Development Programme for Chairs of Multi Academy Trusts

1. Leading the board - taking the chair

- The role of the chair within the trust
- The wider role of the chair: engagement with dioceses, RDO, ESFA and other trusts
- The strategic leadership role unpacked
- Specific expectations of the chair
- Scoping and defining your role, commitment and availability as MAT chair
- Leadership styles and behaviours
- Planning your development as chair
- Governance action planning

2. Building your board

- Building a skilled and diverse board team (including succession planning)
- Establishing suitable governance professional support
- Governance capacity: using delegation effectively
- Managing board relationships and dynamics
- Establishing and working with local governance
- Managing trustee performance and meeting attendance
- Communicating effectively with the board; the CEO; local governance
- Developing a healthy governance culture: finding the right level of board challenge; establishing the board's culture of operation; unifying governance culture across the trust

3. Working with your trust's executive team

- Expectations of the CEO role including their accounting officer role
- The relationship with the CEO: respecting role boundaries, staying strategic and negotiating
- Working with other senior executive leaders and ensuring a talent pipeline and contingency planning
- Developing an effective working relationship with the governance professional
- Rigorous performance management: day to day; appraisal and objective setting; pay awards; dealing with significant underperformance
- Effective challenge: agreeing a reporting framework, setting expectations for trustees
- Looking after your CEO and senior executive: promotion of wellbeing; professional development.
- Promoting engagement with staff

4. Developing the strategy

- The strategic and generative role of the board
- Setting the vision and strategy
- Achieving a healthy trust culture - the chair and board's role
- Shaping your trust's organisational identity
- Engaging with stakeholders to develop vision and strategy
- Growth considerations including maintaining sustainable improvement at scale
- Empowering local governance
- Communicating and monitoring the strategy

5. Making good decisions for your trust

- A suitable meeting and reporting framework to support effective board decision making
- Effective delegation, monitoring and control of delegated decision making
- Ensuring informed, rigorous and evidence based decisions
- Making better decisions: setting risk appetite and using the risk register
- Using stakeholders' views to make better decisions
- Difficult meetings and effective chairing
- Getting formalities right
- Communicating decisions effectively to achieve transparency and engagement

6. Evaluating the effectiveness of governance

- Expectations for boards to evaluate their effectiveness.
- Implications for growth: effectiveness for a larger trust?
- Getting your governance structure right: committees and local governance
- Developing an effective internal audit culture: does your assurance reassure you?
- Developing an effective relationship with the members
- Responding to difficult findings including, if necessary, managing crises
- Personal development review and next steps
- Developing the board and local governance