Governance

The key pillars of governance in the Fern Academy Trust Schools, are as follows:

- The **seven Nolan Principles** of Public Life
- **Strong financial governance**, ensuring good value for money and accountability across the trust
- Clearly defined **roles and responsibilities** between the three tiers of governance – i.e. members, the trust board and the local governing bodies
- Ensuring that all the schools in the trust are **rooted in the communities** they serve and ensuring the local governing bodies are championing the stakeholders in those communities
- Linking governance within the trust into the school **improvement cycle** and the relentless focus across the trust on improving the outcomes of pupils
- **Strong central governance support**, promoting strong governance through co-ordinated training, governance tools and expert clerking, guidance and advice.

Fern Multi-Academy Trust (Fern MAT)

The Board of Trustees is the accountable body for Fern Multi-Academy Trust. It is constituted in line with the Trust's Articles of Association (September 2023), which outline the governance structure and composition of the Board.

Composition of the Board:

- Up to 9 Trustees, appointed by Members
- Up to 2 Co-opted Trustees, appointed by the Board
- The CEO is an ex-officio Trustee
- Staff Trustees may be appointed, provided they do not exceed one-third of the total Board

Core Functions of the Trust Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the trust and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the trust and making sure its money is well spent
- Ensuring compliance with statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding and SEND

Headteachers and parent advocates join every other board meeting to ensure consistent school representation and stakeholder engagement.

Declarations of Interest

Full Name	Initial Start Date	Start Date (Current Term)	End Date	Appointing Body	Declared Interests
Andy Goode (Chair)	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	None declared
Rev. Mark Johnson	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	Chair of Governors The federation of two Herefordshire schools, Much Birch C of E Primary School and St. Mary's, Credenhill C of E Primary School.
Alison Naylor	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	Director – Forward Focus Education
Karen Morris	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	Herefordshire Council Employee
Richard Preece	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	Contracts Manager Halo Leisure Services Limited
Joy Carroll	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	None declared

Kirsty Sockett	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	None declared
June Willis	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	None declared
Nina Purcell	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2028	Members	Trustee – I am chair of a Rotary group that has provided funding to St Martins School.
Tracey Kneale	01/09/2024	01/09/2024	31/08/2026	Ex officio	None declared - CEO of MAT
Nafisa Farooqui	18/05/2026	18/05/2026	17/05/2030	Members	None declared

Trustee attendance 2025-26:

Trustee	22/09/25	15/12/25	16/03/26	18/05/26	14/07/26	Total Meetings:
Andy Goode (Chair)	√	A	√	A	√	3/5
Joy Carroll	A	A	A	A	A	0/5
Rev. Mark Johnson	√	√	A	√	√	4/5
Alison Naylor	√	√	A	A	√	3/5
Karen Morris	√	√	√	√	A	5/5
Richard Preece	√	√	√	√	√	3/5
Kirsty Sockett	√	√	√	A	A	5/5
June Willis	√	√	√	√	√	2/5
Nina Purcell	√	√	A	A	A	3/5
Nafisa Farooqui	-	-	-	-	√	1/5

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee attendance 2025-26

Trustee	15/12/25	16/03/26	22/06/26	Total Meetings
Karen Morris (Chair)	√	√	√	3 / 3
Andy Goode	A	√	A	1 / 3
Rev. Mark Johnson	√	A	A	1 / 3
Richard Preece	√	√	√	3 / 3
Nina Purcell	√	A	A	1 / 3

Diversity Data

The governors of the Fern Academy Trust believe it is important that boards reflect the diversity of the school communities they serve. Diverse boards promote inclusive school environments and provide diverse role models for staff and young people.

The governors are currently collecting data on the diversity of the board, including data on age, gender and ethnicity. They will use that data to inform recruitment and training needs and ensure there is always a diverse range of perspectives around the table to support robust decision making.

Due to our relatively small governing body, we do not publish this diversity data online as individual governors could be identified and we have a legal obligation to protect their personal data.