

Bourne Education Trust risk management policy

Principles

Risk management is the process through which Bourne Education Trust methodically addresses the risks pertaining to its objectives and associated activities, ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated to those objectives so that they are achieved in the most effective way.

Effective risk management protects and adds value to the Trust, its schools and stakeholders through supporting the school's objectives by:

- Improving decision making, business planning and prioritisation by comprehensive and structured understanding of the wider business environment;
- Supporting more efficient allocation and use of resources within the school;
- Enhancing communication between schools and services;
- Protecting and enhancing school assets and image;
- Developing and supporting staff and the school's knowledge base;
- Helping to focus the internal audit plan.

The trustees of Bourne Education Trust have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishment and running of schools. This is largely exercised through strategic planning and the setting of policy. It is managed through business planning, monitoring of budgets, performance management, the setting of standards and the implementation of quality management processes. The trustees have the power to direct change where required.

The trustees have largely delegated authority for the running of each of its schools to a local governing committee (the "Local Governing Committee"), who in turn also fulfil a largely strategic role in the conduct of the school, further delegating authority to a headteacher and senior management team who are responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school on a day to day basis. The responsibilities of the local governing committee are set out in the Trust's "scheme of delegation", which has been put in place by the trustees.

Risk management must prioritise and protect:

- The safeguarding of high quality and effective education of the young people in the schools;
- The reputation and ethos of the Trust;
- The common good in terms of the interests of the families in the communities served by the schools and the pupils of the future as well as the collective interests of the family of schools run by the Trust;
- The scheme of delegation and the balance struck between central management and local responsibility.

The responsibilities of the trustees

It is the responsibility of the trustees to identify those risks which arise from academy status and memberships of a multi-academy trust and develop policies and procedures which mitigate these risks (taking into account the principles identified above). To mitigate financial risk, the trustees will require all academies to use approved banking arrangements, audit arrangements, financial management systems, and premises insurance and building surveyors. Rigorous safeguarding policies are also a requirement for all academies.

Beyond these areas the trustees manage risks common to all schools, set policy frameworks but seek not to impose specific control mechanisms for these risks as responsibility lies with the individual local governing committee. Delegated to the audit & risk committee, the trustees should receive compliance reports where required via its committee structure from the local governing committees (and declarations of non-compliance) and develop systems to support (having regard to the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity) individual schools to mitigate risk to the trustees and the Trust generally. In schools, these reports will take the form of a termly health and safety audit and action plan. These will be reviewed by the Trust's operations director and a summary provided termly to the resources committee.

It is through these common policy frameworks that the Trust embeds the right culture, ethos and operating model in its schools.

The board of trustees will monitor compliance of this policy through the work of the audit & risk committee and the resources committee. The audit & risk committee is responsible for keeping under review the effectiveness of the risk management, control and governance arrangements including insurance arrangements which includes recommending to the Trust board the risk management policy and the board assurance framework. The resources committee is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Trust's health & safety policies and statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will receive each term any significant health and safety matters. The resources committee will be supported by the work of the Trust's appointed health & safety advisor who carries out an annual audit at each school.

The responsibility of each local governing committee

It is the responsibility of each local governing committee to implement, monitor and verify such policies and procedures to facilitate compliance with the risks identified by the board. The governors should take such steps needed to meet their legal obligations including the requirements of the Department for Education (or any successor body) as they relate to the operation of the schools. The governors should provide resources to mitigate identified risks and declare any non-compliance to the trustees. The Trust will commission on a regular basis external verification of the internal systems to ensure fitness for purpose and compliance to current standards.

Operation of the risk management policy

The trustees have delegated risk management to the audit & risk committee made up of appointed trustees and any other suitably experienced co-opted members as may be required. It is the duty of

this committee to consider how to support schools to mitigate identified risks and report to the trustees each term on any significant risks identified.

The nature of the risks

- **The safeguarding of those involved in the enterprise**

Local governing committees will be required to have safeguarding policies which comply with the requirements of the appropriate safeguarding board.

Relevant policies:

- Accessibility plan
- British values
- Child protection (safeguarding) policy
- CCTV policy
- Contractors on school premises
- Educational visits policy
- E-safety policy
- Health, safety and welfare policy
- Premises management policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Whistleblowing policy.

- **The employment of those involved in the enterprise**

The trustees and individual academies should have a suite of legally compliant and common HR policies, supported by advice and insurance.

Relevant policies:

- Allegations of abuse against staff
- Appraisal and capability policy
- Attendance management policy
- Complaints policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Ending bullying and harassment policy
- Equal opportunities, equality and disability policy
- Grievance policy
- Leave of absence policy
- Pay policy
- Recruitment and selection policy
- Secondment policy
- Training and development policy
- Whistleblowing policy.

- **The stewardship of the premises and site and the health, safety and welfare of those who use the site**

The trustees reserve the right to direct individual academies with regard to the insurance of Trust property (buildings, land and assets) and to approve and be kept informed of planned capital works. The academy should develop comprehensive health, safety and welfare policies to include systems to monitor compliance with regulation and good practice and to externally assess these at a regular period.

Relevant policies:

- Accessibility policy
- CCTV policy
- Contractors on school premises procedures
- Health, safety and welfare policy
- Information for visitors
- Premises management policy.

▪ **The ethos and character of the enterprise and the academic standards attained**

The trustees will appoint a suitably qualified CEO to manage the ethos and character of the enterprise and the academic standards attained. The governors should report to the trustees via the CEO on any OFSTED or other inspections and reports. Equally the trustees should be informed through the performance & standards committee of trends and actual academic outcomes and other key indicators identified by OFSTED (or any successor body) in order that the trustees may broker support and advice from within (or beyond) the Trust to minimise the possibility of the Secretary of State using his reserve powers in relation to one of the schools for which the Trust is responsible.

Risks in this area are identified in the Trust's board assurance framework.

▪ **The financial integrity of individual academies**

The trustees will appoint a suitably experienced COO/CFO who will oversee the financial integrity of the academies with a particular reference to levels of delegation and the avoidance of over-reliance upon key individuals. The trustees reserve the right to direct academies to bank with a named bank and to direct academies to use the services of agreed auditors. The trustees reserve the right to have annual agreed budget plans, termly budget summaries and annual outturn statements reported to it. Academies will not be permitted to operate deficit budgets without specific approval from the trustees. The trustees will agree such policies as required to comply with DfE/ESFA requirements on the operation of academies, including in relation to the procurement of goods and services.

Risks in this area are identified in the Trust's board assurance framework.

The capacity of the trustees and the local governing committees to discharge their duties

The trustees and individual local governing committees will be expected to make an annual self-assessment of the skills and experience they require and their capacity to fulfil those requirements. Plans to mitigate deficiencies should be passed to the relevant local governing committee and the trustees. All trustees and governors are required to hold a Disclosure & Barring Services enhanced

certificate and to make a declaration of interests at the beginning of each meeting. The Trust will operate conflicts of interest policies which are incorporated in the Trust's financial management manual. The Trust will ensure that good quality legal advice is available to the trustees, the schools and those responsible for the running of schools on a day to day basis.

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