



## School and Company Advisory Panel

Melrose Education Limited owns several independent special education needs and alternative education schools. The Board of Directors directly oversee the day-to-day activities of the organisation, ensuring that it meets its strategic aims and adheres to legislative and regulatory requirements.

We have relentless ambition for the young people served by our schools and understand the key role governance plays in providing strategic direction and control in order to ensure our learners achieve the very best outcomes.

To achieve this aim, the Board of Directors, and senior leadership team within each school, have commissioned the services of an Independent School Advisory Panel which periodically assesses the performance of the school, offering advice and challenge when applicable.

### Suitability

To ensure each school panel, and Company panel, is adequate and able to meet the needs of the organisation, panel members are identified as having comprehensive experience in their area of specialism within the educational sector.

When appointing panel members, we also seek to reflect the diversity of the school and community in which the panel serves. We know that this diversity promotes inclusive school environments and provides diverse role models for staff and young people.

The primary focus when assembling an Independent Schools Advisory Panel will be acquiring the skills, experience and diversity the panel needs to be effective. We know that panels who bring a diverse range of skills, experiences, qualifications, characteristics and perspectives and who are from different backgrounds will have a positive impact on the organisation.

All members of school advisory panels will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our schools and at a Company level are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school/Company approach to safeguarding. Their training will be regularly updated.

Panel members will be made aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 201022, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.



Panel members will be expected to adhere to the Melrose Education Code of Conduct which sets out clear expectations for their role and behaviour and is based on 'The 7 principles of public life', as set out by Lord Nolan (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).

Panel members are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Further details on DBS checks and regulated activity in schools are within the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Any necessary training required for the panel to undertake their role effectively will be provided at induction and regular reviews of both training needs and audits of the skills and competencies required by panel members will be undertaken to ensure any gaps are addressed. The overall balance of people and skills will also be subject to review to ensure all necessary areas of expertise are covered.

Specific responsibilities within each panel will be designated to those with the appropriate skills, for example, an individual who will lead on safeguarding (including Prevent), however all panel members will be encouraged to make the most of the resources, guidance and training available to develop their knowledge and skills.

Panel members will be made aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010 22, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Full details of panel members' roles and responsibilities can be found in the Melrose Education Independent School Advisory Panel Purpose and Brief.

### Implementation

Panel members will be provided with termly updates (3 times a year) from each of the areas specified in this policy. This information will be used to review school and Company performance in areas set out within the improvement plan, along with any feedback or targets set from any previous review.

Within the academic year, each panel member will also be invited into the organisation to examine and review our procedures and processes. This will ensure that the 'independent' perspective is maintained.

Within the academic year, the Board of Director and senior leadership team of each school, will promote an 'open door policy' where advisory panel members are able to visit the organisation to observe, support and develop in any area.



Each School Principal will invite advisory panel members to attend an annual meeting where the year's activity, development, achievements, and support needs will be examined. This will be summarised, and strategies produced for the following academic year. This will contribute individually to the schools' assessment reports and subsequent year's improvement plans as well as the ongoing improvements within Melrose Education.

#### Recording.

Senior Leaders will record and circulate findings from the annual review meetings within meeting minutes, which will include agenda items carried throughout the academic year. Advisory panel members will be provided with reports (termly), which they will be invited to examine, comment and feedback areas for development.

Information gathered will support the Board of Directors and senior leadership teams of each school to set further aims and targets for subsequent years.