ACET
Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
Shaping **Learning**

Finance and People Committee Terms of Reference

DATE: September 2026
POLICY LEAD: Director of Governance Risk & Compliance
APPROVED BY: Trustees
CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE: To be approved at the first meeting

DOCUMENT CONTROL		
Policy Level	Trust	
Approved By	Trustees	
Approval Date	October 2026	
This policy remains valid until it is reviewed and replaced; it does not expire by date alone. Policies are reviewed annually, or sooner if required by statutory or legislative changes, in line with best practice		
Policy Lead / Author	Director of Governance Risk and Compliance	
Version Number	***Date Issued***	***Updated Information***
Please complete this section with a brief summary of the changes you have made or if this is a full re-write / new policy. The contents of this version control box will be shared with trustees / the LGB as part of the approval process – Thank you		
V2	September 2026	Updated in line with ATH and ATGG 2026

PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITIES	The Committee provides strategic scrutiny and assurance in relation to the Trust's financial sustainability, workforce strategy, staffing affordability, remuneration framework and resource deployment. The Committee makes recommendations to the Trust Board and monitors implementation of Board-approved strategies. **The committee will monitor, evaluate and report on:** **Finance** 1. review an annual budget, ensuring resources are allocated in line with the trust's strategic priorities and curriculum plans 2. Scrutinise and recommend the annual budget to the trust Board for approval 3. Review and recommend approval of a realistic three-year financial plan, taking into account the Trust's vision, known risks and opportunities 4. receive the trust's management accounts in order to monitor the trust's cash position and income and expenditure against the approved budget 5. review pupil number estimates (that underpin revenue projections) termly 6. report back to each meeting of the trust board, alerting them to potential problems and significant variations to the approved budget at the earliest opportunity 7. ensure that the trust board's approach to pay and benefits is transparent, proportionate and justifiable 8. ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for staff pay increments 9. review and recommend approval to the Trust Board any adjustments to the trust's approved budget (subject to the scheme of delegation) 10. Review significant expenditure, procurement activity and budget virements, ensuring compliance with the Financial Scheme of Delegation and making recommendations to the Trust Board where required 11. undertake detailed scrutiny and recommend approval of the school resource management self-assessment checklist annually 12. ensure that the trust's financial procedures are complied with 13. ensure that the trust follows basic procurement rules and achieves best value for money when acquiring goods and services 14. Monitor reserves management, including ensuring a clear and sustainable plan for the use and replenishment of reserves Suggested from NGA 15. Undertake detailed scrutiny of the Trust Scheme of Financial Delegation and recommend approval, amendment or rejection to the Trust Board 16. Monitor the effectiveness and impact of pupil premium and other designated funding streams. 17. Monitor financial sustainability, staffing affordability and reserves sufficiency to support delivery of the Trust Strategic Plan **People** 1. review the staffing structure of the trust, ensuring that it meets the requirements of the trust development plan, the curriculum and is affordable 2. review staff work-life balance, working conditions and wellbeing, including monitoring staff absence rates 3. ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) comply with equality legislation and safer recruitment practice 4. monitor the provision of staff training and CPDL, ensuring sufficient budget is allocated 5. Set, review and monitor progress against the Trust Staffing Strategy. 6. Monitor workforce data including staff turnover, recruitment, retention and attendance trends. 7. Review staff survey outcomes and evaluate the impact of actions taken in response.

	8. Set and review the Trust's Equality Objectives and monitor progress against them. 9. Scrutinise gender pay gap and other workforce equality data and make recommendations to the Board to address identified inequalities. 10. Monitor the effectiveness and impact of staff training and professional development programmes. 11. Review the effectiveness of the Trust's whistleblowing policy and make recommendations for improvement.
POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE	The committee will review and ratify the following ACET policies - Finance Policies (Reserves, Charging and Remissions, Gifts and Hospitality, Investment) - HR Policies (Equality Objectives, Disciplinary, Grievance, Staff Conduct/ Code of Conduct Capability, Modern Slavery Statement & Gender Pay Gap Report) - Whistleblowing
MEMBERSHIP	Members of the committee are appointed annually. The Chair of the Trust Board cannot be Chair of this committee. The Board shall ensure that the Committee collectively possesses sufficient expertise in finance, workforce planning, remuneration, organisational development and resource management to discharge its responsibilities effectively. At least one member should possess significant recent financial experience. Up to three external co-opted members may also be appointed who are not members of the Board. The Board may not co-opt an employee of the Academy Trust if the result would be that the number of committee members who are employees of the Trust (including the CEO) would exceed one third of the Committee. Members of the Executive Team may be in attendance and shall attend meetings as and when required by the Chair. Staff employed by the Trust should not be members of the Finance and People Committee. The Chief Finance Officer and other members of the Trust's staff may be invited to attend but will have no voting rights. the Accounting Officer (CEO) may also be invited to attend meetings, in order to provide information and participate in discussions. The Finance and People Committee is responsible to the Board. The Committee's Terms of Reference are adopted by the Board and may only be amended with the approval of the Board. The Chair and Vice Chair of the committee will be elected annually by the Committee. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the vice chair shall act as Chair for the purpose of the meeting. Members of the Executive Team may be in attendance and shall attend meetings as and when required by the Chair.
QUORUM	Subject to Article 119, the quorum for a meeting of the Trustees, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be any **three** Trustees, or where greater, any one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of Trustees holding office at the date of the meeting, who are in each case present at the meeting and entitled to vote on the matters to be resolved. Decisions to be made at meetings of the Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of eligible members present and voting. Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote. If a member of the Committee withdraws from the meeting due to a conflict (or potential conflict) of interests, the meeting must still be quorate in order for a vote to be conducted.

MEETINGS	The Governance Leader shall be the Clerk to the Committee. However, the Governance Leader can be required to withdraw from that part of any meeting at which their remuneration (or any other matter relating to the Clerk within the remit of the Committee) is to be discussed. In these circumstances, one of the Committee members will act as a temporary Clerk to minute the proceedings of the Committee, or a deputy may attend. The agenda for meetings will be agreed in advance by the Chair of the Committee and papers will be circulated to members and attendees at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting. Minutes of meetings will be taken and will be submitted in the next scheduled meeting of the Board, once approved in draft by the Chair of the committee. The committee will meet at least once per term. The Chair or any two members may call an additional meeting. All meetings will have a hybrid function.