



# Governance Advocate Teams



## **Christian Leadership. - 'Faith to Love and Serve.'**

Christian leadership is responsive to human need and is exercised by:

- showing personal concern;
- a deep faith in the value and meaning of life;
- and a strong hope which breaks beyond boundaries.

This can only be accomplished through service.

This is the kind of leadership which will ensure:

- the needs of communities are met;
- lives are transformed; and
- children's needs are provided for.

This is our task as those charged with the responsibility for providing effective governance across Sola Fide Multi-Academy Trust.

## **Why Advocates?**

We believe Advocacy best describes the nature of governance at a local school level.

The word 'Advocacy' comes from Latin and means 'to add a voice.'

An Advocate publicly supports, recommends a particular cause, concern or policy.

Synonyms connected to advocacy – champion, upholder, supporter, backer, promoter, protector, campaigner.

We primarily see Advocates in educational terms as those who act for and become the voice of the child. They are active supporters of local schools and of Sola Fide C of E Multi-Academy Trust.

Advocates ensure rights and needs are recognised.

## **Advocate Principles involve:**

Collaboration; interdependency

Clarity of purpose

Safeguarding

Empowerment - putting other people first

Equality, accessibility and diversity

## **Advocate Teams: Governance at Local Level – Increasing capacity, impact, potential.**

*(Reference should be made throughout this document to the Trust's 'Governance Document' which clarifies the function of the Advocate Team and their dual function in supporting the ongoing development of Sola Fide Multi-Academy Trust and the school/academy where they serve).*

**The Advocate Team has the dual role of supporting the Trust in one direction and Schools in the other.**



As a Trust focussed on school improvement, the talents, skills, abilities of each Advocate increase the overall capacity of the Trust in meeting school priorities and as a direct result the needs of all the children entrusted into our care by their parents/guardians. Advocates are asked to work alongside other schools within the Trust, take part in Trust briefing sessions and on occasions take the lead within collaborative activities, thus providing the opportunity for everyone to benefit from their area/s of expertise.

***The Directors Board ensure there is appropriate church representation at local level. They appoint Advocates who actively support the ethical values and principles of Sola Fide C. of E. Multi-Academy Trust.***

### **Advocate Team Working Operational**

#### **The Role of the Company Secretary in relation to Advocate Teams:**

To keep up-to-date and respond to requests from DfE, ESFA, Companies House etc. on behalf of the Trust, interpreting relevant information into focused agendas for Advocate Teams to consider.

The Company Secretary acts as the Advocates supervisor by supporting Advocate Teams in:

- ensuring Advocate Teams are operating according to the Governance Document and fully compliant in fulfilling their responsibilities;
- producing Advocate Team meeting agendas and subsequent minutes;
- circulating paperwork in a timely manner so Advocates are kept informed and able to respond as required in meetings;
- capturing effective practices/ways of working and disseminating this information across all Advocates so everyone benefits;
- monitoring the impact of the Advocates work and circulating relevant, pertinent information;
- coordinating relevant training briefings in conjunction with the Operational Director/CEO;
- recording and monitoring meeting attendance;

- keeping up-to-date details/records of Advocates and communicated with them accordingly; and
- acting as the link between the Directors Board and Advocate Teams.

### Trust Briefings

Centrally disseminated Information delivered by Trust personnel, external consultants and key partners linked to ongoing developments that particularly apply to Advocates.

### Advocate Briefings linked to areas of Responsibility (i.e. EYFS)

Collaborative activity (Joint Practice Development) between schools bringing Advocates/School personnel with similar roles together with centrally skilled personnel/external consultants with a view to extend provision, develop understanding and shape practice in order to maximise Trust potential.

### Egalitarian Approach

	Hierarchical	Egalitarian
<b>Supports: Organisation</b>	Individual Performers	Teams
<b>Fairness</b>	Performance	Equal Treatment
<b>Behaviours</b>	Opportunities for promotion Individual contributors Recognition of Difference	Cooperation Share Knowledge Freely Cross Training in jobs

Advocate Teams will operate an egalitarian approach as opposed to a hierarchical system, with different Advocates taking the lead within the Team when/where appropriate, supported by school staff holding an appropriate skill set. The skills associated with this style of working rely on high levels of interdependency.

### Individual Advocate Key Roles include:

- EYFS
- Safeguarding
- SEND
- Health and Safety
- Finance

Together with collective responsibility for all activities that directly relate to school improvement and individual school specific priorities.

## Broadening Horizons - Deepening Perspective:

*'Highly codified and structured learning hampers the development of perspectives.'*

The correct answer, truth, the only right way, maxims and too much deductive logic kills perspectives.

Developing and broadening perspective involves:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• questioning</li><li>• debating</li><li>• testing</li><li>• experimenting</li><li>• envisioning</li></ul>



Deeply personal insights shape one's perspectives.

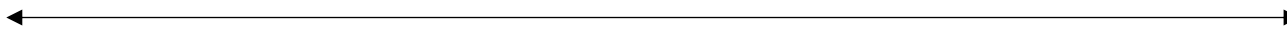
## To unlock meaning in what we learn we need the Key perspectives.

**Newton:** Unlocked nature's secret, the impact of gravity over the solar system. Newton didn't discover gravity, he explained why the moon doesn't collapse into the earth and the planets into the sun. The laws of gravity were born out of this insight.

## Developing Effective Learning Cycles

### Technical Skills

require shorter learning cycles as they are codified and structured.



### Adaptive Skills

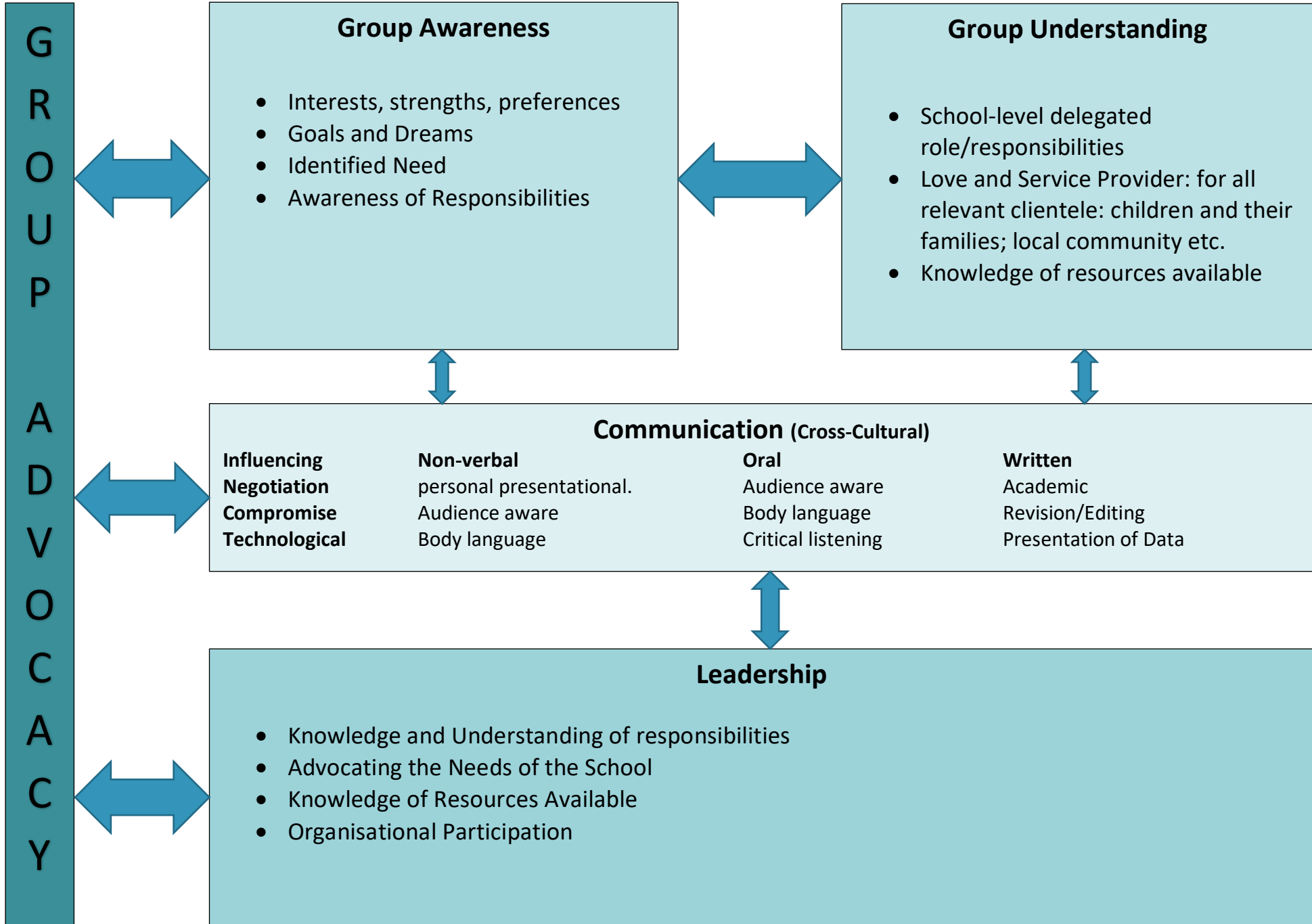
require longer learning cycles (years) as they require meta learning processes.

## Strategic Working

Working strategically advocates need to think logically and flexibly in order to achieve their desired results. Engaging stakeholders in early conversations about goals and objectives achieves the correct level of 'buy in' for the advocacy effort and assist the group in articulating those goals and objectives.

The model below provides a clear perspective on how Advocacy Groups work, the skills required and levels of awareness and understanding.

# Group Advocacy - Organisational Development



## **Recruitment**

The Trust seeks to:

- recruit Advocates who share the vision and ethical position of Sola Fide C of E Multi-Academy Trust;
- appoint high calibre Advocates with an appropriate skill set to support each school Team;
- engage Advocates committed to school improvement/development and are keen to work with school personnel to achieve this;
- provide training and support for Advocates with a view to encouraging active participation with the Trust Directors;
- have representation on each school Team from the parent body, and those committed to the Trust's church foundation; and
- develop Advocate Teams that reflect the local communities in which each Trust schools serve.

## **Advocates**

Advocates are designated following a recruitment process involving an application, selection and subsequent interview.

### **Safeguarding Statement:**

*Sola Fide C of E MAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Advocates will be subject to satisfactory clearances including references and DBS checks.*

## Sola Fide C of E. Multi-Academy Trust Advocates

### Role Specification

This is a voluntary, community role.

Advocates work as a team. They work in partnership with the Trust, and the school they are appointed to, in providing the very best educational provision possible for the children in their care.

### Key Focus:

In line with the vision and values of Sola Fide C of E MAT, a personal commitment to:

- actively demonstrating love and service towards others;
- maximising productivity and impact;
- supporting excellent Trust/school outcomes;
- encouraging, supporting and promoting effective ways of working;
- assisting, contributing to the implementation and evaluation of policy, practice and procedures; and
- on occasions, where felt appropriate, involvement in the selection and appointment of school staff.

### Application (A) Interview (I) Reference (R)

	Criteria	How assessed	Essential	Desirable
<b>Relevant Experience</b>	Experience that is either directly related to the role of an Advocate, or is transferable.	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
<b>Advocate Role</b>				
	<b>A willingness to:</b>	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• attend training briefings that assist in fulfilling the role;			
	• use and apply effective assessment techniques;	<b>A/I/R</b>		<b>D</b>
	• use, comparative data	<b>A/I</b>		<b>D</b>
	• support the Trust in deploying a range of strategies that assist in raising pupils' achievement;	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• commit to developing effective partnerships;	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• use ICT to support the role;	<b>A/I</b>		<b>D</b>
	• support the Trust by taking a lead in an area/aspect (including resources and financial management);	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work in conjunction with school staff to construct an annual development plan, a variety of Trust reports; and</li> </ul>	A/R/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>involvement in school audit and review.</li> </ul>	A/R	E	
<b>Skills and Abilities</b>				
	<b>The ability to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set high expectations and standards as a role model;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop productive relationships at all levels;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inspire and motivate;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work collaboratively as part of a team; a commitment to working interdependently;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>where appropriate, support the planning and deliver of relevant training;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seek advice and support where necessary;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicate and work effectively;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prioritise, plan and organise specific tasks.</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
<b>Communication Skills</b>				
	<b>General:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen to, and understand the views of others;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consult and negotiate to achieve specific objectives;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ability to respect the confidences of colleagues;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contribute to meetings where appropriate; and</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain good communication systems with all relevant personnel.</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<b>Non-verbal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>personal presentational appropriate to a role in the governance of the Trust;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aware of audience;</li> </ul>	A/I/R	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>awareness and appropriate use of body language;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<b>Oral</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when supporting oral presentations have an aware of audience;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate awareness and appropriate use of body language;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective critical listening - the ability to evaluate what is being said and how.</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<b>Written</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage in descriptive, analytical, persuasive and critical writing;</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support the revision and editing of Advocate documentation; and</li> </ul>	A/I	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support the effective presentation of data.</li> </ul>	A/I	E	

<b>Decision making Skills</b>	<b>The ability to:</b>			
	• think creatively;	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• to anticipate and solve problems; and	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• demonstrate balanced and fair judgement.	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>	
<b>Personal Qualities</b>				
	<b>The ability to:</b>	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• prioritise and manage time effectively;			
	• work consistently to deadlines, setting and achieving challenging but realistic goals;	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• operate with high personal/organisational expectations;	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• accept guidance and support;	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• Show a commitment to meet all the demands of the role;	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>	
	• enjoy a sense of humour; and	<b>I</b>		<b>D</b>
• show commitment to educational inclusion.	<b>A/I/R</b>	<b>E</b>		