensuring the trust delivers an excellent education to pupils while maintaining effective financial management and must ensure compliance with:

1. The trust’s charitable objects
2. Regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements
3. Their funding agreement

Academy Monitoring Committees

Trustees can delegate governance functions to the local level. Trustees have complete discretion over what is delegated to each AMC.

The details of what has been delegated from the Trustees to members of the AMC is detailed in a scheme of delegation. This makes clear what functions the Trustees have delegated to the local governance.



“As an Executive Headteacher, I value the Infinity governance model of Academy Champions. Through their focused monitoring work, involving conversations with staff, Academy Champions are able to obtain a very real view of the schools. Staff talk honestly and openly, enabling Academy Champions to become aware of the issues staff are working with, the challenges they face and the way in which these are overcome and worked through. This compliments the challenge and support provided by the Education Directors to whom Headteachers are held to account.”

**Andrew Raistrick,
Executive Headteacher**



What is an Academy Monitoring Committee (AMC)?

AMCs are committees of the Trust Board. Their members are not Trustees or directors of the Trust and, even where responsibility is delegated at a local level, it is the Trust that is the legal entity and it is the Trust that is ultimately accountable.

The AMCs work collectively with the Central Team to create a joint schedule of monitoring and support for all Trust academies that ensure a complete picture of all aspects of each academy's work. This is combined and then shared with Trustees to provide them with all the pertinent information about an academy. The overview picture is also shared with AMCs at key points within the year.

The Trustees delegate some aspects of monitoring to AMCs. The level of delegation will be varied to suit specific circumstances. For example, if an academy is not performing well, the Trustees may reduce the level of delegation until the academy improves or appoint new persons to strengthen it.

The term of office of any person serving on an AMC is four years. Any person may be re-appointed or re-elected. The Chair of the AMC is appointed by the Committee for a term of 12 months, but the decision must be ratified by the Trustees.

What does the AMC oversee?

Governance

The AMC's governance duties are:

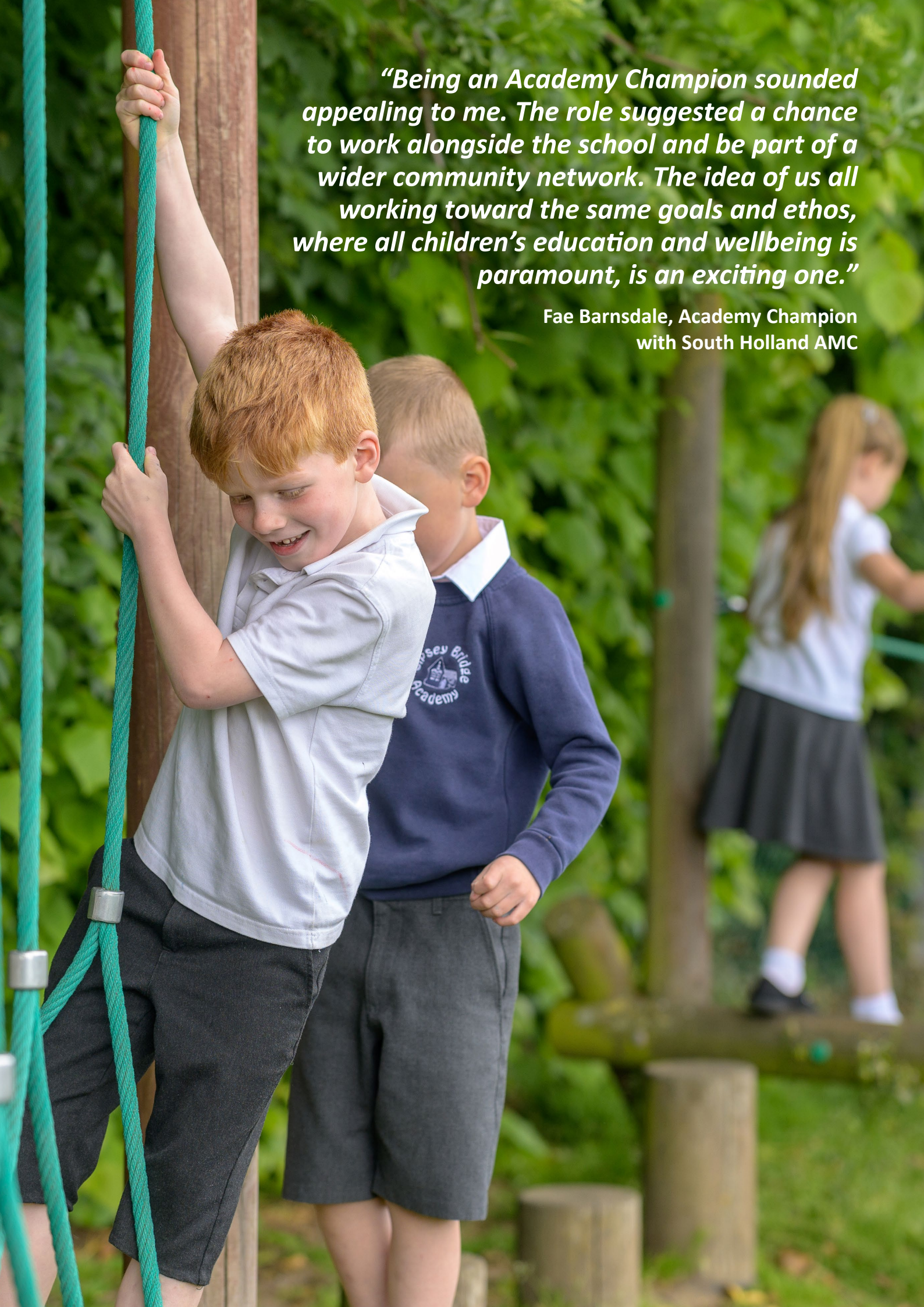
- To determine the ethos, vision and values of the academy, ensuring consistency with that of the Trust, in collaboration with the CEO and Trustees
- To assign individual Academy Champions with responsibilities for Safeguarding, Stakeholder Engagement, Health & Safety/Premises, SEND and Additional Funding
- To ensure adherence with the Trust's Conflicts of Interest Policy
- To monitor and support the implementation of the academy's policies, including Business Continuity Plan
- To establish and maintain a relationship with members of the local community and key stakeholders
- To convene an appropriate panel to review permanent exclusions
- To monitor the impact of additional funding in the academy and monitor that statutory information has been published on the academy website
- To convene an appropriate panel for Stage 3 formal complaints in accordance with the Trust-wide Complaints Policy
- To appoint a designated Academy Champion for Safeguarding who will monitor and support the implementation of the Trust-wide Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- To ensure effective arrangements are in place for pupil/student representation at the academy

Information Management and Communication

The AMC's Information Management and Communication duties are:

- To ensure systems are in place at the academy (in line with the Trust's strategy) for effective communication with students/pupils, parents or carers, staff and the wider community including the support of a local parent teacher association (if established)





“Being an Academy Champion sounded appealing to me. The role suggested a chance to work alongside the school and be part of a wider community network. The idea of us all working toward the same goals and ethos, where all children’s education and wellbeing is paramount, is an exciting one.”

Fae Barnsdale, Academy Champion
with South Holland AMC

Academy Champion – Key Roles

Members of an AMC can have responsibilities to monitor a specific area of an academy’s work. These include:

Additional Funding Academy Champion

This position includes:

- Reporting back to the Trustees via the AMC on the academy’s additional funding
- Obtaining and becoming familiar with the academy’s additional funding strategy
- Knowing basic additional funding facts for the academy, such as how many pupils attract the premium, how this figure compares with other local and similar academies, and how the money is spent
- Challenging the allocation of the additional funding grant if there is no clear audit trail showing appropriate use of the resources
- Monitoring the impact of how the grant has been spent – for example, the effect on pupil participation or staff training

SEND Academy Champion

This position includes:

- Ensuring that the academy’s notional SEND budget is appropriately allocated to support pupils with SEND
- Obtaining and becoming familiar with the academy’s SEND Funding strategy
- Helping to raise awareness of SEND issues at AMC meetings
- Giving up-to-date information to the AMC on the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the academy
- Helping to review the academy’s policy on provision for pupils with SEND
- Building a good working relationship with the academy’s special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo)
- Updating the AMC on the outcomes of any sports competitions or activities with other academies/schools

Safeguarding Academy Champion

This position includes:

- Being familiar with National and LA guidance and policy, attending relevant training
- Championing safeguarding and child protection issues within the academy
- Encouraging other members of the AMC to develop their understanding of the AMC's child protection responsibilities

Health & Safety Academy Champion

This position includes:

- Monitoring that the academy's health and safety policy is being implemented effectively
- Monitoring that risk assessments have been conducted and are up to date
- Monitoring that accidents are being recorded properly
- Supporting the evaluation of the effectiveness of the relevant academy policies and analysing their impact on pupil wellbeing
- Working regularly with the Trust to monitor the academy's health and safety approach
- Completing feedback reports on health and safety checks carried out at the academy



Stakeholder Academy Champion

This position includes:

Monitoring that:

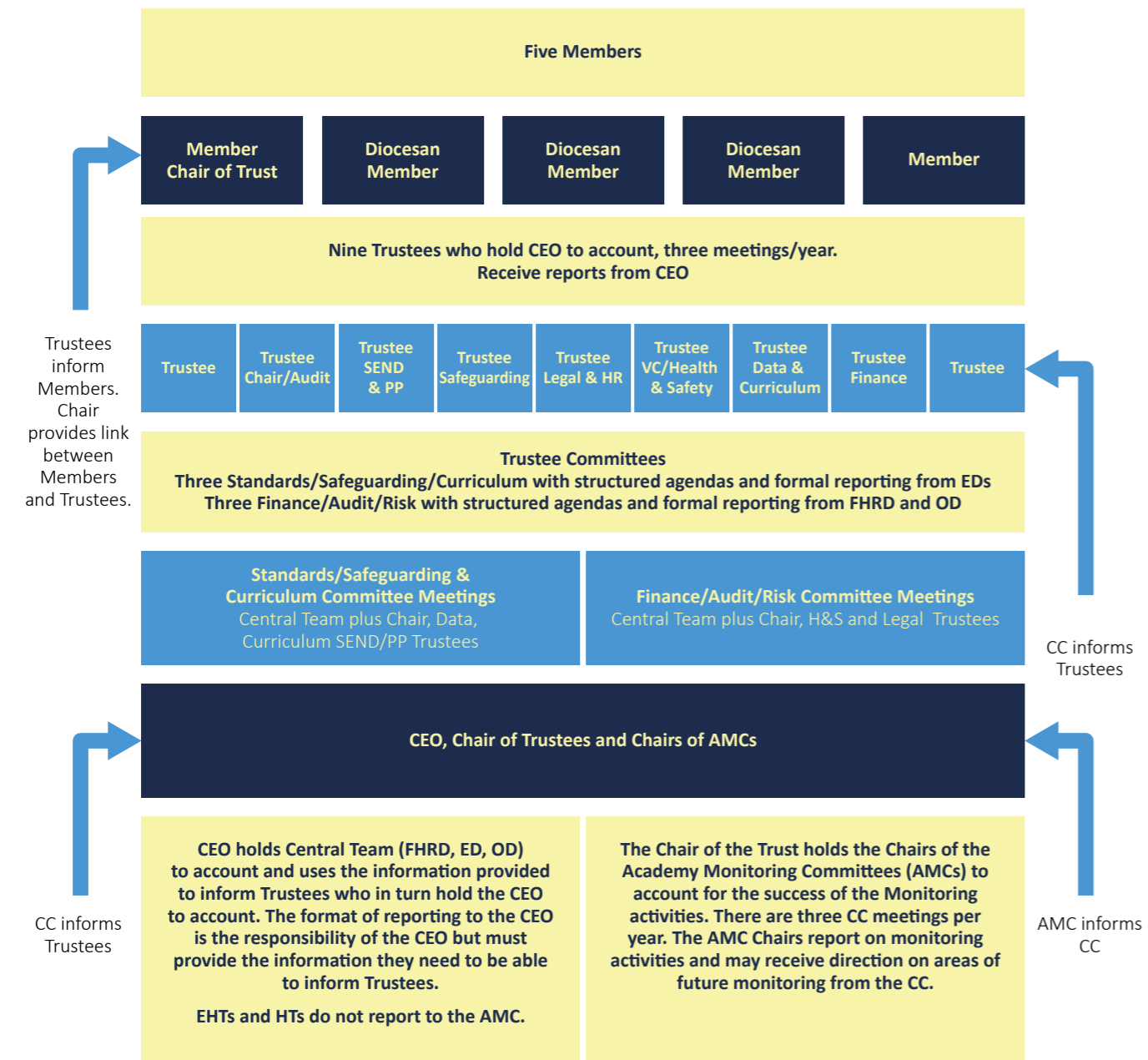
- The impact of the academy's vision and values is in alignment with the Trust aims and ambitions and staff morale.
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the academy can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress
- Pupils visit local businesses, churches and other faith centres
- Church academies observe Church School Distinctiveness, Collective Worship and engagement with the Diocese
- The academy encourages participation in local environmental projects. A display board could be used to publicise their achievements
- The website is up to date
- The academy advertises any before or after-school arrangements

Encouraging:

- Academies to create or join a campaign of local value
- Pupils to address the local parish council on matters that concern them
- Academies to work as a central part of the local community by collaborating, innovating and sharing benefits for pupils, staff and Academy Champions
- The academy to consider providing photographs for a community website
- The academy to consider creating a community website linked to the academy
- Academies to advertise local events

Governance Operations

We have a set structure to ensure a continuous and transparent flow of information across all groups, resulting in timely action or intervention for our academies.



To support this we have a programme of meetings set up throughout the year for all levels of Trust governance. These include:

Governance Meetings

AMC Briefing Meetings

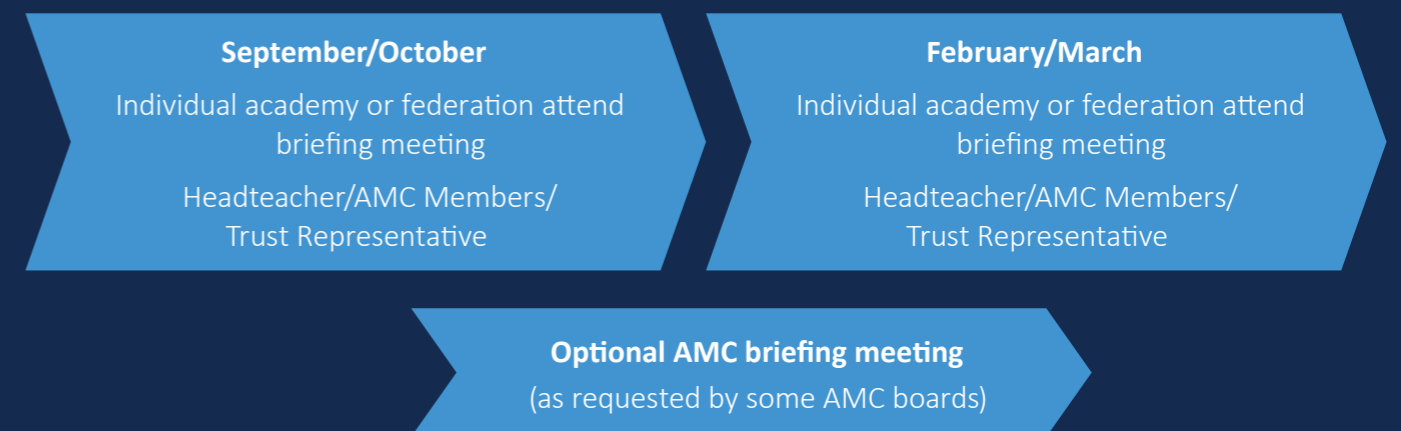
Two per year

- There are meetings for each AMC, attended by the Chair, the Academy Champions for that particular Committee, the Headteacher, an Education Director and the Governance Professional
- These meetings are held either in person or on Teams (or a combination of both) and are recorded; the minutes will be transcribed by the clerk
- The Head provides a presentation on the Academy Self Evaluation, School Development Plan, Data Performance and Church School Distinctiveness
- The Chairs update the Academy Champions on the progress of the monitoring activities that have been completed
- Any training needs or updates from the Trust or Central Team can also be shared at these meetings

Infinity Governance Meetings (IGM)

Three per year

- The IGM is attended by all Academy Champions, the Chair of Trustees, CEO, Education Directors, Operations Director, Teaching & Learning Lead and Governance Professional, via Microsoft Teams
- All meetings are recorded and the minutes are transcribed by the clerk



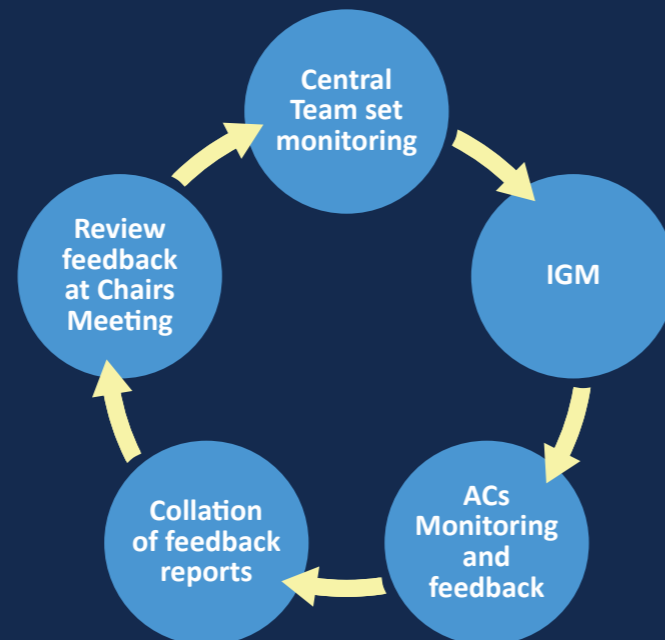
IGM Meeting Format

- CEO update on Infinity Academies Trust
- Chair of Trustees update on any governance issues (local and national)
- The group is then split into five breakout rooms to cover the key areas for monitoring for that term



- The Central Team lead the breakout rooms. They give a brief overview of their individual monitoring area and inform Academy Champions of the bespoke area they will be asked to monitor for the term. To assist the Academy Champions in answering their monitoring question(s), the Central Team will provide information and suggest supporting questions together with details of where to find the Sources of Evidence and which Key Staff to contact
- The IGM is then split into individual Academy Monitoring Committees. During these meetings, the Chairs will check that everyone is confident and able to complete their monitoring and will address any areas where an Academy Champion has not been allocated. It may be that some Academy Champions have to cover more than one area

- Academy Champions will then arrange their monitoring visits plus any 'general' visits that they are able to make. All visits must be pre-arranged in consultation with the Headteacher of the academy
- Following every visit the Academy Champion completes the relevant Monitoring feedback form which will be available in the Infinity Governance folder on Teams. The forms will be collated and the data shared with the Chairs for discussion at the Chairs' Meeting
- Data relating to each Academy Monitoring Committee will be shared at the next AMC meeting



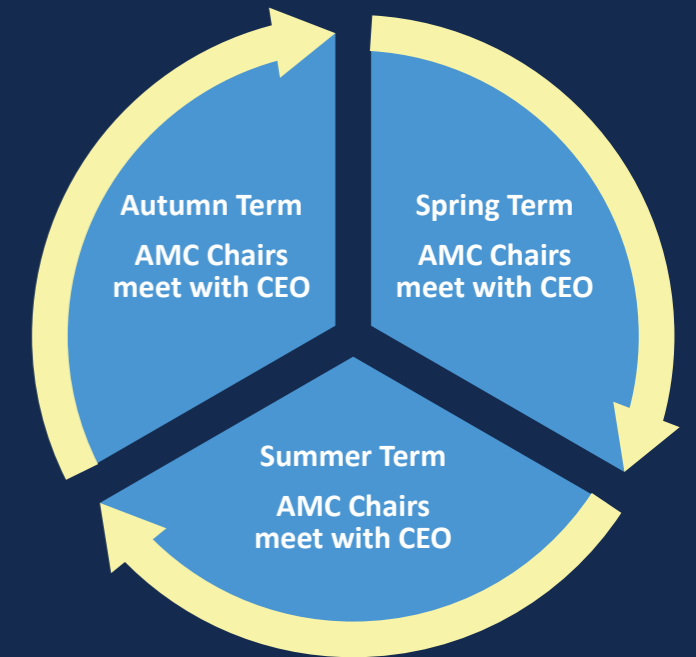
Chairs Committee

These meetings are attended by all Chairs from the individual AMCs.

The aim of the meeting is to:

- Review the monitoring undertaken by their individual AMC member for the particular area of responsibility
- Formulate any matters for further follow up by the Central Team and to feed into the next schedule of monitoring if required

The Chairs will regularly complete a wellbeing check with their Headteacher.



“The Infinity governance model allows insight on the key areas of performance for schools using a multidisciplinary strategy. Academy Champion monitoring provides a visitor’s/stakeholder’s view of vital areas necessary to maintain safety and wellbeing for all while the central monitoring team approach the same significant factors from a different viewpoint. Together the findings of the visits provide the Trustees with collaborated, essential information on individual school performance.”

-Hayley Gatens, Chair of East Lindsey AMC

About Infinity Academies Trust

Infinity Academies Trust is a growing Multi-Academy Trust. As a deeply Christian Church Trust aiming to serve the common good, we enable both Church and Community schools to flourish.

All our children need and deserve schools with loving cultures, an aspirational curriculum and inspiring provision. We provide children with the skills, knowledge and experiences to thrive academically, socially and spiritually so that they are prepared for a future full of opportunity.

With Jesus' promise of life in all its fullness we strive every day to ensure our children know they are valued, understood, supported and loved. We share their hopes and aspirations and provide a well-rounded education that celebrates success.

The future our children are going into is increasingly uncertain, and we need to enable them to become adaptable, resilient, confident, tolerant and highly literate individuals both for their lives today and tomorrow.





Infinity Academies Trust

**Infinity Academies Trust
Woad Farm Road
Boston
Lincolnshire
PE21 0EF**

Tel: 01205 345101
Email: enquiries@infinityacademies.co.uk
www.infinityacademies.co.uk