



Local Advisory Board

Information for prospective members

June 2025

Eden Academy Trust
Young people at the core of all we do





Thank you for your interest in joining the Local Advisory Board at one of our schools.

At Eden we specialise in meeting the educational needs of children and young adults with a range of learning disabilities including those who are autistic and those who have physical or sensory needs.

We are enormously proud of our Trust, its schools, and central and operational services, and look forward to sharing more information about what we do and our hopes and aspirations for the future.

Through careful and deliberate growth, the Trust has developed a family of schools that collaborate to integrate the best educational and therapeutic practices. Our team approach ensures we work closely with families and carers to identify and meet all the needs of our pupils. All our team members place children at the heart of everything it does, a place where parents and carers can look to the future with optimism and confidence and where staff feel their skills and their careers are developed like nowhere else.

We hope that this information pack will give you an insight into the Trust and the role of the Local Advisory Boards, but we also recommend that you familiarise yourself with the school and Trust websites.

You may be wondering what joining the LAB involves. Fundamentally it is about supporting the school and the Head, and helping our key stakeholders (parents, staff and the local community) to have an involvement in the school, and the Eden Academy Trust more widely. Above all else we are looking people who share our passion about special educational needs and ensuring that we deliver the best possible provision for our children and young people, have the necessary skills to complement those of the other LAB members, and the capacity to support the work of the LAB. If this sounds like you, we would very much like to hear from you.

As a Trust, we are committed to ensuring that our governance structures reflect the school communities we serve and support, and the Board of Trustees and Members are working hard to fulfil our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) responsibilities

Keith Holroyd – Head of Governance, Policy & Compliance

Our Trust Values



Inclusion

– a voice for everyone and everyone is heard

Focus

– children and young people at the core of all we do

Collaboration

– together we are stronger

Quality

– excellence through innovation, creativity and continuous improvement

Integrity

– transparency and fairness in all we do

Our Trust at a glance

11

Schools, School Satellites and
Specialist Educational Settings

600+

Staff

800+

Pupils

10+

Local Authorities we support

2012

Eden Academy Trust Founded

50+

Languages spoken by pupils and
their families

1

free school opened since 2015
3 more in pre-opening

1

Northern region

1

Southern region with 2 clusters

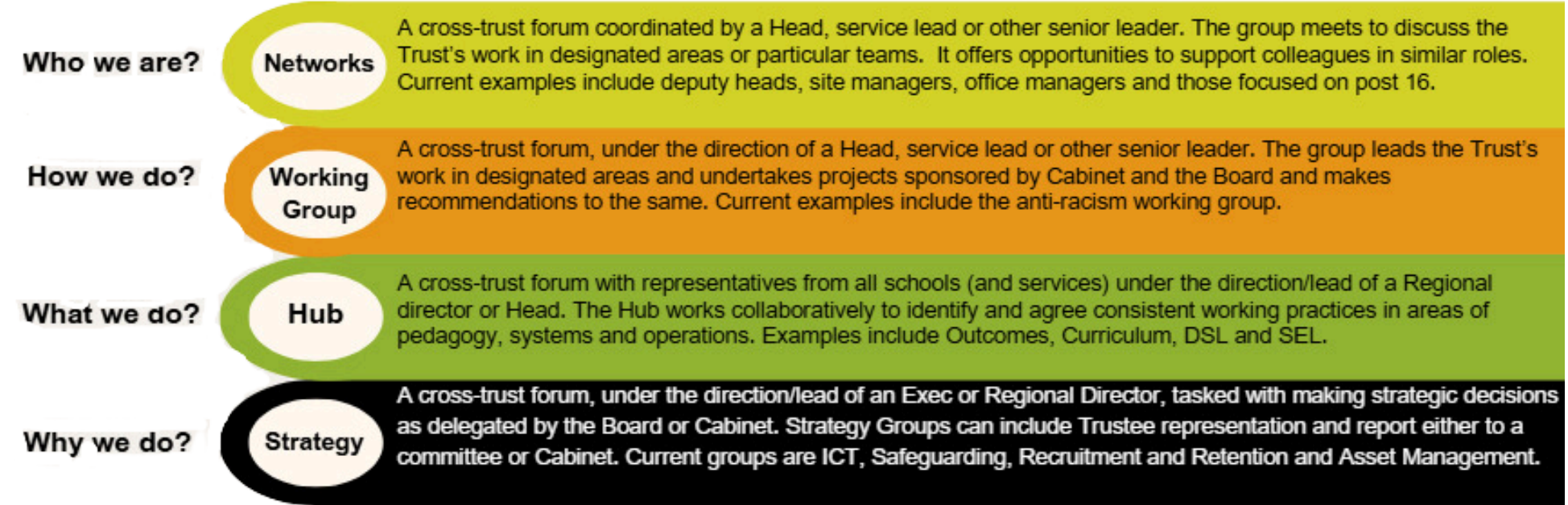
Our Team

Support and Challenge

- Members** The Members have ultimate control over the Eden Academy Trust.
- Trustees** The Trustees offer support, constructive advice and help to the CEO, Senior Leadership team and School Heads where needed, but will also challenge, ask questions and seek information to find the best solution for the Trust..
- Cabinet** Responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the Trust
- School Leadership Teams** Responsible for the operational day-to-day running of the schools and to be the first point of contact for pupils, staff and parents.
- LABs** Each school’s Local Advisory Board (LAB) is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees.
- School based professionals** Everyone from teachers, assistants, therapists, administrative, support staff and pastoral carers, are all dedicated to the education of the children and young adults in their school.
- Central services** We have a number of central services across all schools to ensure consistency and best practice

Collaboration

We value the expertise within each of our schools and endeavour to ensure purposeful opportunities for collaboration and joint working across EAT to ensure excellence for our pupils and staff.



Why should I join a LAB?

It is a chance to use your skills and experience alongside a dedicated team of professionals and volunteers delivering excellent outcomes for our children and young people. It is also an opportunity to serve your community and give back a little. When we asked them here is what some of our LAB members said:

I became a LAB member because I felt like I didn't know anything about my child's educational world. Joining the group and sitting in meetings helped me understand how the school works for her, what goes into thinking about her curriculum and helped me get to know other parents and teachers more.

It has been immensely helpful to be able to participate in initiatives organised by the school to understand the challenges, and how we can work together as a community (staff, parents, LAB) to get the best results for our children.

I welcomed the opportunity of becoming a parent member of the LAB because I felt it was really important for parents to be a voice for all of the other parents at their school.

I wanted to be a parent member of the LAB so that I could be more involved with the school and better understand the changes taking place. As well as being able to give feedback, it also gives an opportunity to ask questions.

“I joined LAB because I believe that the family is the most important tool for the future of our children and I think we should integrate even more. I have found that the best way for me to be involved in my son's education, to learn first-hand, to understand the decisions and to leave my ideas as a family, is to be a member of LAB.”

What does it mean to be a LAB Member?

Each school's Local Advisory Board (LAB) is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees. LABs consist of parents, staff and community representatives who provide advice and support to help each school achieve its aims.

The LAB is not a legal entity in its own right; legal accountability for all aspects of the school lies with the Trustees including finance, personnel and premises, and the educational performance of the school.

The LAB is designed to have a key and crucial role in helping key stakeholders to get involved in the life of the school and the Trust, promoting stakeholder engagement, particularly with parents and carers, and contributing to the school's development.

Individual members of each school LAB can also be invited to be part of other Board of Trustees Committees.

LABs generally meet four times a year, but may also set up their own groups to focus on specific areas which might meet more frequently and include regular visits to the school.



What does it mean to be a LAB Member?

Responsibilities

LAB members:

- Have the wellbeing of the school, its children and staff as their prime consideration, using their knowledge, skills and interests for the school's benefit.
- Support the school in developing parental engagement through participation in school events and other activities and using their knowledge of the local and wider community to inform the work of the LAB.
- Have a good knowledge of the school, understanding its strengths and weaknesses.
- Support and advise the Head, contributing to the formation of the school's development plan and actively support its delivery.
- Actively engage in the development of plans for improving local infrastructure, resourcing and asset management, promoting and supporting the school's fundraising activities.
- Act as panel members on complaints panels, disciplinary panels, appeals panels, grievance panels and at contract reviews to the levels identified in the scheme of delegation
- Undertake any tasks delegated to them by the Board of Trustees

Requirements

LAB members:

- Comply with and support the Trust's safeguarding and child protection arrangements including an enhanced DBS and barred list checks and annual safeguarding training
- Comply with the Trust's Governance Code of Conduct including ensuring any business or pecuniary interests are declared as required and withdraw from meetings as appropriate
- Maintain confidentiality

Commitment

- Four scheduled meetings per year, of between 1 & 2 hours each. We understand that attending LAB meetings in person can be difficult so we always offer the opportunity to join these remotely.
- Occasional visits to the school to ensure you have a good understanding of the school
- Occasional additional meetings to support aspects of the school's development plan.

Training and support

We aim to support all members of our governance community, including LAB members, with a range of training and support opportunities.

We have a dedicated pathway as part of our staff professional development offer. Our universal offer is a bank of recorded bite-sized sessions and suggested reading including: a governance overview, specialist school funding and finance arrangements, school improvement, panels, and questioning techniques for LABs. They will be regularly updated to reflect school and Trust priorities.

Schools and settings across the Trust will provide and access professional learning opportunities bespoke to their priorities and locality. Induction visits and opportunities to join INSET training where appropriate are available to LAB members.

As a Trust have membership of various sector and governance bodies including The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) and Governor Hub, with LAB members benefitting from regular updates and briefings.



Applying

If you align with our values and you are ready to make a difference, we would love to hear from you.

Further information about the work and schools within The Eden Academy Trust is available via our website theedenacademy.co.uk.

If you would like to learn more about how our Local Advisory Boards support our schools and the Board of Trustees, then please either contact the Head at your preferred/local/child's school, or Keith Holroyd, our Head of Governance.

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Branthwaite Academy: admin@branthwaiteacademy.co.uk

George Hastwell School: admin@georgehastwell.org.uk

Grangewood School: info@grangewoodschool.co.uk

Hexham Priory School: schooladmin@hexhampriory.co.uk

James Rennie School: adminoffice@jamesrennie.cumbria.sch.uk

Moorcroft School: info@moorcroftschool.co.uk

Pentland Field School: info@pentlandfieldschool.co.uk

