



Autumn

Newsletter





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Trust Governance

What It Means to Be a Local Governor for The Societas Trust;

1. Governance

Being a **Local Governor for the Trust** is all about championing children, supporting staff, and helping each academy thrive at the heart of its community. It's a role rooted in service, curiosity, and accountability—never about hierarchy or power.

What Local Governors Do?

Local Governors play a vital part in ensuring each school within the Trust is the best it can be. Their responsibilities typically include:

- **Championing pupils**
Ensuring every child receives a high-quality education and feels safe, supported, and valued.
- **Understanding the school's strengths and challenges**
Governors don't run the school day-to-day, but they do ask thoughtful questions, explore data, and understand how the school is performing.
- **Supporting and challenging leaders**
Acting as a "critical friend" to the Headteacher—celebrating successes while also probing areas that need improvement.
- **Representing the community**
Bringing the perspectives of parents, carers, and the wider local area into school discussions.
- **Monitoring key priorities**
This might include safeguarding, attendance, curriculum quality, behaviour, or wellbeing—depending on the governor's link role.

Why the Role Matters;

Local governance keeps each school grounded in its community. It ensures decisions are made with real insight into the lives, needs, and aspirations of the children and families the school serves. Governors help maintain high standards, protect the ethos of the school, and ensure that every child—regardless of background—has the chance to flourish.

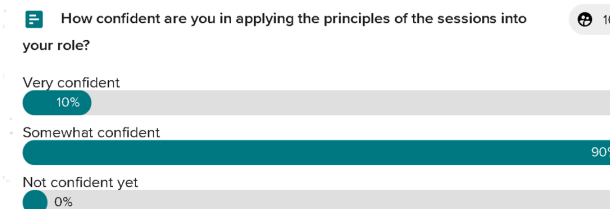
Being a Local Governor means being a thoughtful advocate for children, a supportive partner to school leaders, and a guardian of the school's long-term vision.

If you would like to discuss becoming a Governor at one of the Trust schools, please contact the school directly.

Governors had an opportunity recently to come together and explore the latest Ofsted Framework 2025, while reflecting on how they can strengthen their role as Governors to best support their settings. The session was led by Education Consultant, Mr Rob Johnson, who shared his insights into the process.

Governors welcomed the chance to deepen their understanding and ensure they remain fully informed about how to provide effective support for Academy Leaders and champion the success of children across our Trust. When governors have asked how they found the session – this was the feedback received:

understanding
informative
helpful scary yes
insightful mind settling more prepared
useful wow
overwhelming beneficial informatiicr
thought provoking
beneficial to role



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On Monday 1st December 2025, excitement filled the Stoke City Academy Dome as six of our schools brought their Year 4 and 5 girls' football teams together for the Societas Girls' Football Tournament. The atmosphere was electric from the first whistle, with every team arriving ready to showcase their skills, passion and team spirit.

A huge thank you to the Stoke City Foundation, whose fantastic support and first-class facilities helped turn the event into something truly special. Throughout the day, our players shone—demonstrating outstanding teamwork, determination and positivity in every match.

It was a brilliant celebration of girls' sport and a powerful reminder of the talent and enthusiasm across our Trust.

A big congratulations to **Ash Green**, who battled their way to become this year's champions. And of course, an enormous well done to all our dedicated PE leaders, whose hard work and encouragement made this inspiring and memorable experience possible for our children.

Learners from across the Trust came together for an inspiring **Philosophy for Children (P4C)** enquiry session—an approach that encourages young people to explore big ideas through thoughtful discussion, questioning and reflection. Guided by our P4C consultant, **Neil Phillipson**, pupils dived into the Big Issues that matter to them, engaging in rich dialogue designed to help them *think with others* while also learning to *think for themselves*.

P4C is all about developing children's **oracy, critical thinking, communication skills and self-confidence**. By creating a safe space for curiosity and debate, we help pupils build the essential foundations they need for academic success, personal growth and future life.

What an incredible way to empower our learners to think deeply, challenge ideas and grow together as a community of young philosophers.

If you'd like, I can also craft a shorter version for social media or a more formal version for a report.



Upskilling Teachers in Gymnastics

Fifteen enthusiastic teachers from across our Trust leapt into action at Ellison Primary Academy for a full day of high-impact gymnastics training! The atmosphere was buzzing as staff explored how to plan and deliver exciting, high-quality gymnastics lessons that will inspire pupils back in their own schools. The training was expertly led by **Deb O'Neill**, Workforce Development Officer at the Stoke City Foundation, who will continue to work closely with us to strengthen PE provision and build staff confidence across the Trust.

To bring the learning to life, Deb modelled lessons with Ellison's Year 3 and Year 5 classes—showcasing brilliant examples of progression, challenge and creativity. By the end of the day, our teachers weren't just observing... they were performing! Participants proudly demonstrated their newly-honed skills, proving just how much progress can be made in a single, empowering day of professional development.

What a fantastic step forward for PE across the Trust.

CPD & Events

3 Meet the team



The Role of the Central Team at The Societas Trust

At The Societas Trust, collaboration and support are at the heart of everything we do. Our Central Team plays a vital role in ensuring that each school within the Trust can focus on what matters most—providing the very best education for our children.

What does the Central Team do?

The Central Team provides strategic leadership and operational support across all our schools. Their work covers a wide range of areas, including:

- **Finance and Compliance**
Managing budgets, financial planning, and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements so schools can operate efficiently and securely.
- **Human Resources and Recruitment**
Supporting staff recruitment, wellbeing, and professional development to maintain a strong and motivated workforce.
- **Governance and Policy**
Developing and maintaining policies, safeguarding standards, and governance frameworks to keep our schools safe and effective.
- **IT and Digital Services**
Delivering reliable technology solutions and digital innovation to enhance teaching, learning, and administration.
- **School Improvement and Education Support**
Working closely with headteachers and leadership teams to drive continuous improvement and share best practice across the Trust.

Why is this important?

By centralising these key functions, the Trust ensures consistency, efficiency, and high standards across all schools. This allows school leaders and teachers to dedicate more time to pupils, knowing they have expert support behind the scenes.

The Central Team is committed to working in partnership with schools, listening to their needs, and providing tailored solutions. Together, we create a strong, united community where every child can thrive.

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Working for us - Our commitment to Wellbeing!

Wellbeing at the Heart of The Societas Trust

At The Societas Trust, we believe that wellbeing isn't a bonus—it's a foundation. Our commitment to staff wellbeing is woven into every aspect of our work, creating an environment where people feel safe, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Here's how we're making that vision a reality:

- Promoting wellbeing as a core part of all Trust activities
- Supporting both physical and mental health across our workforce
- Offering resources and interventions to help staff manage stress effectively
- Maintaining safe, healthy workplaces for all
- Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and habits
- Helping staff with disabilities or health conditions stay active and engaged at work
- Managing workloads with care, reflecting our ethos of wellbeing
- Fostering positive morale and a culture of motivation
- Creating opportunities for staff to take part in wellbeing initiatives
- Ensuring every voice is heard—staff feel listened to and valued
- Tackling the root causes of work-related mental health challenges
- Investing in professional development to boost job satisfaction and growth

Together, we're building a workplace where wellbeing isn't just supported—it's celebrated.

Working for us

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Sunday Times Parent Power Guide

Goldenhill Primary Academy Shines in the Sunday Times Parent Power Guide 2026

We are incredibly proud to share that **Goldenhill Primary Academy**, part of The Societas Trust, has been recognised as one of the **top-performing primary schools in the entire country** in the newly published *Sunday Times Parent Power Guide 2026*.

Our flagship school achieved an outstanding **127th place nationally** and ranked **8th in the whole of the West Midlands**—a remarkable achievement out of more than 2,000 schools considered.

★ A Snapshot of the Success

- **127th nationally** among state primary schools
- **8th in the West Midlands region**

🌱 Why This Matters

The *Parent Power* guide is one of the most respected school ranking systems in the UK, using pupil academic performance to give families a clear picture of excellence across England. Goldenhill's placement firmly within the **Top 1,000 schools nationally** highlights not only exceptional academic outcomes but also the school's commitment to nurturing the whole child.

💬 What Our Community Says

Mr Steve Martin, Headteacher, shared his pride:

"This achievement reflects the extraordinary dedication of our staff, the partnership with families and the hard work of our pupils. We emphasise curiosity, resilience and a positive attitude to learning."

Angela Bradshaw, Chair of the Local Governing Board, added:

"Coming 127th nationally—and in the top 10 of primary schools in the West Midlands—shows the huge dedication of all staff, their commitment to education and their deep understanding of our pupils."

Jon Lovatt, CEO of The Societas Trust, celebrated the news:

"We are incredibly proud of the children's exceptional personal development as well as their academic prowess, which was rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2023."



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Welcome...

Sandford Hill

Sandford Hill Primary School Begins Associate Membership

In June, Sandford Hill Primary School's Governing Body formally expressed its interest in becoming an associate member of The Societas Trust. This followed extensive work by governors and school leaders to explore Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) that best reflect the school's vision, values, and long-term aspirations for pupils, staff, and the wider community.

Working Together Since September

Since the start of the academic year, the School has been collaborating informally with the Trust. Leaders, staff and RUGS have attended Trust meetings, learned more about the other schools within the Trust, and gained insight into its processes and ways of working.

A Positive Start

We are pleased to share that this early partnership has been extremely positive. With support from the local authority, the Governing Body has now agreed to enter into a formal associate agreement with The Societas Trust.

This step will allow the School to experience first-hand the support, opportunities and collaborative projects available across the Trust.

Next Steps

During the Spring term, all stakeholders — including parents and carers — will be formally consulted before any decision is made about submitting an application to the Department for Education to convert to academy status.

Find Out More

To learn more about Sandford Hill Primary School, please visit their website:

<https://sandfordhill.org.uk/>



Long Service Awards

25 Years of Service

This month, we are proud to honour four remarkable members of *Societas* who have each reached an extraordinary milestone: **25 years of continuous service.**

Their commitment, professionalism, and unwavering support have shaped our community in ways that cannot be overstated.

Over the past quarter-century, these individuals have contributed not only their time, but their energy, expertise, and heart. They have been mentors, problem-solvers, steady hands during challenges, and friendly faces that make our organisation what it is today.

To mark this achievement, each of our long-serving members has been awarded **£200 in vouchers** as a token of appreciation, along with a **well-deserved day off** to relax, recharge, and celebrate in whatever way suits them best.

Please join us in congratulating and thanking them for their exceptional service. Their dedication continues to inspire us all, and we look forward to many more years of working together.

Thank you.



<https://www.societastrust.org.uk>



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