



City Family of Schools Governance

2022

Introduction

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the City of London, the historic centre of London and home to much of the UK's financial sector - the "Square Mile". The Corporation's structure includes the Lord Mayor, the Court of Aldermen, the Court of Common Council, and the Freeman and Livery of the City. The City Corporation is a major provider and funder of education. We have local authority education duties in the Square Mile, are the proprietor of independent schools and also the sole sponsor of the City of London Academies Trust. In its entirety, this group of schools is what we refer to as the '**Family of Schools**'.

The Court of Common Council is the City Corporation's primary decision-making assembly, and usually meets every four weeks. Its main business focuses on the reports of committees and members' questions and motions. It works through committees, like any other local authority, but it is unique in that it is non-party political. Members of the Common Council (also referred to as Common Councillors) are elected by the wards of the City every four years.

Common Councillors (CC) represent a wide range of professions and City interests and take the major strategic decisions that direct the work of the City Corporation. There are two main types of committee – the first is made up of one member from each of the City's wards plus ex-officio members; the second is made up of members directly elected by the Court of Common Council plus ex officio members.

There are currently 30 committees which manage the Corporations different functions with Common Councillors sitting on a variety of boards. The City's Education Board Committee is made up of 14 Members and is Chaired by Caroline Haines CC. In its Terms of Reference (ToR), the Education Board exists to monitor the frameworks for effective accountability, challenge and support across the City Family of Schools which include the City of London Strategies for Education, Cultural and Creative Learning, and Skills and to oversee their implementation (including skills and work related learning, and cultural and creative learning).

City of London Academy Trust

The City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) is made up of three layers of governance: Members; Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Education Board is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of the City of London Corporation's sponsorship of its Academies, including the appointment of academy Governors and where relevant Members, Directors and Trustees.

Members

CoLAT Members sit above the board of Trustees and have a largely hands-off role, similar to a company's shareholders. However, despite their hands-off role, they do have specific responsibilities, such as; appointing the Trustees, amending the articles of association, and they also have the power to change the company's name and ultimately 'wind it up'.

Trustees

CoLAT Board of Trustees (BoT) are both charity Trustees and company directors of the academy trust (both terms are commonly used). Trustees make sure that CoLAT complies with charity and company law, and the academy trust's own funding agreement. They report to the Members of the trust and to the Secretary of State. Their main duty is to oversee the running of the school and determine its strategic direction, holding trust and school leaders to account.

Local Governing Bodies

CoLATs BoT has delegated some of its functions to 'local governing bodies' (LGBs) in each of the ten schools. In this sense, LGBs are technically committees of the trust board and have no powers except what's been delegated to them. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) are a full and formal part of CoLATs governance structure and the role of a LGB governor is to support the school and academy trust in ensuring that its pupils have an exceptional education which prepares them to flourish and thrive. Local Governors who sit on local governing bodies are not Trustees or directors (unless they also sit on the trust board).

The Aldgate School

The Aldgate School is a Church of England primary school and the only state-funded school located in the Square Mile. It is maintained by the City of London Corporation with its governing body responsible for the strategic direction of the school. The Aldgate Schools governing body meets at least 3 times per year whilst also comprising of two committees and several ad hoc groups.

In its ToR, the Governing Board (GB) should comprise 14 Governors, as per the Instrument of Government, plus up to 3 associate members. Associate members are not entitled to vote on any resolutions and may not participate in discussion or decisions regarding staff appointments, dismissals, grievance, discipline, pay or appraisal. The GB meets at least once a term with additional meetings as required. The GB as a whole is responsible for making sure there's financial oversight, leaders are held to account, money is spent correctly, and spending is in line with Aldgate's priorities.

The Department for Education (DfE) uses the national funding formula (NFF) to work out how much funding each maintained school is entitled to. The DfE then distributes this funding to the local authority (the City of London Corporation) who then applies its own local funding formula, through which it allocates the Aldgate school's overall budget. However, two points should be noted here: (1) the government is in the process of moving to a 'hard' NFF. This could mean that Aldgate's school's budget allocation will not run through the City Corporations local funding formula. Instead, it will be decided by central government; (2) The recent White Paper (2022) outlines how the government will introduce new powers enabling the Secretary of State to bring maintained schools into the academy system in certain circumstances. From this end, LAs will be given legal powers to establish Trusts and to request their non-academy schools join a trust, where that is the right approach for local schools.

Independent Schools

The City of London Corporation are the proprietor of 4 independent schools: **City of London School**; **City of London School for Girls**; **City of London Freeman's School** and **City Junior School**. As with Governors of maintained state schools and academies, those involved in independent school governance come from a variety of backgrounds. Some will have educational expertise. Others will bring a range of outside professional skills into schools, including business skills and experience in running charities. Governors at these schools are commonly referred to as the Board of Governors (BoG).

The BoG are responsible for all the independent Schools matters, the management of the Schools land and buildings belonging to the City of London Corporation and the appointment of their Headmaster/Headmistress (and other members of the Senior Management Team). The BoG also have oversight of the policy, strategic and financial management of the school. As like most independent schools, our 4 independent schools are registered as charitable trusts. The governors are trustees of the charity and have a legal duty to act together to protect the property, preserve any endowments and maintain the charity's solvency and effectiveness - these schools must also comply with the Charity Commission's standards of governance.

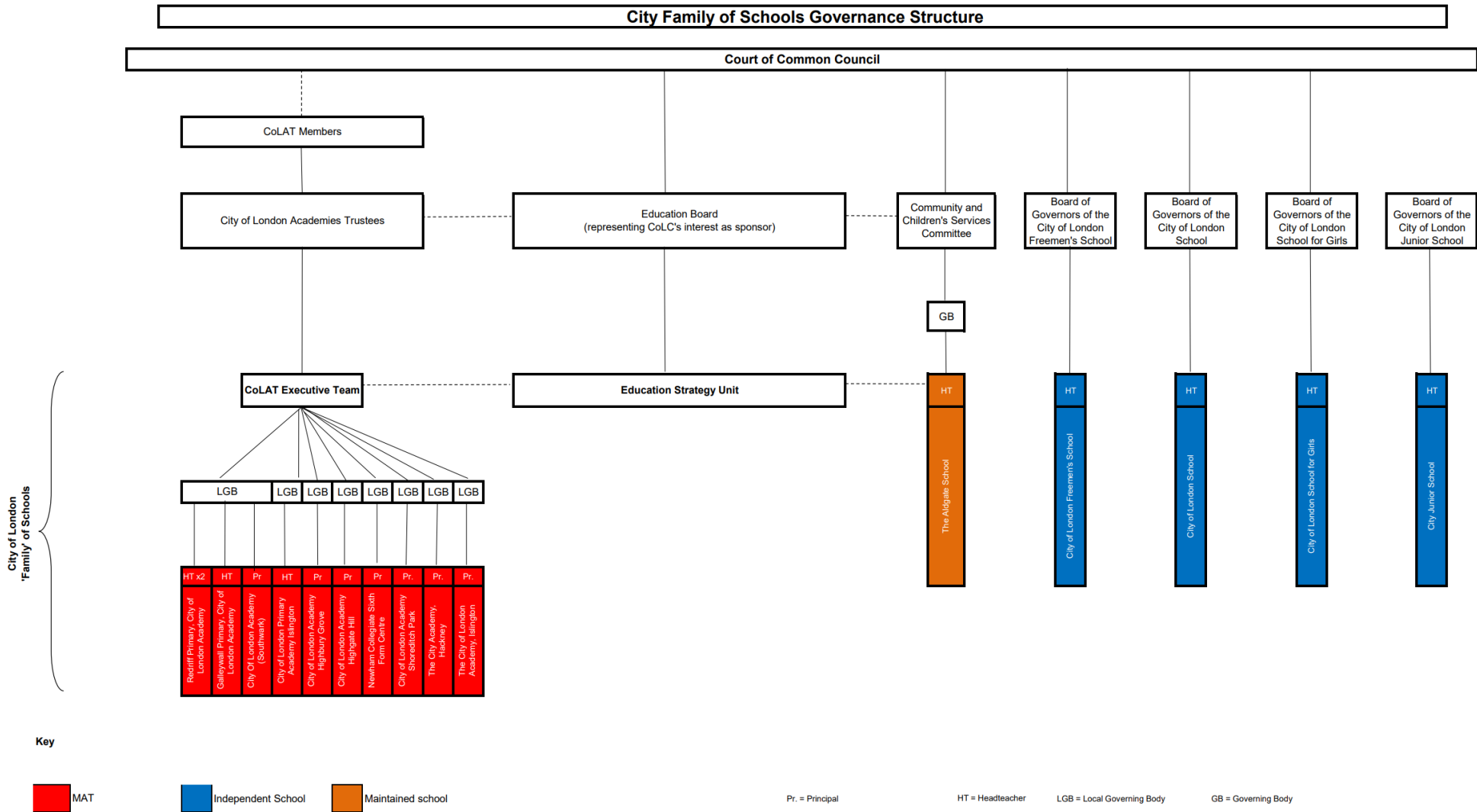


Figure 1: City Family of Schools Organogram

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