

Governance arrangements for school groups

ISI recommends that school groups ¹ provide a statement of the group level governance arrangements for inspectors to read before an inspection.

Although a statement is voluntary, it will save the individual schools time and anxiety on inspection. If you want to provide a governance statement, please complete the table below, which will take you through the information most useful to inspectors.

Completed by:	
Date:	

Item	Information required	Response
1.	Name of group and registered head office.	Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST) Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JR
2.	Short statement of the ethos of the group	Methodist Schools are inclusive and welcoming communities where individuals are valued, good order is respected, relationships cherished, and where excellence in its widest sense (academic, extra-curricular, lifestyle) is pursued. Methodist Schools encourage a sense of belonging, seek to improve lives and boldly expect the impossible. In Methodist Schools educational experiences and activities bring mind and heart, intellect and passion together. Methodist Schools work in mutually beneficial partnerships with each other and the wider Methodist Church. NB the statement of ethos of each school within the group may be worded slightly differently to reflect the particular characteristics of the school and its community.

¹School groups in this context mean schools in common ownership rather than those with informal partnership ties. Examples are the Woodard Schools, the Girls’ Day School Trust, and the Methodist Independent Schools Trust.

3.	Names of all schools in the group, identifying those inspected by ISI.	<p>There are two categories of schools in the group to which this note applies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Trust” Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culford School* – URN: 124886 • Farringtons School* – URN: 101685 • Kent College, Canterbury* – URN: 119001 • Kent College, Pembury* – URN: 118946 • Queen's College, Taunton* – URN: 123913 • Shebbear College* – URN: 113605 • Truro School* – URN: 112076 • Woodhouse Grove School* – URN: 108114 2. “Acquired Schools”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorenden School – URN 119014 • Moorlands School – URN 108102 • Truro High School* – URN 112077 <p>All MIST schools are members of independent school associations and inspected by ISI.</p> <p>There is a third category of schools linked to the group known as “Associated schools” which comprises Ashville College, Kingswood School and Rydal Penrhos. The Methodist Schools Property Company. (MSPC) holds the properties in Trust for both MIST schools and Associated Schools. MIST has no governance responsibility for</p>
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		Associated Schools, each school is run independently by its own governing body, so this note is not relevant to the Associated schools.
4.	An organogram ² for the group, showing all the bodies/boards with control/influence over schools. This should include local advisory boards, if any, and mention whether or not they have legal status and authority. ³	Please see organogram below which shows the governance relationship between MIST and the governing bodies of the Trust and Acquired Schools.
5.	Identify which bodies within the group are registered companies and charities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIST is a company limited by guarantee (Company number: 07649422) and registered charity (Charity Number: 1142794)). • The Trust schools are not registered companies or charities but all have (or will have) their own charitable foundation for fundraising purposes only. • Three of the Acquired schools (Lorenden School and MoorlandsSchool) are charitable companies limited by guarantee. • One of the Acquired schools (Truro High School) is a charity established by Charity Commission Scheme.
6.	Indicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role of each body/board on the organogram; and • the nature of their influence over school and contact with the school. 	MIST delegates governance responsibilities to each school’s local governing body in accordance with a formal scheme of delegation (described in MIST’s Instrument of Government which is available to inspectors along with their Governance Manual and Delegation Planner). Each local governing body has responsibility for ensuring that their school meets the Independent School Standards and can therefore be considered the school’s governing body for inspection purposes. However, note that in exceptional circumstances MIST can

²A diagram that shows the structure of an organisation and the relationships and relative ranks of its parts and positions/jobs.

³Please ensure terms or titles are used consistently in the organogram so that it is clear which person or entity is being referenced.

		intervene. These circumstances are listed in MIST’s Instrument of Government and would include, for example, a serious failure to meet certain standards required by MIST or a fundamental breakdown in relationships between the Trustees and School Governors, School Governors and a School’s senior management team.
7.	Which schools, if any, have Tier 4 sponsor licences.	Those marked with a * in box 3 above
8.	Who is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as the proprietor for each school? This should be the same as the individual(s)/body named on the DfE database which can be accessed at https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/ . ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Trust schools = MIST • For Acquired Schools = the relevant company /charity linked to the school (i.e. Lorenden’s proprietor = Lorenden School Limited)
9.	Has the group agreed with the DfE that the proprietor is one or more individual(s)/a body other than those named on www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk ? If so, please provide copies of any relevant correspondence with the DfE confirming this.	No, MIST have confirmed that the correct proprietors are registered on www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk . MIST have also confirmed that they have explained their group structure to the DfE.
10.	Has a Chair been appointed? (The appointment of a chair is the trigger for the DfE treating a group as a “body of persons” rather than as a number of individuals.)	Yes, MIST has a chair of trustees and each body of school governors also has a chair.
11.	If the registered proprietor of any of the schools in the group is a body with several layers of boards, please explain how the suitability of people at each level is ensured (i.e. to what vetting checks ⁵ are they subject and by whom e.g. Secretary of State, school). ⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each school in the group maintains its own single central register, on which the details of the School Governors appear. MIST then maintains its own register (equivalent to a school's

⁴The DfE’s database of educational establishments in England and Wales.

⁵NB. The question is not intended to imply that it is a regulatory requirement that, in a complex, multi-layered organisation, every person at every level must be subject to formal vetting checks. As a minimum, the persons who are registered on www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk as the proprietor, or who are members of the body named on www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk as the proprietor, must have been vetted as required by the ISS.

⁶Ensure the vetting checks for individuals registered as proprietors, or who are members of the body registered as proprietor, appear as required on the SCR of each relevant school. (This will be checked by inspectors on site.)

		<p>single central register) recording the relevant details for the Trustees and senior MIST executives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At School level, the Chair of the School Governors is responsible for ensuring that the School undertakes DBS and Section 128 checks on other School Governors and submits to the Secretary of State for his or her own check. • At MIST Trustee level, the same principle applies, with the Chair of Trustees being responsible for ensuring that DBS and Section 128 checks on the other Trustees and MIST Executives are undertaken, and submitting to the Secretary of State for his or her own.
12.	What types of decisions are the various bodies/boards empowered to take (aka the scheme of delegation, in brief) in relation to the Independent School Standards (ISS) and other associated regulations? ⁷	The Trustees delegate the governance and management of each school to its local governing body. Local governing bodies have full responsibility for ensuring that the ISS are met. See Delegation Planner and Governance Manual for further detail if required.
13.	List any policies that are common across the group and briefly describe how these are adjusted to the context of individual schools and kept up to date.	Each school establishes key policies as required for inspection that are consistent with the school's aims and are managed in each school by the management team overseen by the school's governing body. Best practice and guidance is shared among the group via termly meetings of Chairs of local governing bodies and Heads.
14.	Describe any impact that being part of the group has on an individual school's complaints procedure, e.g., at stage 3.	The complaints procedure for each school is the responsibility of that school; MIST does not serve as a final place for appeal though it may be called on to assist in mediation should this be required.

⁷ ISI does not need to know about arrangements for making financial decisions.

15.	Describe any group-wide systems for ensuring that safeguarding strategy is effective in each school, e.g., each school has a policy, which is reviewed at least annually to ensure that it is up to date, and the efficacy of practice is regularly reviewed.	Responsibility for safeguarding is delegated to school governors and overseen by MIST. School governors have to report annually to MIST on child protection and safeguarding and at any point in the year if a major safeguarding issue arises.
16.	Explain any group-wide approach for ensuring that leaders and those with management responsibilities in each school <u>demonstrate good skills and knowledge</u> appropriate to their role so that the ISS are consistently met in their school, considering, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ recruitment processes for leaders and managers; ▪ training and support for leaders and managers; and ▪ performance management for leaders and managers. 	MIST’s Instrument of Government includes explicit acknowledgement of Standard 8 requirements. The detailed provisions of the scheme of delegation are intended to ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities at the Trust Schools can meet the standard, demonstrating good skills and knowledge and actively promoting the well-being of pupils. The Trustees use the Annual School Report (ASR) and routine visits by MIST Executive Officers and Trustees to keep in reasonable contact with each school underlining the school’s responsibility for Standard 8 compliance. The appointment of the Head and Bursar is a responsibility the schools share with MIST. There are agreed protocols and policies for the recruitment and appraisal processes for the Head and for the appointment of a new Chair of Governors.
17.	Explain any group-wide strategy to ensure that leaders and those with management responsibilities in each school <u>fulfil their responsibilities effectively</u> so that ISS are consistently met. See above for suggested considerations.	Governance manual and delegation planner. Also reporting systems described in note. MIST also organises group-wide information and training events for Heads, Chairs and others as may be required
18.	Please describe any systems by which the group ensures that the well-being of pupils is actively promoted by each school.	MIST receives and/or commissions reports in order for the Trustees to be assured of the quality of pastoral care and the procedures to meet all requirements of KCSIE. Specific examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual School Report (ASR).

		<p>Ad hoc reports as necessary – e.g., the Methodist Schools Safeguarding Review and Audit (SSRA) 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Annual Residential Conference, other meetings and training events during the year in which good practice is shared between school leaders and other specialists.
19.	For each school, please provide a link to where parents are provided with the required information about the proprietor and a statement of the school’s aims and ethos (which may include those of the overarching body), in accordance with the “Provision of Information” standard (para.32(2)).	Links are provided by each school on their websites and in the parent contracts. This information is also available on the Methodist Schools website.
20.	Are there any other arrangements not covered above which might be relevant to inspection?	<p>MIST says its approach is to provide support and challenge to School Governors, and to keep open effective channels of communication and dialogue, thereby minimising the likelihood of an occurrence that would warrant any formal intervention.</p> <p>Through these arrangements, the role of governor for inspection purposes is placed with the school governors of each of the Trust Schools.</p> <p>The arrangements for the Acquired Schools are somewhat different in legal form but in practice are very similar to those for Trust schools.</p>

MIST Organogram for ISI

