Governance oversight at Overley Hall School

The Proprietor, Headteacher, and Education Management Team at Overley Hall School operate within a robust framework of support and scrutiny to ensure high-quality education, safeguarding, and operational effectiveness. Oversight is provided through a combination of external and internal mechanisms, drawing on specialist expertise and statutory guidance.

External Sources of Scrutiny and Support include:

- The Proprietor or a delegated representative, providing strategic oversight and governance.
- The School Improvement Partner, offering independent evaluation of teaching, learning, and school development.
- Quality assurance visits from Local Authorities, including teams focused on Virtual Schools, SEND, Social Care, Contracts and Commissioning, and Safeguarding, ensuring compliance and promoting best practice.
- Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted, monitoring statutory standards and regulatory compliance.
- Safeguarding Boards, providing guidance and oversight on child protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures, their implementation and effectiveness
- SEND officers from placing authorities, ensuring the school meets the specific needs outlined in EHCPs and supports individual learners effectively.
- Virtual Schools from multiple placing authorities, contributing expertise in promoting outcomes for looked-after children.
- Awarding Bodies, overseeing assessment, accreditation, and compliance with external qualifications for learners and accredited awards for school

Internal Governance and Oversight:
As a proprietor-owned school, scrutiny is further strengthened through **Company Board** Meetings, which review and hold responsibility for:

- Company finances and resource allocation
- Health and safety compliance
- Recruitment and staffing processes
- Education quality and care provision

The Company Board benefits from the input of external specialists in health and safety and recruitment, providing additional independent oversight and guidance.

In addition, Overley Hall School has embedded internal **support and scrutiny** mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement. This includes the formation of the **Support and Scrutiny (SAS) Team**, which brings together key staff and leaders to review school performance, promote

accountability, and provide challenge from within. This structure ensures that oversight is not only externally informed but also rooted in day-to-day school practice, fostering a culture of reflection, professional challenge, and continuous development.

The Aims, Objectives and Responsibilities of the SAS Team.

Support and Scrutiny Responsibilities

The Support and Scrutiny (SAS) Team at Overley Hall School provides a structured and ongoing framework of **monitoring, challenge, and support** across all aspects of school life. Its purpose is to ensure that the school operates effectively, maintains high standards, and continuously improves outcomes for learners. The SAS Team oversees and provides scrutiny for:

- **School Improvement Plan:** Development, implementation, and evaluation of priorities to ensure strategic objectives are met.
- **Safeguarding Provision:** Review of policies, procedures, training, and practice to ensure statutory compliance and the safety of all learners.
- **Training and Professional Development:** Oversight of staff training, identification of learning points, and embedding of best practice across the school.
- **6th Form Provision:** Including curriculum pathways, work experience opportunities, and preparation for adulthood.
- **SEND Provision:** Monitoring the quality and impact of support for learners with SEND, including EHCP outcomes and individualised planning.
- **Statutory Compliance:** Ensuring the school complies with legal and statutory obligations, including Health and Safety regs, Safeguarding and PREVENT duty oversight, Employment law, Equality Act and accessibility duties
- **Pupil Premium Spending:** Scrutiny of funding allocation and impact on learner outcomes.
- **Behaviour Management:** Review of behaviour policies, interventions, and consistency of practice across the school.
- **Attendance Management:** Monitoring attendance, identifying trends, and evaluating strategies to improve learner engagement.
- **School Finance:** Oversight of budgets, financial planning, and allocation of resources to support strategic priorities.
- **Learner Numbers:** Monitoring admissions, transitions, and retention to ensure appropriate planning and provision.
- **School Website:** Review of content to ensure transparency, accessibility, and compliance with statutory requirements.
- **Therapy Provision and External Contacts:** Oversight of specialist services, therapy programmes, and coordination with external professionals.
- **Learner Progress:** Monitoring academic and personal development outcomes to ensure learners are making measurable progress.

- **Health and Safety Provision and Incidents:** Review of policies, risk assessments, and reported incidents to ensure a safe learning environment.

In addition, SAS Team members provide the Headteacher with structured support and constructive scrutiny, ensuring that leadership decisions are robust, evidence-informed, and aligned with the school's strategic priorities. The Team reviews and approves policies and procedures, evaluates feedback and notes from external visitors—including Local Authority advisors, inspectors, and parents following events or consultations—and monitors the implementation of key initiatives. This dual role of support and challenge ensures that the Headteacher is guided, accountable, and empowered to drive continuous improvement, promote high-quality teaching and learning, and maintain a culture that is transparent, inclusive, and learner centred.

SAS Team Objectives and Governance Compliance

The Support and Scrutiny (SAS) Team plays a vital role in supporting, challenging, and monitoring school leadership while ensuring that all activities are aligned with high standards of governance and ethical practice. In fulfilling their objectives, SAS Board members **actively uphold the Nolan Principles of Public Life**, which underpin the school's commitment to accountable and transparent decision-making:

- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty and moral soundness in all deliberations and interactions.
- **Objectivity:** Making decisions based on evidence, fairness, and impartiality, free from bias or personal interest.
- **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for actions, recommendations, and contributions to the school's improvement and reporting structures.
- **Openness:** Ensuring transparency in discussions, decision-making, and communication with staff, governors, parents, and stakeholders.
- **Honesty:** Communicating clearly, truthfully, and accurately in all matters relating to the school's operations and provision.
- **Leadership:** Demonstrating exemplary professional conduct, guiding discussions constructively, and fostering a culture of improvement and excellence.
- **Selflessness:** Acting in the best interests of learners, staff, and the school community rather than personal gain.

During meetings and discussions, SAS Board members apply these principles while carrying out their objectives, which include:

- Establishing and maintaining effective, collaborative relationships with staff.
- Developing a deep understanding of learners' individual needs to inform support and strategic decision-making.

- Monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding systems and ensuring statutory compliance.
- Recognising and celebrating successes across the school to promote achievement and morale.
- Overseeing the implementation of the School Improvement Plan, providing constructive feedback and challenge.
- Increasing first-hand knowledge of the school's operations, including classroom practice and departmental initiatives.
- Observing policies, learning plans, and interventions in practice, ensuring effectiveness and consistency.
- Evaluating resources and their impact on learning, identifying areas for development.
- Providing support and encouragement to staff and learners, promoting wellbeing and engagement.
- Contributing meaningfully to the school's self-evaluation process, ensuring reflection informs continuous improvement.
- Strengthening links across all departments and areas of the school, promoting a cohesive, holistic approach to provision.

By aligning their work with the Nolan Principles, the SAS Team ensures that their oversight not only supports the Headteacher and staff but also reinforces the school's commitment to ethical governance, accountability, and high-quality education—complementing the statutory duties and strategic oversight of governance.

Legislation and Guidance

Overley Hall School is an independent special school and is committed to full compliance with all relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and regulatory frameworks that govern independent schools. This ensures that the school maintains high standards of education, safeguarding, inclusion, and governance. Key areas of compliance include:

- **The Independent School Standards – Guidance for Independent Schools (2019):** Ensuring that the school meets all standards related to quality of education, welfare, health and safety, premises, and leadership.
- **Standard Inspections of Non-Association Independent Schools (2024):** Adhering to inspection frameworks and protocols that assess school effectiveness, safeguarding, and educational outcomes.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Complying with duties to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations for all learners, staff, and the wider community.

These legislative and regulatory frameworks inform the structure and operation of the Support and Scrutiny (SAS) Team, ensuring that oversight, monitoring, and strategic decision-making are aligned with statutory expectations and best practice in independent special education provision.

The Support and Scrutiny Team is made up of:

Chairperson - Liz Hyner

Head of school – Bev Doran

Proprietor – Mrs Anita Brown

School Improvement Partner – Heather Davies

Managing Director of Overley Hall Ltd – Lynn Thompson

Clinical and Therapy lead/ Assistant Head – Rachel Hawley

Head of 6th form/ Assistant Head – Dee Marshall

SENCO – Lorna Deakin

Pastoral Head- Mandy Peever