

**GROWTH PAPER**  
**March 2023**

**Governance  
Offer**

**School  
Improvement Offer**

**Operational  
Delivery Offer**

**Finance  
Delivery Offer**

**Why do we ensure Governance support and challenge?**

*“So that trusts continue to be responsive to parents and local communities, all trusts should have local governance arrangements for their schools”*

*‘Opportunity For All’, Department for Education, March 2022*

GHAT’s vision has always included effective governance, including local governance. We believe that, in strong trusts, each Local Governing Body (LGB) adds value as it can focus on one school, one community and play a key role in understanding the needs and maintaining a school’s identity within the trust. As the trust grows, these aspects become even more important for overall trust strategic governance.

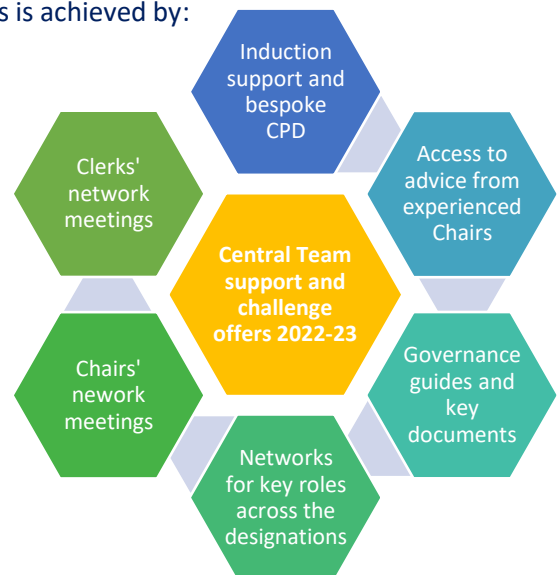
GHAT believes that the key benefits offered by LGBs are:

- **Enhanced accountability:** they form the bridge between the Trust Board and its schools as they are ‘the eyes and ears’ of the Trust Board at school level
- **Visible governance:** they are a powerful advocate for the Trust’s vision and values at the local level, helping to retain active engagement with the school and the wider community
- **Accountable governance:** they keep the Trust answerable to its stakeholders, providing a mechanism for the Trust to listen to parents, staff, pupils and others in the community
- **Checks and balances:** they provide a valuable source of challenge to the Trust Board and the central team, essential to good governance and leadership

All governors and trustees have support and CPD available to ensure they are up-to-date with current guidance/ legislation and can challenge and support leaders effectively. We ensure all involved are given the right information in a consistent format to feel confident that they know their school well – the strengths and areas for development.

Currently, many schools nationally are struggling to fill governor roles and ensure governors have the knowledge and understanding to become effective in their duties. The GHAT Governance team works with all our academies, designation leaders and trustees, in a supportive way, to achieve the appropriate level of challenge and support whilst continuing to focus on the priority of delivering excellent teaching and learning. This is achieved by:

- Clear LGB Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation
- Continually monitoring and supporting our LGBs, we ensure we analyse the needs of governance at Trust level and at school/ designation level.
- Offering tailored support for each academy/ designation
- Bespoke support for each academy whether it be an existing academy, a new academy to the MAT, one with an established governing body or one with an Interim Executive Board
- A common format for meetings, agendas and reports to ensure a consistent approach
- Membership for all governors to the [NGA](#). This ensures access to high quality support, training, networking and sector leading publications.



**What is our Governance offer?**

- Consistent procedures for reporting, agendas etc. to ensure information sharing and full accountability
- Support for Principals’ reports to LGBs to ensure key information is presented appropriately and consistently
- Links between LGBs and the MAT board – reporting LGB meeting outcomes to the board and any key questions/ concerns that have arisen; these are responded to with feedback/answers from the MAT board to LGBs
- Monthly Leadership Newsletters with updates and actions required around LGBs / Trust for all senior leaders
- Attendance of a Trustee and Director of Governance at an LGB meeting during the year
- Regular network meetings for LGB Chairs, named governors and clerks
- Induction support for new governors
- Bespoke LGB Governance training where required.

### **Who provides our governance offer?**

We have an experienced central MAT Governance team, in summary:

- Our Chief Operations Officer ensures overall compliance with all DfE governance requirements
- A Governance Professional oversees all aspects of governance effectiveness within the Trust, ensuring Members and Trustees meets all statutory and regulatory requirements
- A dedicated Director of Governance for leadership support who ensures that governance adheres to good practice
- A very experienced Trust Board Chair, who is on national groups to keep up to date with changing legislation and improving practice – over 20 years' experience of chairing a variety of primary and secondary academies
- A range of skilled and experienced Members, Trustees and Governors covering primary and secondary leadership, finance, legal, procurement, business, marketing and health
- Access to funded support from the National Governance Association, including its full CPD offer
- Access to the Confederation of School Trusts and its regular remote meetings
- Networking opportunities across the Trust.

### **When is our governance offer provided?**

A calendar of events and meetings is designed annually to align with the requirements of the reporting schedule of academies, local governing bodies (LGBs) and the Trust Board:

- Half-termly LGB meetings and Trust Board meetings plus an annual Members' AGM
- Trust Board Committee meetings – Termly Finance & Premises Committee and Standards Committee
- Regular network meetings for sharing practice, where people can learn with and from each other:
  - Termly meeting of LGB Chairs with CEO, Director of Governance and Trust Chair
  - Annual meetings of named Trustee with named Governors – Safeguarding, SEND and Pupil Premium
  - Termly meeting of LGB Clerks

### **Where is our governance offer provided?**

We are able to support all our academies on their own sites as well as group attendance at our Trust offices.

The **impact** and **track record** of our governance offer for all our schools as of the academic year 2022-23 has helped support their journeys, ensuring that now all Trust schools are at least Ofsted good or better.

Carlinghow Academy – Ofsted Inadequate 2018 (joined GHAT 2019-20) to Good, May 2022. *“The chief executive officer and governing body have been key partners in reshaping the strategic direction of the school. The executive leadership team knows the school well. It has worked alongside school leaders to drive rapid, sustainable improvements in school. Trustees perform the required statutory duties with care. They hold senior leaders to account. Teachers are well supported. They express their gratitude at being part of this strong staff team.”*

The Greetland Academy – Ofsted Outstanding, October 2021 – *“Support from the trust has been highly effective. Trust leaders work closely with the leadership team to make the school even better. Staff told inspectors that leaders, including governors, are mindful of their well-being and workload. They feel well supported by leaders”*

West Vale Academy – Ofsted Inadequate 2017 (joined GHAT 2018-19) to Good June 2022 – *“Trustees and governors have taken effective action to ensure a rapid pace of school improvement. The interim principal, appointed by the trustees, is leading an effective senior leadership team. Pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Governors are already working with the incoming principal to ensure that this improvement momentum is sustained seamlessly from September onwards.”*