



# Becoming a Governor

A guide for potential governors



**Dominic Wall**  
Chair of Trustees

## Welcome to The Pinnacle Learning Trust

We are an organisation committed to developing and promoting the welfare of the young people within our academies. As a governor you will play an important role in ensuring the quality of education we deliver on a daily basis. Through challenge and support to the principal you will help maintain the high standards we expect.

When we created The Pinnacle Learning Trust we wanted to ensure that each of our academies benefitted from high quality leadership. This included an approach to governance which recognised that each of our local governing bodies (LGBs) had a critical role in delivering the quality of education and the transformational opportunities our children and young people should expect.

We fully appreciate the commitment this entails - to bring your experience, knowledge and time to help the next generation. We will support you with training and development opportunities and we will want to hear from you about your experience as a governor and any changes we can make to improve the overall quality of our education service.

Dominic Wall



**Nick Lowry**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Welcome from the CEO

A warm welcome to The Pinnacle Learning Trust. We recognise what a commitment it is to consider becoming a governor. Our aim is to ensure the experience of being a governor is both enjoyable and rewarding for all governors, in addition to you providing support and challenge for colleagues working for our trust, and thereby benefitting our staff and students.

We are determined to make a positive difference to the lives and life chances of our children and young people, providing excellent teaching, learning and support for all. We are also committed to being a great place to work, and we strive to ensure our staff team is well-supported and offered a wide range of professional development opportunities which enable them to excel and to progress in their careers. Our governors play a vital role in supporting us and holding us to account in making these things happen. If you feel you could play a role in the invaluable work our local governing bodies do in helping us to achieve these aims, we would love to hear from you.

Strong and effective governance is very important to us. Our trust currently serves schools and colleges in areas facing significant disadvantage. We are determined to ensure that our children and young people have opportunities to achieve great things and progress to positive careers, leading fulfilling lives.

Our governors are held in high regard and their input is significant, requiring a commitment to prepare for and attend meetings, in addition to more informal contact and the opportunity to make a positive difference. I look forward to hearing from you and potentially working with you to help support and improve the lives of the young people we serve.

Nick Lowry



**Susie Fraser**  
Principal

## Welcome from the Principal

The Hathershaw College has a proud, long-standing reputation of being at the heart of our local community. We are defined by a simple commitment: doing the right thing for our students, supporting our families, and collaborating with our partners to create a brighter future for Oldham.

As a key member of The Pinnacle Learning Trust, we benefit from a robust support network that allows us to focus entirely on our core mission: providing an exceptional education for our children and young people.

Governance at Hathershaw is not just about oversight; it is about partnership. Our Local Governing Body (LGB) and trustees provide the vital support and challenge that keeps us focussed. They hold us to account while encouraging us to think differently and act strategically.

We greatly value the expertise and dedication our governors bring to the table. By joining our LGB, you aren't just attending meetings; you are making a tangible difference in the lives of young people and further cementing Hathershaw's place at the center of our community.

We look forward to welcoming you to the team.

Susie Fraser



**Louise Astbury**  
Interim Chair of Governors

## Welcome from the Chair

Becoming a governor at The Hathershaw College is an incredibly rewarding experience, offering the chance to make a real difference in the lives of our students and the wider community.

As Chair of Governors, I've seen firsthand the positive impact a dedicated and skilled local governing body can have on a school. We are looking for individuals who are passionate about education, committed to our values, and possess the skills and experience to challenge and support the school leadership team.

Whether you have a background in business, finance, education, or simply a desire to contribute to your community, we encourage you to consider joining us. You will be part of a team that is dedicated to ensuring every student at The Hathershaw College has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Louise Astbury

Belong  
Inspire  
Challenge  
Celebrate  
Belong  
Inspire  
Challenge  
Celebrate



## Our Vision is to:

- Ensure that all students make outstanding progress irrespective of starting points that are often significantly lower than the national average, and those facing disadvantage are lifted from educational and social poverty.
- Establish a culture of high expectations, aspirations and optimism in a borough of high deprivation, unemployment and levels of progression to higher education that are below the national average.
- Provide students with a curriculum that is ambitious offering breadth and depth with an ability to study as many subjects as possible for as long as possible, with an appropriate balance between academic and vocational subjects to inspire and accelerate progress for an intake that is often significantly lower than the national average.
- Develop independent and self-regulated learners who are confident and resilient.
- Rapidly improve reading proficiency in order to mitigate against low levels of literacy on entry, high proportions of EAL students and a lack of access to books in the community.
- Ensure students stay physically and mentally healthy in a community where 1 in 10 children and young people are affected by mental health problems and adults have lower than national life expectancy.
- Deliver a curriculum that is rich in spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences, that promotes British values and celebrates the rich diversity of our multi-cultural school community by teaching young people to have tolerance for all faiths and cultures, and those whose characteristics are protected by law.
- Develop lifelong learners who are adaptable and are able to transfer their skills in order to be employed in occupations or professions which provide opportunities for progression in a 21st Century global economy.

## The Pinnacle Learning Trust Values

Underpinning our daily activities are our key values:

**Belong • Inspire • Challenge • Celebrate**

We aim to:

- **Celebrate children and young peoples' uniqueness** and inspire each one to flourish and become responsible, successful citizens who contribute positively to their communities and wider society.
- **Offer exceptional learning environments** which allow our colleagues, children and young people to thrive.
- **Develop outstanding leadership** at all levels.
- **Promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion** by nurturing a sense of belonging in our academies and our trust.

# Why Volunteer to govern?



Being involved in governance at any level can be both challenging and extremely rewarding and provides an opportunity to develop your own personal skills. As a governor you are able to:

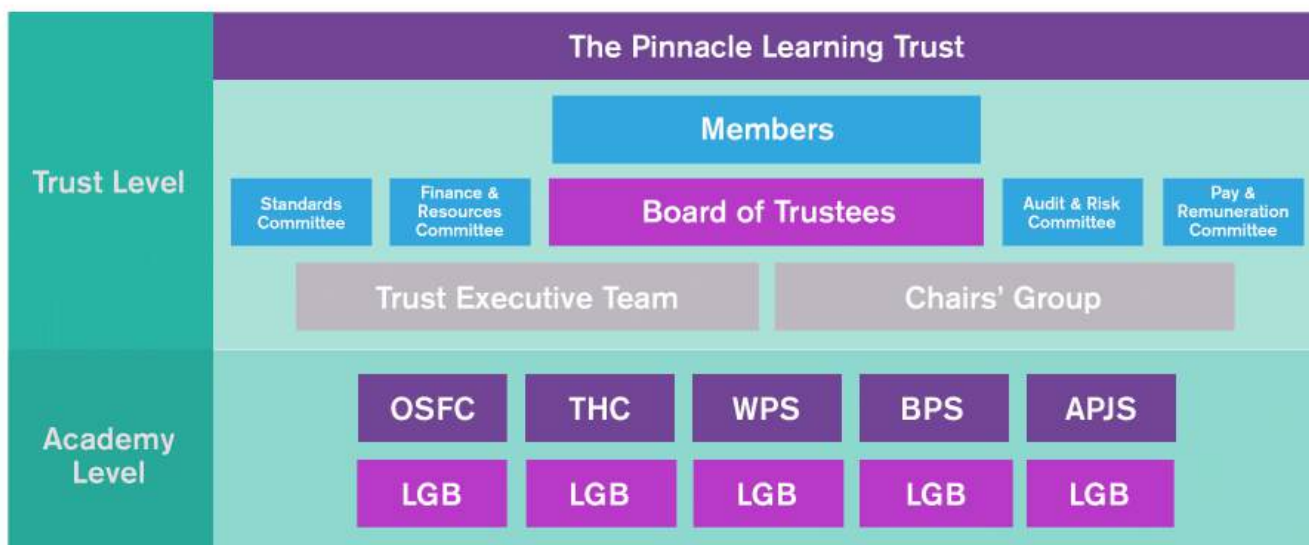
- ensure voices are heard at a strategic level.
- use your own unique experience of education, employment and life beyond college to inform conversations.
- have the opportunity to contribute to the academy's ongoing improvement journey.
- make a difference in your local community.
- support your professional development.
- build your confidence and skills by working with others as part of a leadership team.
- gain increased knowledge and experience of specific areas such as safeguarding, SEND provision and inclusion.
- contribute to the strategic direction of the school.
- make a huge difference to the life chances of our young people by driving improvement and striving to ensure they get the best possible education.

**Details of the current governors of The Hathershaw College can be accessed on our website [here](#).**

## Governance Structure

Hathershaw's LGB operates within the overall governance structure of the trust as demonstrated in the image below.

The different layers of governance all contribute significantly and work together to support the trust board, enabling our trustees to effectively manage multiple academies, all of which are able to maintain a strong sense of identity.



## **The trust board is the legal entity with collective accountability and responsibility for all academies within the trust.**

To support local decision making, each of the academies in our trust has its own LGB which is a committee of the trust board and an integral part of the trust's governance structure.

Our LGBs provide strategic level support to the operational leadership of our principals and their senior leadership teams. The LGB doesn't have statutory responsibilities in the way that the governing body in a standalone local authority establishment has, but it has responsibilities delegated to it by the trust board, which are set out in our trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Our LGBs are responsible for monitoring key performance indicators and acting as a critical friend to the principal. They also play a key role in representing the views of the academy's stakeholders and are responsible for promoting high standards and educational achievement.

In essence the purpose of the LGB is to:

- support and promote active engagement between the college and its wider community.
- offer appropriate challenge and support to the principal to ensure that the college meets the needs of the pupils and families it serves.
- develop an understanding of the college's progress, performance and outcomes in order to assure the trust board and other stakeholders and the public that it is providing high quality, effective and efficient education.
- retain a local focus on accountability.
- provide challenge and support to the trust board and central team.

Our trust's academies serve families from the full spectrum of backgrounds. Many are deemed disadvantaged with a high proportion of children and families which speak English as an additional language. Our trust is built upon a shared belief that all young people in Oldham and surrounding areas should have access to excellent educational provision and our governors help us to achieve this.

# Eligibility

LGB members must meet the eligibility criteria for academy governors. Any governor must be at least 18 years old and not be disqualified according to Charity Commission guidelines. These include unspent convictions for specific offences, as well as financial and non-financial legal reasons.

Any appointment will be subject to various recruitment checks, including a criminal records DBS check and a section 128 check to ensure an appointee is not prohibited or restricted from taking part in the management of a school.

## What does the role involve?

### Time commitment

The LGB will meet at least four times a year. Governors will need to be available for approximately 6-8 hours per half term depending on the roles taken on. Many employers give time off to conduct governing duties so this may be something to check if you are in employment and considering the role.

### Meetings

Meetings generally last two hours and it would be expected that LGB members would have read papers and be prepared to engage fully in the meetings (about the same length of time as the meeting generally). All meetings are now held in person, unless there is a good reason to move the meeting online. The chair will work with the LGB and leaders to decide whether this is necessary. We feel it is important to have face-to-face meetings to enable LGB members to meet each other and build stronger relationships with key stakeholders.

### Link roles

LGB members may be asked to take on a specialist link role e.g. SEND, safeguarding, or health and safety. Taking on this role brings additional expectations around making link visits to scrutinise practice within the school and working with leaders to consider how to progress. Appropriate training will be provided.



## School visits

LGB members are also expected to be visible ambassadors for the school within the community and time allowing, will periodically be asked to attend school events to get to know staff and leaders.

## Ad-hoc panels

LGB members can from time to time be asked to participate on trust wide ad-hoc panels (conflicts of interest notwithstanding) which include complaints, exclusions and disciplinary panels. These panel sessions can last up to two hours and can be in person or online. No prior experience is required to take part and training will be provided.

## Committing to a code of conduct

LGB members are expected to commit to our code of conduct. This outlines the ethos of governance within the trust including:

- The importance of abiding by the seven principles of public life as set out by Lord Nolan: selflessness; accountability; integrity; objectivity; openness; honesty; and leadership.
- How those governing fulfil their role and responsibilities.
- The expected commitment to the role.
- The importance of building and maintaining relationships and respecting confidentiality.

## Committing to training

LGB members bring significant experience to the table and the local knowledge, insight, commitment and leadership they provide on an on-going basis is hugely valuable. To strengthen the role of LGB members and their ability to lead the school, all are asked to participate in mandatory training sessions and other bespoke developmental sessions appropriate to their induction and their individual role.

Mandatory training includes:

- Safeguarding
- Prevent
- GDPR
- Cyber security



## We look forward to hearing from you!

“ I had never thought about being a governor before, but the way it was explained to me I felt very eager to apply for the role. It was exciting to take part in the first meeting and see the dedication from everyone attending. The students, teachers and all the staff were so attentive and eager to go through everything in detail. I felt so welcomed and I felt that I was able to ask questions confidently. I always felt that everyone was valued and the environment was always very supportive. ”

**(Former Parent Governor)**



**Belong**  
Inspire  
Challenge  
**Celebrate**





**The Hathershaw College**

Bellfield Ave,  
Oldham. OL8 3EP

0161 770 8555

mail@hathershaw.org.uk



PROUD  
TO BE  
PART OF

