



**AMBITIONS**  
Academies Trust

## SCHEME OF DELEGATION

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<b>APPROVING COMMITTEE:</b>	Trust Board
<b>DATE ADOPTED:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> October 2023



**Outstanding Achievement for All**

## Introduction

As a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the Trust Board of Ambitions Academies Trust (AAT) is legally accountable for all statutory functions and major decisions concerning all the academies and subsidiary companies within the Trust.

The principle governing document in trusts is the Articles of Association. The Articles set out the charitable purpose of the Trust, providing a framework for trusts to act within both company and charity law. The Articles do not, however, include the specific detail of the Trust's chosen governance structure and how governance functions have been delegated.

The Scheme of Delegation explicitly establishes who carries out which governance function.

Governing and managing groups of schools is complex. The Scheme of Delegation does not detail every single governance function, but seeks to demonstrate the principles which determine the lines of accountability so that it is clear where certain functions and key decision-making lies.

There is a clear distinction between accountability through governance (by the Trust Board and its Committees) and accountability through line management (by executive leaders). The Scheme of Delegation illustrates 'mixed accountability' where both governance and line management are being utilised.

The Trust Board is not required to carry out all the Trust's governance functions and many can, and should, be delegated to the CEO & Executive Team, the Trust Board's Committees and the Academy Committees (local tier). The decision to delegate a function is made by the Trust Board. Without such delegation, the individual or committee has no power to act.

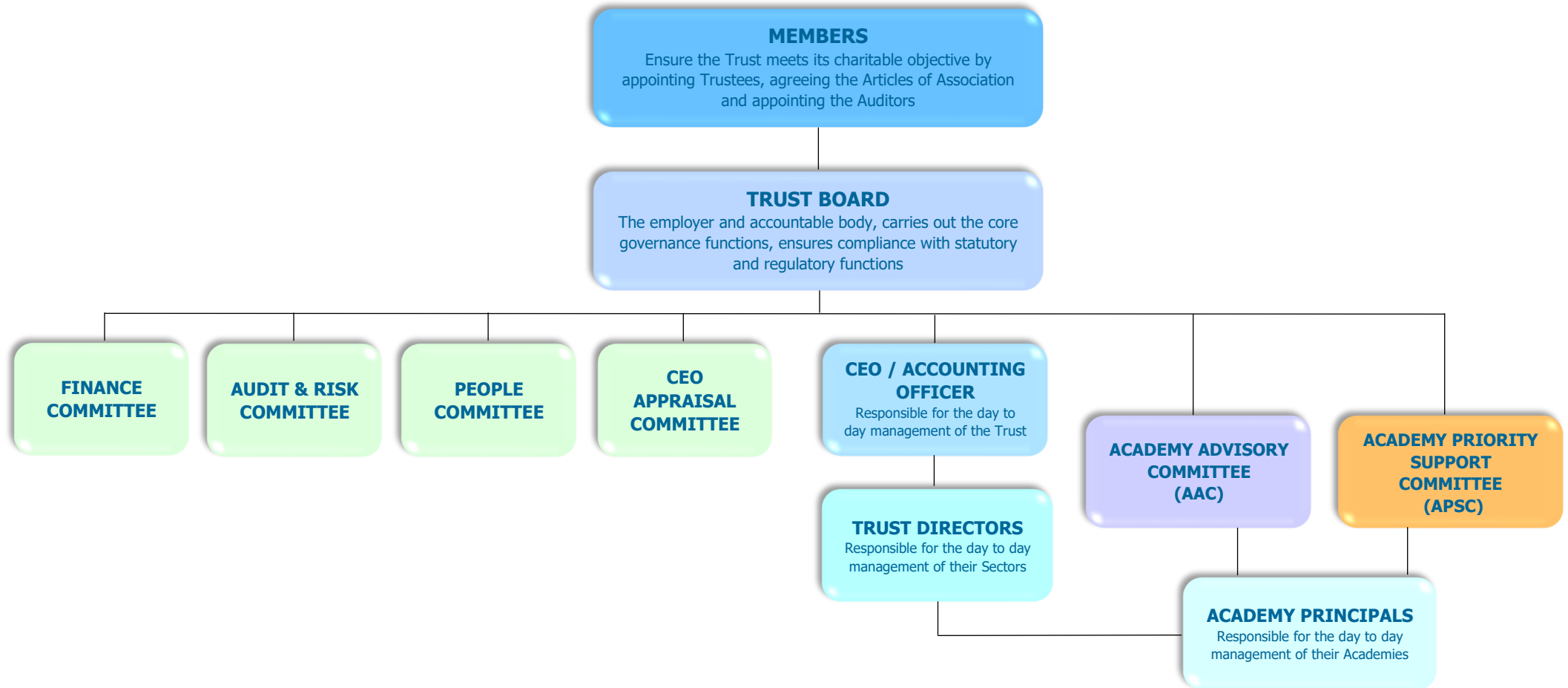
The Scheme of Delegation is an essential requirement for effective governance and clear decision making. It is the key document that defines lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT to ensure that the Members, Trustees, Trust Board Committees, Academy Committees, Executive Leadership and Academy Principals understand their role and responsibilities within the governance structure.

It is important that the Scheme of Delegation is visible to all, both within and beyond the Trust so that it is clear how the governance structure and lines of accountability work. The Scheme of Delegation must be published on the website.

The Trust Board has the power to change the constitution and powers of its Committees and the committee membership at any time.

This overarching Scheme of Delegation for decision making in the Trust should not be confused with the written Scheme of Delegation of Financial powers referred to in the ESFA Academy Trust Handbook.

# MODEL OF DELEGATION



## Governance Structure and Accountability

- The Members of the Trust are the guardians of the governance of the Trust, ensuring the charitable objective is fulfilled. They have a different status to Trustees. Their primary role is to hold the Trust Board to account.
- The Trust Board is responsible for the core governance functions:
  - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
  - Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
  - Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
  - Ensuring that the voices of stakeholders are heard
- The Trust Board appoint the Chief Executive (CEO), to whom it delegates responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy of the Trust. The CEO is held to account for the conduct and performance of the Trust, including the performance of the academies and the subsidiary company within the Trust, and for financial management.
- The CEO manages the Trust Directors for Education, Finance, Estates, and HR carrying out their performance management and setting their targets.
- The Trust Board has established Board Committees with delegated powers for Finance, Audit & Risk, People and the CEO Appraisal. At least three Trustees sit on each Board Committee. Committees have clear Terms of Reference.
- The Trust Board delegates some academy level monitoring and scrutinising functions to the Academy Committees. These committees also promote stakeholder engagement as a point of consultation and representation. The Academy Committees have clear Terms of Reference detailing the committees' remit and meeting requirements each term. Academy Committee Chairs are invited to meet with the Chair of Trustees and CEO each term.
- Academies that join the Trust, or require additional support, establish an Academy Priority Support Committee. This committee is led by the Executive team and meets each half term.
- Academy Principals are line managed by the Trust Education Directors reporting to the CEO.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Role of the Members

The Members have a limited yet distinct and vitally important role. They must ensure that the Trust Board carries out its charitable objective.

There must be at least three Members, although the DfE prefers at least five. There must be separation of powers between the Members and the Trust Board. Members are not permitted to be employees of the Academy Trust.

Members approve the Trust's Articles of Association, appoint Trustees and appoint the Trust's external auditors.

The Members should receive information about the Trust's business and receive the annual report and accounts. If they have concerns that the Trust is not carrying out its charitable objective, Members should remove Trustees that are failing to fulfil this responsibility.

The Chair of Trustees is appointed as a Member to ensure that Members are kept informed and engaged. This maintains a robust governance structure as the majority of Members are independent of the Trust Board.

### The Role of the Trustees

The Trust is a charitable company and so Trustees are both charity Trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and Company Directors (within the terms of the Companies Act 2006).

Trustees are bound by both charity and company law. The terms 'Trustee' and 'Director' are often used interchangeably. AAT uses the term 'Trustee' as it avoids the possible confusion caused when Executive Leaders are Directors. The use of Trustee also serves to highlight the overarching charitable purpose of the organisation.

Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the Trust and, in accordance with the provisions set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and its Funding Agreement, are legally accountable for all statutory functions and for the performance of all schools within the Trust; they do this by carrying out the core governance functions.

The Trust Board must approve a written scheme of financial delegation and, if they choose to delegate to Board Committees and Academy Committees, must approve a written Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference.

The Trust creates channels of communication between the Trust Board, the Academy Committees and the CEO so that Academy Committees can share with them any concerns or celebrations they may have.

The Trust Board is legally responsible and accountable to the Department for Education.

As a Trust with a Church of England school, the Trust has a legal relationship with the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (DBE). This is governed by the Articles of Association and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust and the DBE.

The Board of Trustees has the right to review and adapt its governance structure at any time which includes removing delegation.

## The Role of Trust Board Committees

Trustees delegate some governance functions to Board Committees, one of which must include Audit & Risk which advises on the adequacy of the Trust's controls and risks.

Board Committees must have at least three Trustees in membership and Trustees must be in the majority for voting purposes; it is usual for the Trust Board to appoint Board Committee Chairs and Committee Members according to their skills.

The Trust delegates detailed scrutiny of financial management to the Finance Committee.

The Trust Board has a responsibility to make pay determinations for all staff annually. This responsibility is delegated to the People Committee to ensure that all pay determinations act in accordance with the Trust's Pay policy and procedures, including adherence to timings.

The Trust Board agree the members of the CEO Appraisal Committee. The appraisal process is an annual cycle to monitor and evaluate the progress of the CEO in achieving the Trust's strategic priorities.

## The Role of Academy Committees

The Trust Board delegates some governance functions to Academy Committees.

The Trust Board approves the appointment of the Academy Committee Chairs. It also approves the appointment of Academy Committee members at the time of their application.

The Academy Committee is close to, and representative of, the community the school serves. The Committee is informed of how their Academy is being managed through their meetings and school visits. They are tasked with scrutinising management information thus providing assurance to the Trust Board that the school is:

- operating within the ethos and values of the Trust and creating a positive climate for all stakeholders
- working within agreed policies
- meeting the agreed targets
- engaging with stakeholders
- acting as an ambassador for the Trust

The Trust board ensures effective channels of communication between Trustees and Academy Committees, as well as providing specific training and development programmes for all involved in the governance of the Trust.

The Trust Board can remove delegation to the Academy Committee at any time.

### ➤ **Academy Advisory Committees (AAC) – the standard governance model**

- The Academy Advisory Committees meets termly.
- Parent and staff members are elected to the AAC as representatives of the school community.
- Membership is ideally 6-8 committee members to enable succession planning. The maximum number of members is 8.

➤ **Academy Priority Support Committees (APSC) – the high-support governance model**

- The Trust establishes an Academy Priority Support Committee as an effective way of managing a school which requires rapid improvement across a range of operational areas as well as with the local governance function.
- The ASPC meets half termly to monitor and evaluate agreed actions and to take key decisions. The committee is chaired by the Director of Outcomes.
- The committee includes members of the senior executive team and non-executive committee members. The committee does not include parent members. The Trust's aim is to transition from an ASPC to the standard governance model and establish an AAC.

### **The Role of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Directors**

The Trust Board delegates the day to day management of the Trust to the Chief Executive Officer.

The CEO is also the Trust's Accounting Officer and, therefore, not only responsible for the performance of the Trust as a whole, but has a personal responsibility to parliament for the regularity, propriety and value for money and for assuring the Trust Board that the Trust is compliant with the Funding Agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook.

The CEO is responsible for the leadership and management of the Trust's executive team and is accountable for its performance.

The Directors for Education (for Primary, Secondary and Special Education), the Director for Outcomes, the Finance Director, Estates Director and HR Director report to the CEO.

The CEO reports to the Trust Board and its committees.

### **The Role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**

The CFO is the Trust's Finance Director with delegated responsibility for the Trust's detailed financial procedures.

### **The Role of the Academy Principal**

The day to day management of the Trust's schools is delegated to the Academy Principals. They are line managed by the Directors of Education in accordance with the Trust's policies.

Academy Principals share information with the Academy Committee about how the school operates to enable monitoring and scrutiny of key policies and improvement plans.

## KEY

### Governance Function and Decision Making:



Responsible and **A**ccountable for action at this level



Responsible for action at this level



**A**ccountable for action at this level



**C**onsulted by those accountable and/or responsible for decision making



**I**nformed by those accountable and/or responsible for decision making

**Highlighted** – statutory expectation or a requirement to comply with the Articles of Association or Funding Agreement



<b>BOARD BUSINESS</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	
Members: Appoint/Remove in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association	A R						
Trustees: Appoint/Remove in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association	A R	A R					TB accountable to Members
Chair of Trust Board: elect annually in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association		A R					TB accountable to Members
Board Committee Chairs: appoint annually, remove, suspend		A R					TB accountable to Members
Named Trustee for Safeguarding: agree		A R	I				
Named lead Trustee for SEND: agree		A R	I				
Named lead Trustee for Careers: agree		A R	I				
Governance Lead (as Company Secretary and Clerk to Trust Board): appoint, remove, suspend		A R	C				TB accountable to Members
Academy Advisory Committee Chairs: appoint, remove, suspend		A R	C	C		C	
Foundation Governors: appoint, remove, suspend		A R	C	C	C	C	In consultation with the Diocese
Parent Academy Committee Members: elect and appoint in accordance with the Trust's Articles		A R	C	C		C	
Academy Committee Members (including Staff): appoint, remove, suspend		A R	C	C	C	C	
Academy Committee Clerking Arrangements: agree		A R	C	I	I		
Ambers Group Directors: appoint, remove, suspend		A R	C				
Articles of Association: review		A R					
Articles of Association: ratify	A R						
Governance structure for the Trust: establish, review and agree annually		A R	C	I	I	I	TB accountable to Members
Scheme of Delegation: annual review		A	R	I	I	I	
Terms of Reference for Board Committees and for Academy Committees: agree annually		A R	C	I	I	I	

<b>BOARD BUSINESS</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	
Annual schedule of business for Trust Board (including policies): agree		A R	C				
Termly CEO Report for the Trust Board: receive and review		A R					CEO Accountable to TB
Annual schedule of business for Academy Committees (including policies): agree		A	C	R	R	C	
Termly Principal Report for the Academy Committee: receive and review		I		A R	A R		Principal Accountable to Academy Committee
Monitor progress on key priorities: agree reporting arrangements		A	R				
Termly report on performance of the Trust: submit to Members		A R	C				TB accountable to Members
Self-review of the Trust Board: complete annually		A R	I				TB accountable to Members
Trustee contribution: review annually		A R					Chair of Trustees accountable
Trust Board Skills Audit: complete annually and recruit to fill gaps		A R	I				
Trustee Succession – Governance Roles & Responsibilities: plan		A R	C				
External Review of Governance: commission every 3 years	C	A R	C				
Trustee recruitment: undertake		A R					TB accountable to Members
Academy Committee member recruitment: undertake		A R	C	C	C	C	TB accountable to Members
Trust and Academy websites are compliant: ensure		A	R			C	CEO accountable to TB for compliance of MAT and academies
Termly Chair's forum: attend and review the work of Academy Committees		A	C	R		I	AAC Chair accountable to TB
Governance Training & Development Programme: agree		A R	C	C	C	C	
Panels for suspensions/exclusions, disciplinary, capability, complaints, appeals: convene		A R	I	C		I	
Panels for suspensions/exclusions, disciplinary, capability, complaints, appeals: undertake		A R		R			

<b>VISION &amp; STRATEGY</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Determine Trust's vision, values and ethos		A R	R	C	C	C	TB accountable to Members TB oversight of Christian ethos for CofE Academies
Determine the Trust's strategic plan, key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured		A R	R	C	C	C	TB accountable to Members
Apply the Trust's vision and strategy to individual academies		A	R	C	C	R	
Determine Academies strategic plans and key priorities: approve		I	A R	I	I	C	
Effective implementation of strategy: Hold CEO to account		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Trust Expansion Plan & Due Diligence: agree		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Engagement with Stakeholders: ensure		A	R	R	R	R	
Trust Contingency & Business Continuity Plans: agree		A	R				TB accountable to Members

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Approve Trust curriculum, academy curriculum and curriculum policy		A	R				
Ensure high standards of teaching and learning		A	R				
Delivery of curriculum			A			R	
Set targets for trust outcomes		A	R				
Plan and deliver individual school improvement interventions and strategies			A	C	C	R	

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Trust's educational performance against Strategic Plan KPIs and Risk Register: monitor and evaluate		A	R				
Academy's educational performance against the Academy RAP: monitor and evaluate				A	R	A	R
Strategy and impact of grant funding – pupil premium, catch-up funding PE & sport: agree and publish		A	R	I	I	R	

<b>PEOPLE</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Chief Executive Officer: appoint, dismiss, suspend		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Accounting Officer: appoint, dismiss, suspend		A	R				
Performance Manage the CEO		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Trust Executive Team Performance Management: conduct		C	A	R			
Academy Principals performance management: conduct			A	R	C		AAC Chair to attend
Executive Team staffing structure: determine		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Trust Directors: appoint, remove, suspend		A	R				
Academy Staffing structure		A	R			C	CEO to recommend to TB
Academy Principal: appoint, dismiss, suspend		C	A	R	C		AAC Chair to join interview panel
Academy Principal of CofE School: appoint, dismiss, suspend		C	A	R	C		In consultation with the Diocese
Staff appraisal procedure and pay progression: review and agree		A	R				
CEO Disciplinary and Capability procedures: implement		A	R				TB accountable to Members

<b>PEOPLE</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Central Team Disciplinary and Capability procedures: implement		A	R				
Academy Disciplinary and Capability procedures: implement		A	R			R	
Exit Payments / Early Retirement / Pension Discretion (above a certain threshold): approve		A	C				

<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Overall responsibility of Trust Funds		A	R				TB accountable to Members
External Auditor: remove and appoint	A R						Appoint at AGM
External Auditor: recommend		A R	C				Audit Committee accountable
Chief Financial Officer: appoint, dismiss, suspend, performance manage		A	R				CEO to advise TB
Trust Scheme of Financial Delegation: establish, monitor and review		A	R				TB Finance Committee to agree
Budget plan to support delivery of Trust strategic priorities: agree		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Reporting and monitoring arrangements for trust and academy budgets: agree		A	R	I		C	
Trust performance value for money: monitor and evaluate		A	R				Finance Committee accountable to TB
Annual Trust balanced budget in accordance with ESFA timeframes: approve		A	R				Finance Committee to advise TB
ESFA required reports and returns: submit		A	R				
Budget plan to support delivery of Academy's strategic priorities: agree		A	R	I		C	
Central spend / Management Fee for each Academy: agree		A	R				

<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Trust performance against Trust Budget: review		A	R				Finance Committee to advise TB
External Auditors' Report: receive	A R						
External Auditors' Recommendations: action		A	R				
Trust's externally audited accounts: submit to ESFA by 31 <sup>st</sup> December, publish on the Trust's website by 31 <sup>st</sup> January and file with Companies House by 31 <sup>st</sup> May		A	R				
Annual Report and Accounts: produce in line with the Charity Commission's recommended practice		A	R				
Financial outgoings not covered by the SoD: approve		A	R				
Benchmarking and Trust-wide value for money: evaluate		C	A R				
Financial Contingency Plan/levels of reserves: agree		A	R				
CEO pay award: agree		A R					
Academy Principal pay award: agree		A	R				

<b>ESTATES</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Trust wide estate vision, strategy and asset management plan: approve		A R	C				
School estates: monitor and ensure they are safe and well maintained		A	R	R	R	R	

<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
The Trust and its academies are compliant with its statutory and contractual duties: ensure		A	R				
Management of Risk – financial and non-financial: establish Risk Register and conduct regular review		A	R				
Compliance (e.g. safeguarding, H&S, employment): agree auditing and reporting arrangements		A	R	I	I	C	
Internal Auditor: appoint and receive report		A	R				CFO to advise Audit Committee
Register of Business interests: agree		A	R				
IT Acceptable Use Agreement: agree		A	R				
Compliance with the Gifts, Hospitality & Bribery Policy and Procedures: ensure		A	R				
Compliance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Policies & Procedures: ensure		A	R				

<b>POLICIES</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Determine Trust wide policies which reflect the Trust's ethos and values: approve		A	R				
Statutory policy changes: review and agree		A	R	C			
Trust Policies (non-statutory): review and agree in accordance with the Policy Timetable		A	R				
Facilitate discussions with unions and the JCNC		I	A	R			CEO accountable to TB
Trust wide pay policy, terms and conditions of employment: review and agree		A	R				
Disciplinary and Capability Policies: determine		A	R				
Complaints Policy: determine		A	R	C			
Complaints Procedures: implement		A	R	R	R	R	

<b>POLICIES</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Admissions Policy: review and agree		A	R	C	C	C	
Admissions Appeal Process		A	R	C	C	C	
Agree Trust Behaviour Policy		C	A R	C	C	C	
Implement Behaviour Policy			A			R	
Determine academy level policies which reflect the school's ethos and values: approve		A	R	C	C	R	TB oversight of Christian ethos for CofE Academies
Academy Policies: review and agree in accordance with the Policy Timetable		A	R	R	R	R	

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	
Stakeholder partnerships across the Trust: develop		A	R	C		C	
Stakeholder partnerships at academy level: develop			R	A		R	