



GOVERNANCE POLICY - Schools

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Our Mission:

Our mission is to develop confident and capable young people by meeting their individual educational, personal, social and emotional needs in our nurturing school provisions, where we have highly skilled leaders and staff who understand and work with our pupils, and understand their individual and unique needs, aspirations and talents. We work in partnership with young people, their families and carers and other stakeholders to achieve outcomes which make a difference. Ultimately, we work with young people to prepare them for adulthood and for the next stage of their education, training or employment, so they can live a life which is meaningful to them.

Kedleston group offers a range of schools (and in the case of two schools, limited residential placements) across England which help children and young people gain the confidence and skills they need to achieve. Pupils are taught in small classes by highly skilled teachers with learning packages tailored to meet their needs.

Overview of Kedleston governance system

Strong governance is essential for good schools and for ensuring that schools are continually looking for ways to reflect and improve their practice. The heart of governance is the voice of the child; the need to listen to and act upon the views, wishes and needs of the children in our schools is paramount. The key role of governance is to support and challenge schools in order to ensure pupils/children receive the best possible education in a caring environment. This document takes Ofsted's non-association independent school handbook as a basis to describe governance of Kedleston schools.

The Board of Kedleston Group Limited (the "Kedleston Board") is ultimately responsible for governance in all schools. The Kedleston Board delegates the task (not its responsibility) of school governance to a dedicated group of appropriately qualified and experienced professionals – the "Board of Governors".

The Board of Governors have a specific remit to hold schools to account to deliver to the highest standards for all our children. They support and challenge each school to ensure standards are consistently met and exceeded.

The Board of Governors adopts a team approach that is overseen by the group Chief Operating Officer and two Non-Executive Directors – all three of whom sit on the main Kedleston Board.

The Quality Director and the Regional Directors also sit on the Board of Governors. For the 2024/25 academic year, the Quality Director will Chair each of the termly school governance meetings. The COO can act as alternate in her absence.

The Board of Governors can call on other corporate support team professionals for contributions to the governance meetings. Each of these professionals is tasked with specific auditing responsibility (Quality of Education, HR, H&S, Estates Management etc). They work with the group's head teachers/ principals, senior leaders and their respective teams to ensure the highest levels of compliance and quality delivery.

To further promote quality development:

The two non-executive directors each have a responsibility for chairing a sub-committee of the Kedleston Board, which supports the Board of Governors, in ensuring compliance, quality development and safeguarding/child protection.

The two sub-committees are:

- The Safeguarding Overview Committee (SOC); and
- The Quality Assurance & Compliance Committee (QACC)

The SOC is chaired by Angela Nightingale (Non-Executive Director) and comprises:

- Group Safeguarding Lead
- Quality Director
- Chief Executive
- Chief Operating Officer
- Non-Executive Director

The Quality and Compliance Committee (QACC) is chaired by Lesley Cox (Non-Executive Director) and comprises:

- Quality Director
- Chief Executive
- Chief Operating Officer
- Regional Directors (Education)
- An additional Non-Executive Director.

The aim of this policy is to support and challenge schools in order to ensure children and young people receive the best possible education journey and outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors will promote a vision that enables:

- the creation of a culture of high expectations, aspirations and achievement.
- having the highest expectations for social behaviour among the pupils and staff, in line with company vision and values.
- the consistent application of policies and procedures.
- pupils, parents/carers, and staff to be committed to, and contribute to, the vision and ambition of leaders, managers, and governors.

The Quality Director & Regional Directors will ensure:

- The rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans and swift action where any specific areas of improvement are identified.
- That schools continually strive for positive outcomes for young people and satisfaction from parents and placing local authorities.
- The effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all pupils are safe.

Including but not limited to:

- Effective maintenance of the single central record and appropriate arrangements for child protection
- Schools ensuring rigour in following up on pupil absence, including appropriate checks when pupils cease attending and accurate recording and reporting of attendance.
- The effectiveness with which a school identifies any pupils who may be at risk, using a case study approach based on concerns about individual pupils that may have originated either inside or outside the school.
- Thorough decision-making process involving any placements at risk.
- Robust recording and reporting in all areas of Safeguarding and Behaviour.
- Adequate action taken following any serious incident.
- The effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils who are educated wholly or partly off-site in an environment run by the school or at alternative provision.
- An effective approach to keeping pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and what is done when it is suspected that pupils are vulnerable to these.
- The promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety, including online safety

Governance processes will also ensure:

- The effectiveness of procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the extent to which underperformance is tackled.
- There is strong link between performance management, professional reflection and staff development.

- How well the head teacher/principal and, where relevant, other senior staff are managing staff performance and conduct.
- The accuracy with which best practice is identified, modelled, and shared.
- Where teachers'/staff performance is less than good, that this is rigorously managed, and that appropriate training and support are provided. Where teachers' performance is good, this is recognised through the performance management process and positive culture in the school.
- There is support and challenge to the principal/HT and other senior leaders so that they are held to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety.
- Effective financial management of the school, including value for money and best use of physical and human resources.
- Positive engagement with key stakeholders including placing authorities, parents/carers, and children.

In addition, the Quality Director and Regional Directors for education will ensure:

The monitoring and evaluation of:

- The quality of teaching and the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils, relative to other schools nationally
- The performance of the school, including, if applicable, the school's sixth form and/or early years provision
- The standards related to compliance are met, ensuring that schools maintain high standards in all areas.
- That school leaders are prepared for internal and external scrutiny, including audits and inspections.
- The satisfaction of pupils, parents/carers and placing authorities
- How effectively leaders use assessment to ensure that pupils, teachers, and parents/carers know if pupils are achieving the expected standard or if they need to catch up including:
 - assessment information, including test results, is used by leaders and governors to improve teaching and the curriculum.
 - the accuracy of assessment through internal and external standardisation and moderation
 - schools' approaches to moderate assessment for year groups and the end of key stages.

How well the curriculum:

- Meets paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(i) of the independent school standards.
- Is broad and balanced and provides a wide range of subjects, preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life in modern Britain.

- Actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Focuses on the necessary priorities for ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics and promotes high levels of achievement and good behaviour.
- Links to the school's system of assessment and that together they set out what pupils are expected to know, understand, and do, and when it is effectively planned and taught.
- Is based at Key Stage 4 on an appropriate balance between academic and vocational courses that is appropriate for the pupils.
- Provides timely independent information, advice, and guidance to assist pupils on their next steps in training, education, or employment.
- Information about what is taught in the curriculum each year is shared with parents and carers, meeting the requirement in paragraph 32(1)(b) of the independent school standards.
- Promotes tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability, and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics) through the effective spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils, including through the extent to which schools engage their pupils in extra-curricular activity and volunteering within their local community.

They will also monitor:

- How effectively pupils are grouped within lessons and across year groups.
- The effectiveness of careers guidance
- How well the school meets the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils, including reducing the numbers who do not continue to education, employment, or training.

The COO, Regional Directors and Quality Director, alongside other members of the corporate team will also ensure that the appropriate level of support, challenge and training is given to schools and school leaders in accordance with the Strengthening Governance and School Support process (**See Appendix 2**)

Implementation

Governance and Audit visits:

Governance will be assured using a variety of approaches:

- audit visits from central specialist staff,
- weekly collection and analysis of KPIs,
- a weekly report from each Headteacher to the Quality and Compliance Committee (QACC) and other key corporate staff.
- Regular visits to schools by executive directors and members of the senior corporate team.
- termly governance meetings.

Audit visits will be completed by specialist staff in full at least once per year. The order of the audits and any further audits required will be determined by the RAG rating of each school/home as decided by QACC or in advance of an anticipated 3 yearly Ofsted inspection.

The audit suite comprises the following:

- Safeguarding - Group Safeguarding Lead
- HR/training and development (including single central register check) – Regional HR Partner
- Arbor audit / Compliance audit
- Education - Quality Director/Quality Improvement Lead (QIL)/Regional Director for education
- Health and Safety - Group Health and Safety Manager
- Medication - Group Lead Nurse

In addition, additional meetings and desktop audits will be conducted for compliance, finance, referrals, record keeping and complaints as appropriate.

There will be a minimum of one Director plus senior corporate leadership present at each governance meeting. Except in exceptional circumstances, these meetings will take place in each school, every term, in person and will involve members of the school leadership teams.

Appendix 1:
Governance Model for Schools

Frequency	Meeting/Report/Visit	Associated document
Weekly	QACC Report from School Principals/Head Teachers/RM sent to Chief Operating Officer/Regional Directors /Head of Social Care/CEO/Non-exec director, as specified. COO to respond.	Weekly Report Template
Weekly	Remote monitoring using KPIs from Arbor	Weekly KPI reports
FULL audit annually	Audit Visits Order of audits and any further audits determined by RAG rating	Audit reports from Head of Safeguarding, HR, Training, Health and Safety, Education, Group Nurse, Head of Care (if residential).
Termly	Termly Governance report from School Principal/Head of Education/Head Teacher/RM	Termly Governance report
Termly	Termly Governance meeting	Termly Governance Agenda
Monthly	Safeguarding Overview Committee – actions taken for each individual site with letters/ training etc as needed	SOC agenda
Annually	Staff survey	Online survey
At least Termly	CEO and COO Visit, plus organised RD visits	-
As need identified	External view from another Kedleston senior leader where relevant	Site Visit Report

As need identified	Regular visits from Quality Improvement Leads (Visits and/or training from external consultants as required)	Site visit report Individual School Action Plan
Monthly	Independent Reg.44 inspections of children's homes	Inspection reports
Ongoing	Each site will keep ISS monitoring files in which to keep records for the current academic year only (archived yearly)	Overview record and Record of visit sheets
Termly	Quality Assurance & Compliance Committee to Monitor Governance across all sites (QACC)	QACC report/Minutes of meeting
Monthly	Board Report	Board report

APPENDIX 2

Strengthening Governance & School Support

One of Kedleston's key aims is the drive to improve outcomes for children and young people through improving the quality of provision and ensuring continuous school improvement. The aim of all corporate departments is to work in collaboration with each other to ensure that Governance of our schools is highly effective, using a targeted, tiered approach and ensuring that school improvement remains a key focus throughout each academic year.

Highly effective governance will:

- Hold each school to account for their delivery and performance.
- Govern each school to ensure it meets statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Harness the commitment, energy and expertise across the Kedleston Group
- Champion the needs of each learner
- Enable effective leadership and management.

Effective governance will lead to:

- Strong individual schools – by holding leaders and managers to account, effective governance will provide the support and challenge necessary to drive their continued improvement so schools achieve their full potential.
- Improved pace of change – where rapid change is needed, tenacious governance is critical to success, bringing a wider perspective to the leadership and management of the school.
- Increased provision of school-to-school support across the group of schools, with sharing of effective practice – building support for others and effective practice will enable schools to address any problems as they arise and build on strengths across the schools.
- Swift evaluation, analysis and follow up to ensure key improvements are made in schools identified as less than good.

In order to strengthen the governance, Kedleston will take a targeted approach to its schools, with three offers, as outlined below.

TIER 1 – UNIVERSAL OFFER

Support / challenge for all schools judged to be Good or Outstanding

An annual audit undertaken by the Quality Director and/or Quality Improvement Leads to:

- Challenge and scrutinise the self-evaluation of all aspects of the provision and other data.
- Judge the current effectiveness of the school.
- Agree the further developments and actions with the school.
- Agree an additional programme of focused support (if any)
- Confirm to Kedleston the current quality of the school.

In addition to the above, the following will be provided:

- Remote monitoring of data, including policies, assessment, behaviour, incidents, attendance, monitoring of teaching and learning, ISS compliance and safeguarding.
- A termly visit from the Quality Director for the Governance meeting to include a site visit, pupil discussions and school development discussion with the HT/DHT.
- At least half-termly visits from the Quality Improvement Lead for the region, to focus on the quality of education.
- A minimum of a half - termly visit to each provision from the Regional Director including but not limited to:
 - performance management, safeguarding, ISS compliance and financial management, operational support, commercial, SLT development and strategic planning
- A yearly full audit of Safeguarding, HR, Health & Safety, Training and Medication.
- A termly Arbor audit.
- Remote support throughout inspection and Regional Director or QD to be present at Ofsted feedback (unless support is requested or deemed necessary by the company).
- Scheduled training and development programmes such as conferences, development days, SLT training & development, meetings and briefings for specific groups of staff as appropriate.
- Access to regional workshops or role specific workshops to respond to corporate or national issues or to share best practice.
- There is also an expectation that schools will share good practice and support colleagues across the organisation including facilitating visits.

TIER 2 – TARGETED SUPPORT

Support and challenge for schools where specific areas for improvement have been identified.

Any school making less than good progress post audit or through quality/compliance visits.

Any school that, at governance, is evaluated to be currently at risk of receiving a less than good judgement in any specific area (or decline from outstanding).

Any school where school leaders and/or corporate staff identify an area needing specific support.

Any school which is subject to a significant period of change or facing specific challenges.

In addition to the core offer:

- Initial meeting led by the RD/QD and involving any other parties deemed necessary, to identify the challenges, support required and timeframes for improvement.
- Specific targeted support from specialists within the wider company.
- Additional monitoring visits by RD and QIL to monitor progress against the action plan.

- At least fortnightly visits from the quality improvement leads to support the school in moving forward with required actions.
- Follow up audit to be arranged in identified areas of concern to review progress against agreed actions

Targeted support will move the site to a position where any identified areas are improved swiftly and/or any risks around quality and compliance will have been removed.

TIER 3 – INTENSIVE SUPPORT

Support and challenge to *focus schools/newly opened schools* :

Any newly opened school which has not yet been inspected

Any school not meeting the required standards or at risk of decline in standards across either quality or compliance.

Any school not making sufficient progress/in a timely fashion towards audit actions or from quality and compliance visits.

Any school that, at governance, is evaluated to be currently at risk of not gaining a good outcome at inspection.

Any school where concerns are highlighted regarding the leadership and management of the school.

Intensive support to include:

A TAS (Team Around The School) meeting, led by the Regional Director and involving all relevant parties. The TAS meetings will include:

- Review of latest audits
- Review of associated action plans
- Assessment of staffing and appropriateness of staffing structure
- Additional targeted staff support required.
- Supply/agency staff usage
- Environmental evaluation.
- Safeguarding (children and staff)
- Placements at risk.
- Stakeholder Communications

For newly opened sites, support will also include external audit from an outside consultant once per term until the first full inspection is completed.

During the TAS meeting an action plan will be agreed with clear priorities, support required and timeframes for improvement. KIT (Keeping In Touch) meetings will then be arranged to monitor progress. Additional support will be provided where necessary. The intensive support tier will remain applicable until it is agreed by the relevant RD and the Quality Director that the level of support is no longer required, and the level of support can be reduced to Tier 2 'Targeted support'.

Appendix 3

Weekly Report to Governors

Weekly Report to Governors

To be returned to identified governor for comment by 12.00 each Monday for the previous week by email;
cc Quality and Compliance Committee.

Name of school		Week Ending	
Occupancy			
Actual Day:		Budget: Day:	
Achievements and successes			
Issues arising			
Number of RPI's		Number of RPI's that meet threshold (<i>an RPI sequence ≥ 10 minute duration, an RPI >15 minutes duration in total, a ground hold or an 'other' hold</i>)	
Details of Emergency Services Involvement			
•			
Brief details of Safeguarding referrals			
•			
Summary of significant incidents			
• Brief details including incidents of self-harm and police involvement where applicable			
Compliments or Consultations received – over view including staff, young people and stakeholders			
• <i>Brief details</i>			
Complaints received			
Number received	Details of complaints received		
	• <i>Brief details</i>		
Agency – please give reason for agency:			
1 = to cover short term sickness 2 = to cover long term sickness 3 = to cover maternity 4 = because of staff shortages due to recruitment issues 5 = increased levels of behaviour from a young person 6 = to cover staff shortages due to work related accident 7 = due to taking in a placement at short notice			
Please detail ALL agency used this week & costs:			
Staffing - including sickness, supervisions issues, resignations			
•			
Maintenance, Estates			
•			
IT Actions/Issues Outstanding		Date Raised	Ticket Number
Planned/unplanned leavers or Placements at Risk			
• <i>YP initials and brief description</i>			
• <i>Have any children or young people transitioned to another provision?? Please give initials and further details.</i>			
AOB			
Report Completed by:			

Appendix 4

Governance Skills and experience

The Board of Governors have the following range of skills:

Lee Reed, COO: Lee joined Kedleston in 2015 having spent the vast majority of his career working in the health and social care sector, initially within finance in the NHS before entering the independent sector where he spent five years working with one of the largest providers of medical / surgical hospitals in the UK before moving across to work in the specialist mental health and learning disability sector.

During his time working in mental health, Lee has worked in corporate functions with responsibility for business development and project management as well as having held Hospital Director, Operations Director, Managing Director, and Chief Executive posts with small, medium, and large size mental health providers. These include Priory Healthcare, The Huntercombe Group, Mental Health Care (UK) and InMind Healthcare.

Whilst with Priory, Lee was responsible for the commissioning of a number of new hospitals, involved in a number of new acquisitions, set up what was at the time the first in-patient treatment programme for young people with addiction problems in the UK and worked directly with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health to evaluate mental health provision in the Emirates and then established a joint venture company for Priory in the middle east to undertake a three year management contract overseeing and developing mental health services.

In addition to acute mental health services, Lee has significant experience of leading specialist services such as substance misuse in adults and adolescents, eating disorders (adult and adolescent), female personality disorder, secure services (adult and adolescent) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services which included out-patient, day patient and in-patient services. Several of these services had Ofsted registration for in-house education provision.

Lee is the local authority appointed governor at his local community mainstream primary school.

Angela Nightingale, Non-Executive Director: Angela has extensive experience in working with children and young people with a focus on children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Complex Needs, Asperger Syndrome and Challenging Behaviours. She was Head of two specialist residential schools and developed The Wing Centre, opened by Lorna Wing, which is a service for young adults with Asperger Syndrome. She became the Education Operations Director and RI for a large provider of independent residential schools and homes, responsible for leading, supervising and managing the services.

Angela also served as a Justice of the Peace for sixteen years chairing both Adult and Youth Courts.

She developed and led training programmes in mainstream, special schools, universities and young offender institutions and was a regular speaker at conferences both nationally and internationally. She also delivered training to the police, prison officers and legal services.

She was also Chair of the Southampton University Centre for Biological Sciences External Advisory Board for 12 years, until recently and is currently a guest lecturer. Angela chairs the Safeguarding Overview Committee and is also a member of the Quality Assurance and Compliance Committee. She is also Children's Champion for the group.

Lesley Cox, Non-Executive Director: Lesley has been a senior leader and a head teacher within mainstream and special schools. In 2012 she was appointed as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) for Schools and was a National Lead for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) for Ofsted. Since 2017, Lesley has worked as an independent education consultant. She provides school improvement services, leadership training and quality assurance/governance support for a wide range of schools, national organisations and local authorities. Lesley joined the Kedleston Board in 2018 and chairs the Quality Assurance Committee.