



# Ambassadorial Advisory Group Charter

Academic Year 2018-19





## AMBASSADORIAL ADVISORY GROUP (AAG) CHARTER

### THE ROLE OF THE AAG

The AAGs are volunteer groups which form part of the governance structure of E-ACT by working in conjunction with the regional teams specifically at their academies. They focus on four key elements, “the four C’s” which helps to strengthen E-ACT from a user perspective, and enables a critical friend voice to flourish. ’:

#### The Four C’s

1. **Celebration** - to help make sure that celebrating staff, pupils and parents remains a priority for the academy. To lead on initiatives to promote and celebrate achievements within the academy or more widely.
2. **Communication** - to work with staff, pupils and parents to make sure that the academy effectively communicates to all stakeholders, so that everyone feels part of academy life and has the opportunity to access information and events. This includes the presentation of academy on its website and social media channels.
3. **Concerns or complaints** - to act as an independent local point of contact for staff, pupils and parents to express their concerns. Ambassadors will signpost people to the right channels for dealing with their issues and will ensure that any concerns or complaints are fed back to the AAG. Where any trends emerge, the ambassadors will work with the Headteacher and other ambassadors to help find solutions. There will also always be **at least one ambassador** on appeals panels.
4. **Community** - making sure that the pupils maximise on local opportunities by finding ways to keep the academy at the heart of the community and acting as a key link between the two. To help the academy explore creative ways to become a hub of the community.

### INFLUENCE

Our AAGs are advisory groups which help shape the direction and representation of E-ACT academies, as well as sounding boards for the academy to gauge the opinions and ideas of parents, pupils, staff and the community.

The AAG bridges the gap between E-ACT and the community by helping the community understand decisions taken. They in turn help E-ACT identify regional and national need within their academy communities to improve the offering and environment for pupils, parents and staff.

We want our ambassadors to actively work with the Headteacher to improve the Four Cs within the academy, and to advise the Regional Directors and Board on how further improvements or shared learning can be achieved.

There are a number of areas where ambassadors have input into important decisions relating to their academy:

- **Recruitment of new headteachers**

The AAG must be involved with the recruitment of any new headteacher for their academy. This would normally involve the Chair of the AAG sitting on the interview panel.

- **Panels relating to complaints, exclusions, or staff disciplinary or grievance matters**

AAG representation on hearing and appeal panels is essential to ensuring that there is independent scrutiny and input on these decisions. Details of specific panel composition requirements can be found in the Scheme of Delegation and in the relevant policies. Training is available to ambassadors to support their participation on these panels (please see the trust-wide CPD brochure for further information).

- **Raising Achievement Boards**

One representative per AAG should attend their academy RAB and be part of the scrutiny of its academic and operational performance.. **Ambassadors should note they may be privy to confidential information at the RAB which must not be shared beyond their group.**

Ambassadors will also have regular meetings with the RED (one per term) and will also have the opportunity to attend a conference with the E-ACT Board of Trustees each year.

## MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the AAG is intended to be flexible and may differ in each academy. The Headteacher and Chair must agree on whether a maximum number of members should be set. Staff, pupils, parents and members of the community may be part of the groups but as a minimum each AAG must have:

- At least two parent ambassadors from the local parent body. Parents of the academy must be formally consulted at the beginning of each academic year. The consultation must give parents the opportunity to (a) make nominations for membership to the AAG where there are vacancies (parents may nominate themselves or other parents) and (b) help shape the AAG workplan for the year. Please note: if there are more parent nominations than vacancies available, a parent election must be held.
- A **nominated Chair**, who will be recommended by the Headteacher and fellow AAG members for appointment by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. This is to ensure that the Chair of each AAG has a direct link with E-ACT's Board of Trustees.

### Appointment & removal of members

Aside from the Chair, appointment and removal of AAG members will be by joint agreement of the AAG, Headteacher and RED. The Chair may only be removed by the Chair of the Board, via recommendation from the Headteacher.

In order to become a member of the AAG, an applicant must complete and return the E-ACT Volunteer Commitment and a DBS application. Ambassadors must also complete a basic declaration of any conflicts of interest on an annual basis - this will be circulated by the Governance team for completion at the start of the academic year.

The Regional Coordinator will administer all appointments for AAGs in their region.

Ambassadors may be removed by the RED where there is a clear breach of the volunteer commitment, for example non-attendance.

### Term of membership

There is no minimum term of membership for ambassadors, except for Chairs where the term of office should ideally be two years and certainly no less than one academic year. Ambassadors may serve for up to four years, at which point their membership should be renewed by the Headteacher and Chair for a maximum of four more years.

## MEETINGS

### Frequency of meetings

The AAG will ideally meet every half term, but **must** meet at least once per full term.

### Administration of meetings

There is no need for formal minutes to be taken at meetings but there must be a record of the meeting which includes: time and date, attendees, absences, key discussion points, and actions agreed. Regional Coordinator will take the record for one per term. For additional meetings, members will nominate one of their membership to take notes from meetings where required - this record must be shared with the Regional Coordinator. All minutes and progress against workplans are collated and monitored centrally by the governance team and reported to the board of trustees.

## AGREEING PRIORITIES AND A WORKPLAN

The AAG will set its own priorities in conjunction with the Headteacher according to the needs of the academy. It is up to each AAG to decide where and how it can be of most benefit to its academy. The AAG must work with the Headteacher to agree priorities for the year and agree an annual workplan; the sample of which is at appendix one.

As a minimum the workplan must include:

- Activity in support of each of the Four Cs (celebration, complaints/concerns, community and communication) each academic year.
- Relevant training dates to ensure that enough AAG members are able to participate on hearings panels.
- A meeting date for each term of the year.

AAGs should tailor their workplan according to the needs of the academy and the skills of their members. For example, AAGs may decide to focus the bulk of their energy on a single larger project over the course of the year that targets one of the Four Cs or they may spread activity evenly between the Four Cs. they may spread activity evenly between the Four Cs.

## E-ACT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognise that the AAGs cannot thrive without energy and input from E-ACT - at academy, regional and national level. The following sets out our responsibilities in relation to our AAGs:

### Headteachers must:

- Attend **at least one** AAG meeting per term.
- Actively and enthusiastically work the AAG to help set its priorities and workplan for the year and to support its development and progress against the agreed workplan.

- Ensure staff at the academy are aware of the AAG and are engaged with its work.
- Liaise with the regional coordinator, RED and governance team on AAG matters.
- Act as a champion for their AAG within the academy and within E-ACT more widely.
- Ensure the AAG is included in academy communications.
- Ensure all AAG members receive an academy induction.

#### Regional coordinators must:

- Attend and take notes for one meeting per term where possible.
- Keep a record of all AAGs in the region, including contact details and membership paperwork.
- Liaise with the governance team and headteacher on AAG matters.
- Actively support the development of the AAGs in their region.
- Lead on the organisation of a regional AAG induction/training event each academic year.

#### The governance team must:

- Ensure AAGs are on organisation wide mailing lists.
- Actively support the development of AAGs across all regions by providing support to headteachers and regional coordinators and, where necessary, AAGs directly.
- Ensure central guidance and documentation is updated and communicated.
- Keep a central contact record of ambassadors.
- Organise AAG Chairs meeting with the Chair of the Board.
- Regularly update trustees on the development of AAGs across all E-ACT academies.
- Ensure AAGs are progressing against their workplans.

## **BUDGET**

AAG costs - expenses, administration, DBS checks etc - will come from academy budgets. The governance budget will fund any costs incurred as part of undertaking central activities, for example, training activities that are part of the main CPD programme.

