



Governance Framework



Document History

Version	Comments/Amendments	Name	Date
1	First Issue	Chris Kelly	22/04/2025

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1. Governance Principles and Legal Status

- Oaktree Education Services operates as a statutory corporation under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.
- The corporation exists to advance education and is accountable to the Department for Education as the principal regulator.
- The board operates with internal-only governance: all governors are employed by Oaktree Education Services in roles outside the education provision. While not independent, the board is structured to provide appropriate scrutiny through role demarcation and clear responsibilities.

2. Board Structure and Membership

- The board comprises internal staff governors, including:
 - Chair of Governors
 - Governor for Safeguarding
 - Governor for Behaviour and Attitudes
 - Governor for Quality of Education
 - Governor for Compliance and HR
- No external governors are currently appointed. This internal model reflects organisational capacity but must be transparently documented in statutory returns and self-assessment documents.
- The board remains accountable for discharging all functions in line with charity law, FE governance codes and Ofsted expectations.
- All governors must complete enhanced DBS checks and meet the legal requirements under charity and education law.

3. Governor Role Descriptions

- Chair of Governors: Leads the board, sets governance expectations, and maintains communication with the Principal. Ensures effectiveness of governance functions and that statutory duties are met.
- Governor for Safeguarding: Provides strategic oversight of safeguarding policy, compliance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and supports the DSL in embedding safeguarding culture.
- Governor for Behaviour and Attitudes: Reviews behaviour policy, exclusion trends, attendance data and supports a culture of respect and resilience.
- Governor for Quality of Education: Monitors curriculum delivery, student outcomes, and the quality assurance cycle, including data on SEND learner progress.
- Governor for Compliance and HR: Oversees policies related to employment, safer recruitment, staff wellbeing, regulatory compliance and whistleblowing procedures.

4. Core Board Functions

The board remains responsible for:

- Setting and reviewing the college's vision, values and strategic priorities.
- Monitoring educational and operational performance.
- Ensuring compliance with statutory duties and governance code expectations.
- Approving key policies, including safeguarding, SEND, curriculum, health and safety, and HR.
- Managing conflicts of interest and maintaining accountability despite the non-independent structure.

5. Decision-Making and Accountability

- Decision-making is collegiate. Governors are expected to act in the best interests of the organisation's educational mission, not their employment roles.
- The board must minute all decisions, with a focus on transparency and risk mitigation where role overlap exists.
- The board retains responsibility for ensuring legal compliance, even where tasks are delegated to leadership or operational staff.

6. Training, Conduct and Review

- Governors must undertake annual training on:
 - Safeguarding and Prevent
 - Equality and diversity
 - Charity governance
 - SEND legal frameworks
- The board follows the Nolan Principles of Public Life and should maintain an up-to-date Code of Conduct.
- Annual self-assessments and regular peer-led reviews should be used to evaluate governance performance.
- While external governance reviews are not currently mandated, the board should consider commissioning one every 3 years in line with DfE guidance.

7. Stakeholder Engagement and Transparency

- The board must ensure that student voice and family engagement are reflected in strategic decisions.
- Although all governors are internal, efforts should be made to include impartial perspectives through stakeholder surveys, external advisors or targeted feedback mechanisms.
- Meeting minutes and impact statements should be published on the organisation's website or made available to stakeholders upon request.

8. Risk Management and Assurance

- The board must maintain and review a live risk register, ensuring that all categories of risk — including financial, reputational, safeguarding and educational — are monitored.
- The Governor for Compliance and HR leads on internal assurance processes and helps ensure that risk controls are enforced consistently.

9. Continuous Improvement

- Governors contribute to internal quality reviews and the self-assessment report (SAR).
- Regular strategy days and learning walks should be embedded into the governance calendar to support direct engagement with college life and students.
- Leadership reports to governors must include performance data, student outcomes, safeguarding logs, and any external feedback (e.g. Local Authority audits or Ofsted feedback).

10. Framework Review

- This policy will be reviewed **annually** (or sooner, if required by legislative changes or significant developments in best practice).
- The review process will involve **teaching staff, support staff, senior leaders, and governors**, alongside student representatives (where appropriate).

Approval and Signature

- **Principle of Head of College:**
Chris Kelly, 22/04/2025
- **Chair of Governors/Trust Board:**
Name, Signature, Date