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This Scheme of Delegation was approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees on 12 October 2020. It is a live document and will be updated by the Clerk to reflect changes in practice or policy and nomenclature. The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving all policies; as these are updated and include responsibilities delegated to Committees, Local Boards or officers, the Scheme will be updated accordingly.

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Preface

There are eight elements to effective governance and these principles apply to all levels of the Link Academy Trust’s governance arrangements.

1. The right people around the table;
2. Understanding the role and responsibilities;
3. Good chairing;
4. Professional clerking;
5. Good relationships based on trust;
6. Knowing the schools – their data, staff, parents, children and community;
7. Commitment to asking challenging questions; and
8. Confidence to have courageous conversations in the interests of the pupils.

Charity Object

The Trust’s Articles of Association state that:

4. *The Company’s object (“the Object”) is specifically restricted to the following:
To advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing Academies which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum and which shall include:*
 - (i) *Church of England Academies designated as such which shall be conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship, and having regard to any advice issued by the Diocesan Board of Education; and*

- (ii) *other Academies whether with or without a designated religious character; but in relation to each of the Academies to recognise and support their individual ethos, whether or not designated Church of England.*

1. **Vision, Aims and Objectives**

Vision

As a Multi-Academy Trust, we want to be nationally recognised for putting our pupils first by:

- Delivering educational excellence underpinned by strong moral values
- Each learner exceeding their aspirations in a quality learning environment
- Highly motivated, research-led, passionate teaching
- Schools being at the heart of and an integral part of their community
- Being a partner of choice

Our Mission is to deliver the best for our children, families and communities through:

- Innovative approaches to learning
- The development of partnership and collaborative working to create a cutting edge approach
- An uncompromising approach to health, safety, nurturing and inclusion

We will achieve this by investment in:

- High quality provision for staff and their pathways to success
- School environments that provide stimulating learning spaces
- Strong business planning to maximise the Trust's geographical range and collective expertise

Aims

Every Academy within our Trust has considered exactly what they offer their pupils and this has been summarised as:

Small Schools – Big Opportunities

- *Unforgettable experiences – setting the foundations for life*
- *No ceiling, the highest possible achievement for all*
- *Individually valued, collaboration not competition*
- *People matter, every interaction, every moment*

Our Church Schools:

The Church Schools within the Link Academy Trust aim to provide an education with four key elements which are at the heart of all that we are, enriched by our Christian traditions: Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity.

Our learners will be given opportunities to become independent, collaborative, creative learners who have the confidence to seek wisdom and nurture a love of learning.

Our small schools provide big opportunities to broaden learners' horizons and prepare them for the fullness of life, through hope, aspiration and our core Christian values. We focus on relationships and learning to live well in a wider community that can flourish together.

Central to children's learning is respecting the worth, dignity and preciousness of each person in a safe and inclusive environment within the sight and love of God.

Objectives

As a not-for profit organisation, the key driver for the Link Academy Trust is that its schools retain their individual characteristics as they deliver primary education and services within their local communities. The Trust's role is to maximise the value for money from central government funding through two strands:

- The Central Business Unit, led by the Trust Business Manager with purchasing using benefits of scale, as well as cross-Trust support, leadership and best practice in terms of employment and human resource management, accounting, budgeting, financial management, health and safety, safeguarding, IT, data protection, site and environmental management.
- The Executive Improvement Team providing all schools with access to best practice in terms of curriculum design, development and leadership, safeguarding, inclusion, adherence to standards, Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) practice, collation of data, statutory training and continuing professional development leading to career progression within the Trust as opportunities arise.

2. Scheme of Delegation - context

This Scheme of Delegation (the Scheme) identifies the key decisions required in the overall governance and management of the Link Academy Trust and its academies. The Trust is a private company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

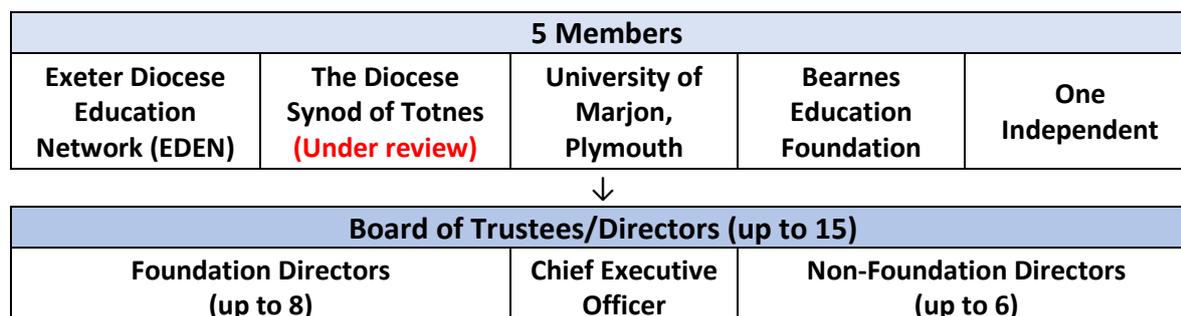
The Scheme sets out the delegation by the Trustees under Articles 105, 105A and 106 whereby the Directors may delegate to any Director, committee (including any Local Governing Body), the Chief Executive or any other holder of an executive office, such of their powers or functions as they consider desirable to be exercised by them. Any such delegation shall be made subject to any conditions the Directors may impose, and may be revoked or altered provided that the Directors shall not make any regulation which may impact upon the faith ethos or religious designation of the Church of England academies without the consent of the Diocesan Board of Education. Such delegation may be further sub-delegated with the consent of and subject to the conditions imposed by the Board of Directors.

The Link Academy Trust has agreed to adopt the term 'Trustee' in accordance with Department for Education policy for the academy sector. Thus all references to Trustee(s) in this and other documents, also mean Director(s) which is the term used in the Articles of Association. The term 'Trustee' and 'Director' can be used interchangeably. However, the term 'Director' in this context should not be confused with any executive officer with the title of 'Director' but who is not registered as a Director of the Trust with Companies House.

The layers of the Trust's governance are explained in section 4 (Layers of Governance: Key Roles and Responsibilities). This Scheme should be read in conjunction with the Articles of Association and any Terms of Reference. In any issue where it is not clear where authority lies, the Articles will always take precedence.

The Board of Trustees of the exempt charity, who are also Directors of the company, will review the Scheme at the first meeting of each academic year, or more frequently if the need arises. All changes to the Scheme are subject to the discretion of the Board of Trustees at a meeting which is quorate.

3. Governance Overview



Local Boards are established to each group of schools within the Trust.

4. Layers of Governance: Key Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust's three core layers of governance are Members, the Board of Trustees and Local Boards. Below is an overview of the respective key roles and responsibilities across the different layers of governance.

4.1 Members

The Members may be considered as the shareholders of a company and are often referred to as the 'gatekeepers'. However, unlike shareholders, Members cannot take money or assets from the company. The Members have ultimate control over the Trust, with the ability to appoint some of the Trustees and the right to amend the Trust's Articles of Association (the document that sets out the powers of the Trust itself and those of the Members and the Trustees). The Articles describe how Members are recruited and replaced and how many Trustees can be appointed to the Board of Trustees by the Members. The Members can also remove Trustees.

Whilst Trustees can serve as Members, best practice recognises that the Members are responsible for holding the Trustees to account. The Trust has nominated the Chair of the Board of Trustees as the fifth Member but this can be changed with the agreement of the Members, the Trustees or the individual. Members of staff cannot be appointed as Members.

The Board of Trustees submits an annual report to the Members on the performance of the Trust but Members are entitled to any information they require between the annual general meetings which they attend each year.

4.2 Board of Trustees

The Board is responsible for the general control of the Trust in accordance with the provisions set out in the Articles of Association and this Scheme. The Board and individual Trustees must adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life (Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership) in fulfilling their roles and observe the highest standards of governance set out in the Handbooks published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Department for Education (DfE) as well as comply with English law, including company and charity law.

The Articles set out the Objects of the Trust as a charity and its powers as a private company, together with the composition of the Board. Trustees are appointed from a range of skills and professional backgrounds that enable the Board to agree strategy and take decisions. The range is reviewed each time a vacancy occurs.

The primary role of the Board of Trustees is to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Appoint the Chief Executive Officer and hold them to account for the effective operation of the Trust as a whole, including the educational performance of the Academies and their pupils, and the performance management of their staff
- Oversee the financial performance of the Trust, ensuring financial probity, its future sustainability and the achievement of best value for money within the funds available to it.
- The Trust is the employer of all staff and must ensure that the enterprise is legally compliant.

The Board of Trustees meets at least five times a year and also holds an annual Away Day when the discussion focuses on strategic direction and growth, to which Chairs of Local Boards are invited. Trustees also meet with the Members and Chairs of Local Boards at the Annual General Meeting. To manage its responsibilities effectively, the Board has established four Committees:

- Audit
- Finance and General Purposes
- Remuneration
- Standards and Curriculum.

4.3 Local Boards

Trustees can delegate some governance functions down to the local level of the Multi-Academy Trust and therefore have established Local Boards (LBs) to conduct regular monitoring of the educational provision of a group of schools. Generally, these are geographically close or, historically, were grouped together prior to joining the Trust.

Each Board will include representatives of the local community, staff and parents. Those academies that have a Church of England Foundation will include a representative from the respective Diocese. The title of each Local Board is generally referenced to the location of the group of schools and its members are referred to as Governors. Local Boards are the vehicle through which the educational enterprise is closely monitored. The role is to:

- 'Learn' from the academies – get to know the school, the staff and the pupils
- 'Support' the academies to improve, monitoring the achievement of the annual Academy Strategic Improvement Plan
- 'Challenge' the actions of the Executive/Academy Head and their team, assessing outcomes and the impact of their work

Local Governors do not have the legal responsibilities that apply to Trustees but should see their role as one of challenge and support to the Executive/Academy Head.

4.4 **Other Committees**

Those academies which have a faith foundation will also have an Ethos Committee; its role is to uphold and to support the Executive/Academy Head, staff and pupils to uphold the designated religious character of the academy. In those academies that do not have a religious foundation, there will be a School Committee which provides an opportunity to engage with the academy's pupils.

5. **Committees of the Board of Trustees**

All Committees have clear terms of reference and defined membership which is reviewed annually. Any changes must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

5.1 **Audit Committee**

The Audit Committee meets three times a year and is supported by the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust Business Manager who attend meetings as officers. The principal responsibilities are to make recommendations on the appointment of the External Audit Service (EAS), to work with the EAS following the annual audit and ensure the agreed recommendations are implemented.

The Committee also recommends to the Board the appointment of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) and the Service's annual programme of work based on the Trust's risk register, ensuring that recommendations for improvement are followed up. The Committee has the authority to investigate any causes for concern, satisfy itself that arrangements for safeguarding, data protection and health and safety are effective and the risk register is maintained and up-to-date.

5.2 **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

The F&GP Committee meets six times a year and oversees the detailed financial performance of the Trust and individual academies. This includes the preparation of the annual budget, for recommendation to the Board, and then monitoring actual income and expenditure against the budget on a monthly basis. It takes the lead on any issues to do with improving or maintaining the estates and school premises and will monitor the completion of any approved capital projects against programme and budget. It has general oversight of Human Resources practice and legal compliance as well as health and safety and data protection.

The Committee assesses the Trust's financial arrangements against the best practice set out in the Academies Financial Handbook, updated each year, and reviews within an agreed cycle, all policies relating to finance and the estate.

5.3 **Remuneration Committee**

The Committee meets four times a year and approves middle management structure changes as well as the detailed pay progression arrangements for individual staff members. The Committee oversees the appraisal arrangements for the Senior Management Team, which comprises the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust Business Manager and makes recommendations to the full Board on the objectives and any pay progression for these officers. The Committee reviews all policies relating to employment and staffing matters, which are subject to Board approval. The Committee also devotes a meeting annually to evaluate talent within the schools and identify opportunities for staff to progress over a one to three year period.

5.4 **Standards & Curriculum Committee**

The Committee meets five times a year and oversees all issues relating to the educational provision from curriculum design and delivery to pupil progress and ensuring that Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Sports funding achieves best value for money in terms of pupil outcomes. The Committee will contribute to the preparation of individual Academy Strategic Improvement Plans (ASIP) and the overarching Academy Trust Strategic Improvement Plan (ATSIP) to test that they encompass a comparable level of challenge across all schools and that the plans fit with the Trust's overall education strategy.

The Committee's meetings include representatives of the Local Boards, usually the Chair or Vice Chair, to ensure effective two way communication between Trustees and Governors. The Committee takes responsibility for ensuring that all schools uphold the highest educational standards and will follow-up all issues arising from external inspection to ensure they are implemented in a timely and effective way.

The Local Boards report to the Board through the Standards & Curriculum Committee although Governors may refer urgent matters directly to the appropriate officer.

6. **Trustees - General Issues**

6.1 **Appointments, Induction, Training, Resignations and Disqualification**

6.1.1. Appointments

From time to time and whenever a vacancy occurs, the Board of Trustees will assess the skills and expertise required to ensure it is able to fulfil its responsibilities and be mindful that there must be a majority of Foundation Trustees over the Non-Foundation Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer.

Vacancies are advertised where possible, including via the Trustees' respective networks, EDEN and organisations able to source new Trustees. Applicants are required to complete an 'Expression of Interest' form, setting out how their skills and expertise fit those required, including past experience as a Trustee or Director, and provide an up-to-date CV.

The Chair of Trustees, the CEO and, where possible, one other Trustee will meet the candidate to explore their knowledge and understanding of the Trust and their commitment to its Values and Ethos. The Clerk will obtain a professional and a personal reference in support of each applicant. Recommendations for appointment will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for agreement and then formal approval by the Members.

For Foundation Trustees, the appointment must also be approved by EDEN. Once all approvals are in place, the Clerk will issue a formal letter of appointment, setting out the role, responsibilities and commitment to uphold the Standards of Public Life, a duplicate of which must be signed and returned to the Clerk for filing. Trustees must complete a Companies House form and a Related Parties form (see 6.4). The HR Officer will arrange for the selected candidate to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure form.

All Trustees upon their appointment or election and before exercising any duties as a Trustee shall give a written undertaking to the Site Trustees and EDEN to uphold the Object of the Company. This will be set out in the letter of appointment. [Article 45].

Trustees' terms of office are for four years from the date entered on the Companies House website; if Trustees wish to serve a second term, this is subject to the Board's consent for renewal. The re-appointment of Foundation Trustees is also subject to EDEN approval. All Trustees are required to complete an induction programme and to attend training relevant to their role.

6.1.2 Induction and Training

On appointment, new Trustees will undergo an induction; this will provide key documents such as the budget, business plan and Trust strategy. Foundation Trustees must attend the Diocesan Foundation Trustee/Governor training as early as possible.

The Clerk will provide all Trustees with resources to assist them in their role and this can be supplemented through discussions with the Chair, CEO or other Trustees or officers. All Trustees **must** undertake the NSPCC Safeguarding and such other training as appropriate to support them in their role.

6.1.3 Resignations

Trustees may resign from their appointment at any time if their circumstances or commitments change, providing as much notice as is possible so that the Board can seek new applicants.

6.1.4 Disqualification

Articles of Association 68 to 80 set out the reasons whereby a Trustee is disqualified from holding office.

6.2 **Payment of Trustees**

As indicated above, Trustees are bound by company and charity law. As the Trust is an exempt charity, the role of Trustee is a voluntary one and is not paid. Trustees may not benefit in any way from their appointment on the Board through employment or contracts for work for example. Trustees may claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses, based on actual receipts to be submitted to the CEO or Trust Business Manager for authorisation.

The exception to this is the Chief Executive Officer who is a paid member of staff and an *ex officio* Trustee. No other staff member can be appointed as a Trustee.

If circumstances arise that a Trustee is considered for the payment of any services beyond their voluntary role, then legal advice should be sought **before** any work is carried out as there are strict rules governing this.

6.3 **Indemnification of Trustees**

All Trustees are faced with complex sets of circumstances where they must make decisions which are in the best interests of the Trust to safeguard its future. The

Articles therefore permit the Trust to pay for insurance to cover Trustees' actions **provided** they abide by the advice of qualified professionals, such as accountants, solicitors, architects, surveyors etc.

6.4 **Conflicts of Interest and Related Party Transactions**

Trustees are required to complete a form on appointment recording any connection(s) they may have with a person, a company, client, organisation or service, which may have a bearing on their independence in taking a decision on behalf of the Trust. The duty for Trustees derives both from company law and charity law and therefore all meetings begin with any declarations of business interests. The form will be updated annually but if any new relationships occur mid-year, Trustees should advise the Clerk to the Trust so that records can be updated. The External Auditor will review all Trustees' personal and business interests as part of the audit of accounts to identify where there are any 'Related Party Transactions' which must be reported.

6.5 **Schedule of Meetings**

To ensure that meetings are planned with the maximum attendance, dates for the Board of Trustees for the following academic/financial year will be agreed by the Board's meeting in May. The Trustees' Committees will then ensure that the timing of their meetings feed into the Board so that Trustees are able to deal promptly with the approval of budgets, documents and policies without undue delay. Meetings of Local Boards will be scheduled so they similarly feed into the next Standards & Curriculum Committee meeting.

The Clerk to the Trust will co-ordinate the planning of the meetings cycle and publish this once it is agreed.

6.6 **Clerking**

The Board of Trustees appoints the Clerk to the Trust who will provide a professional and independent service for the Members and the Trustees in the execution of their roles. The Clerk will undertake training in accordance with the Clerking Competence Framework (Academies Governance Handbook 2019, section 4.4).

7. **Chief Executive Officer**

The Chief Executive Officer is the accounting officer; that is they are answerable to the Secretary of State through the ESFA and have overall responsibility for the operation of the Trust's financial responsibilities. The CEO must ensure that the organisation is run with financial probity, effectiveness and stability, avoiding waste of publicly and non-publicly funded resources and securing value for money. This includes the Trust's estates as well as its most valuable resource – staff.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, the CEO is an *ex officio* Trustee and is therefore a member of the Board of Trustees. In this role, the CEO is a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Standards & Curriculum Committee. The CEO is a member of the Remuneration Committee but withdraws from any discussion of their own pay and conditions of service. The CEO attends meetings of the Audit Committee as an officer to maintain the appropriate level of accountability to Trustees.

The CEO is responsible overall for the educational provision of the Trust and reports to the Board of Trustees on standards, achievement and attainment, pupil progress and must

ensure that effective arrangements are in place for those pupils in receipt of pupil premium or other special funding.

The CEO will work in consultation with the Trust Business Manager on future workforce planning for consideration by the Remuneration Committee.

8. Management Structure

A diagram showing the management structure is at Appendix A.

8.1 Senior Management Team

The SMT comprises the CEO and the Trust Business Manager. In the absence of the CEO, the TBM is authorised to take decisions within their level of authority, seeking approval from designated Trustees where appropriate.

8.2 Trust Business Manager

The TBM provides advice to the CEO in respect of viability of the Trust's strategic future, both in terms of capacity and growth. The TBM is responsible for all staff who have financial, estate, IT and HR roles to support the long term efficiency, effectiveness and economic operation of the Trust.

8.3 Executive Improvement Team

The EIT comprises the following senior staff who have a cross Trust role:

- Academy Trust School Improvement Lead (ATSIL)
- Academy Trust Safeguarding and SEND Lead (ATSSL)
- Academy Trust School Standards and Education Outcomes Lead (ATSSEOL)
- Academy Trust Data & Standards Lead (ATDSL)

8.4 Executive Academy Heads and Academy Heads

Academy Heads (AH) are responsible for the day to day management and operation of their academies. The title Executive Academy Head (EAH) is awarded to those leading more than one Academy.

9. Local Boards – General Issues

Local Boards are established by the Board of Trustees to carry out some governance functions at local level. Each LB will comprise a number of schools which are geographically close or have converted to the Trust as a Federation or other small group.

Article 104 states that, "The functions and proceedings of the Local Governing Bodies shall be subject to regulations made by the Trustees from time to time provided that the Trustees shall not make any regulation which may impact upon the faith ethos or religious designation of the Church of England Academies without the consent of the Diocesan Board of Education."

This Scheme provides guidance on those functions where the Local Boards have a role.

When a school joins the Trust, consideration will be given to the most appropriate Board to join. The Trust recognises that there is a maximum number of schools which an LB can work with (no more than six) and this will be taken into account. To provide the joining school time to adjust to its new status, the Trust will work with the school's Governing Body in the first year to mediate the change. This will help to ensure that the membership of the existing

LB can be adjusted as necessary and the outgoing GB members understand the division of responsibilities between Trustees and Governors.

9.1 Composition of Local Boards

The membership of Local Boards will comprise:

Type of Governor	Number	Term of Office	How they are appointed
Academy Head	Max two per LB	Ex officio	Under discussion with E/AH and CEO- to offer the Trust perspective and ensure that Governors have Trust strategy clarity.
Parent Governors	One per academy	Four years	Parent Governors shall be drawn from the parents of children attending the schools within the Local Board's remit.
Staff Governors	One per academy	Four years	Staff Governors shall be elected by the staff of each Academy within the Local Board's remit.
Community Governors	One per academy	Four years	Community Governors are able to demonstrate knowledge or experience that will contribute positively to the role of the Local Board and represent the local community.
Associate Governors	No more than two	Duration of a project/ focus	Appointed by agreement to support a specific project or focus for the duration of that project, where their skills and interest will help to support the LB to achieve high quality results
<i>For Local Boards which have Church Schools</i>			
Foundation Governors	One	Four years	Foundation Governors will be able to demonstrate their commitment to the Church of England and local church community and to the Trust's Christian Ethos.

The Academy Trust School Improvement Lead or a member of the Executive Improvement Team will support and attend occasional meetings of the Local Boards when a specific focus requires input. Members of the Executive Improvement Team may also request attendance if they wish to support improvement or governors request their expertise. The Board of Trustees will ensure that a Clerk is appointed to support Local Boards.

9.2 Appointments, Induction, Training, Resignations and Disqualification

9.2.1. Appointments

From time to time and whenever a vacancy occurs, the Local Board will assess the skills and expertise required to ensure it is able to fulfil its responsibilities and be mindful when a Foundation Governor is to be appointed.

Parent Governors:

The Local Board will call for applications from the parent body. Ideally, parent governors will cover the full age range drawn from all the academies to be represented. Excluding the Parent Governor(s) leaving office, the remaining members of the Local Board will consider applications and submit, to the Clerk to the Trust, a report of the Parent Governors appointed, with their start and end dates, for formal note by the Board of Trustees. If there are more candidates than vacancies, a secret ballot of eligible candidates may be undertaken, to be voted by parents. If there are too few applications, the CEO will seek to fill these, in consultation with the Executive/Academy Heads.

Staff Governors:

The Local Board will call for applications from the staff body of all academies within its remit. Applications should indicate the reason for applying, such as past experience, career development etc. and ability to represent the interests of other staff. If there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot of eligible staff may be undertaken. If there are too few applications, the CEO will seek to fill these, in consultation with the Executive/Academy Heads.

The Clerk to the Local Board will notify the Clerk to the Trust so that appointments can be formally noted at the next Board meeting.

Community Governors:

Vacancies will be advertised where possible, including via the Trustees' and Governors' respective networks, EDEN and organisations able to source new Trustees. Applicants will be required to complete an 'Expression of Interest' form, setting out how their skills and expertise fit those required, including past experience as a Governor, if relevant, and provide an up-to-date CV. Their application should be supported by a professional and a personal reference.

The Chair of the Local Board and a member of the Executive Improvement Team and, where possible, one other Governor will meet the candidate(s) to explore their knowledge and understanding of the Trust and their commitment to its Values and Ethos. Recommendations for appointment will be submitted to the Local Board for discussion. The Clerk to the Local Board will submit recommendations for appointments to the Clerk to the Trust for approval at the next meeting of the full Board of Trustees.

Foundation Governors:

The process for appointment of Foundation Governors is the same as for Community Governors, save that once the Board of Trustees has approved an appointment, the recommendation must also be approved by EDEN.

Associate Governors

The Local Board may also appoint Associate Governors when there is a need for specific expertise, experience or skills related to a time specific issue or project. The recruitment process is the same as that for Community Governors and subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

Once the recruitment or election process is completed for any category of Governor, the HR Officer will prepare a formal appointment letter for signature by the Local Board Chair and a duplicate signed copy will be held on file. The letter will include, in accordance with Article 103 a written undertaking to:

- the Trustees, the Site Trustees and to EDEN to uphold the Objects of the company; and
- EDEN to uphold the designated religious character of those Academies which have previously been a Voluntary Controlled School or a Voluntary Aided School

All appointments are subject to a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Certificate.

The Trust's HR Officer will arrange for a Disclosure and Barring Service check to be undertaken and the Single Central Register will be updated, together with *Get Information about Schools* and the relevant academies' websites.

9.2.2 Induction and Training

All local governors will receive an Induction Pack, attend induction, safeguarding and other training to support them in their role, as well as updating sessions as issued.

9.2.3 Resignations

Governors may resign from their appointment at any time if their circumstances or commitments change, providing as much notice as is possible so that the Board can seek new applicants. Parent Governors are required to resign at the end of the term in which their child or children complete no longer attend the Academy. Subject to having specific areas of expertise required by the Local Board, Parent Governors may be eligible for appointment as Co-opted Governors at such time as vacancies occur.

The Clerk to the Local Board will notify the Clerk to the Trust so that resignations can be formally noted at the next meeting of Trustees.

9.2.4 Disqualification

Articles of Association 68 to 80 set out the reasons whereby a Governor of a Local Board is disqualified from holding office.

9.3 **Role of the Local Boards**

Local Boards will meet each half term, six times a year. Governors are expected to visit schools regularly to:

- **LEARN** from the Academies
- **SUPPORT** their improvement and
- **CHALLENGE** their actions, outcomes and impact

To ensure Governors fulfil the breadth of the Local Boards' role, there will be a specific focus at each meeting which is set out in the Annual Focussed Visit Document. This is reviewed and updated annually by the CEO and ATSIL in collaboration with the Local Board Chairs.

Governors will complete the Visit Note pro forma report to record a summary of activities such as talking to staff and pupils, looking at resources, having lunch etc; what Governors have learned from the visit, positive comments and any aspects they would like clarified and support provided.

9.4 **Protocols for meetings**

The Clerks to the Local Boards will follow the same protocols, wherever possible, as those for meetings of the Board of Trustees and its Committees in respect of:

- Planning the cycle of meetings to fit with the Trustees' Standards and Curriculum Committee
- Electing a Chair and Vice Chair annually at the start of the academic year
- Three weeks' Notice of meetings to those eligible to attend, including officers
- Preparation of agenda and papers in consultation with the Chair
- Issue of agenda and paper, 7 to 10 days prior to the meeting

- Clarity over the recording of decisions, including key information about who is to take action and any time limits or deadlines
- Agreement of minutes by those present prior to publication on the Trust's or Academies' websites

9.5 **Conflicts of Interest**

Governors must disclose any relationship or connection they may have with a person, a company, client, organisation or service, which may have a bearing on their independence in carrying out their role. This should be noted on the Register of Business Interests and updated annually or at such time as a change occurs.

9.6 **Payment of Governors**

The role of Governors is voluntary and is not paid. Governors may not benefit in any way from their appointment to the Local Board through employment or contracts for work for example. Governors may claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses, based on actual receipts to be submitted to the Trust Business Manager for authorisation.

10. **Intervention Triggers**

The Trust is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the provision of education in accordance with its legal obligations. The Trust desires to delegate some areas of decision making to individual academies but reserves the right to change the level of authority delegated in order to fulfil its legal obligations.

The Board of Trustees delegates responsibilities to the Local Board as set out in Section 11 (Table of Responsibilities). However, if at any time:

- a. Ofsted rate any of the Academies in the Local Board group as a level 3 (Requires Improvement) or 4 (Inadequate);
- b. an event occurs at or in relation to any of the Academies in the Local Board group which is significantly damaging to the reputation or the Trust
- c. The Local Board fails to act in a way which frequently would be considered normal behaviour for a governing body; or
- d. any event analogous to the above events occurs at or in relation to any of the Academies in the Local Board's remit.

the Board of Trustees may alter or revoke the authority delegated to the Local Board until such time as the Board of Trustees is satisfied that the event that has occurred has been rectified or ceases to cause concern. When making such decisions, the Board of Trustees shall have regard to any representations made by the Local Board.

The Academy Trust School Improvement Team will use key performance indicators (KPIs) as a tool for determining where support is required.

11. Table of Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has agreed to delegate some responsibilities to its Committees, to the Chief Executive Officer, to Executive/Academy Heads, to the Trust Business Manager, the Executive Improvement Team and to Local Boards. The delegation is through Job Profiles for members of staff, through Committees' Terms of Reference, Trust Policies or through this Scheme of Delegation. This Scheme clarifies that a duty has been delegated; the Trust Policy will detail the process for how this duty is delegated and undertaken.

PEOPLE	
Members' appointment and removal	The Members appoint and remove Members in accordance with the Articles of Association, 2019.
Trustees' appointment and removal	The Members appoint Trustees in accordance with the Articles of Association. Foundation Trustees' appointments must be approved by the Exeter Diocese Education Network (EDEN). Trustees cease to hold office if they are removed by the person who appointed or elected them, otherwise by ordinary resolution of the Members. Trustees can be disqualified in accordance with the Articles of Association.
Chief Executive Officer appointment and removal	The Board of Trustees appoints and dismisses the CEO.
Trust Business Manager appointment and removal	The Board of Trustees appoints and dismisses the TBM.
Executive Improvement Team	The Board of Trustees approves the composition of, and appoints and dismisses members of the Executive Improvement Team.
Middle Management Structure	The Remuneration Committee approves the composition of the management structure below the EIT.
Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees appointment and removal	The Trustees elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board annually. Either can resign office at any time or be removed in accordance with the Articles of Association.
Chair and Vice Chair of Trust Committees	The Trustees elect the Chair and Vice Chair of Trust Committees
Clerk to the Board of Trustees Appointment and removal	The Trustees appoint and remove the Clerk to the Trust
Local Board Chairs election and removal	The Local Boards are responsible for the election and removal of the Chair for the Local Board. The Chair of the Local Board shall be elected every year.

Local Board Parent Governors appointment and removal	The Local Boards undertake the nomination and election process for the appointment of Parent Governors and are responsible for the removal of parent governors.
Local Board Staff Governors appointment and removal	The Local Boards undertake the nomination and election process for the appointment of staff governors and are responsible for the appointment and removal of staff governors.
Local Board Community Governors	The Local Boards undertake the appointment process for Community Governors. Appointments are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees
Local Board Foundation Governors	The Local Boards undertake the appointment process for Foundation Governors. Appointments are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and EDEN.
Local Board Associate Governors	The Local Boards undertake the appointment process for Associate Governors when there is a specific need or project the focus of which may be supported by an 'expert' to ensure the effective execution of the action. Appointments are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees
Appointment of Staff	The arrangements for the appointment of staff are set out in the Recruitment, Probation and Exit Policy.
SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES	
Articles of Association – agree and review	The Members agree, review and update the Articles of Association. The Board of Trustees recommends amendments to the Members for approval, in consultation with EDEN.
Governance Structure for the Trust – agree and review	The Board of Trustees is responsible for the Governance Annual Review and for approving the Governance structure of the Trust.
Scheme of Delegation – agree and review	The Board of Trustees is responsible for producing and approving the Scheme of Delegation and its Annual Review.
Register of Business Interests	Trustees, Governors, the Senior Management Team and the Executive Improvement Team are responsible for completing, submitting and reviewing their own Register of Business Interest forms annually and updating these at such times as changes occur.
Publishing the Trust's Governance information on the Trust's website	The HR Officer is responsible for publishing and maintaining governance documents and information on the Trust website as supplied by the Clerk to the Trust, with compliance to be monitored by the Board of Trustees.
Publishing Local Board Governance information on the Academies' websites	The Clerk to the Local Board is responsible for publishing and maintaining governance documents and information on the academies' websites (all academies within each group of schools) with compliance to be monitored by the Local Board.
Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees – agree and review	The terms of reference for the Board are derived from the Articles of Association.

Terms of Reference for the Board's Committees – agree and review	The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for ensuring that all established committees review their terms of reference at the beginning of each academic year and submitting all changes to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Constitution and Terms of Reference should comply with the agreed format.
Terms of Reference for the Local Board and its Committees – agree and review	The Local Board will adopt the agreed format for their Constitution and Terms of Reference. The document should be reviewed at the beginning of the academic year and any changes should be submitted to the Trust's Standards and Curriculum Committee for approval.
Annual Cycle of Business for the Trust Board – agree and review	The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for producing the Annual Cycle of Business in consultation with the Chair of the Board.
Annual Cycle of Business for the Board's Committees	The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for producing the Annual Cycle of Business and taking it to the individual Committees for approval.
Local Board Annual Focussed Visit Document– agree and review	The CEO and ATSIL in collaboration with the LB Chairs will review and update the Document annually. The Clerk to the Local Board is responsible for circulating the updated version to LB members. The Standards & Curriculum Committee will structure its engagement with the Local Boards against the Annual Focussed Visit Document.
Local Board Agenda template	The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for ensuring the Local Boards adopt the agreed Agenda template as approved by the Academy Trust School Improvement Lead in collaboration with Local Board representatives. It will be reviewed annually.
Local Board Minute template	The Clerk to the Trust is responsible for ensuring the Minute template for Local Boards reflects the Agenda Template as approved by the Academy Trust School Improvement Lead in collaboration with Local Board representatives. It will be reviewed annually.
HOLDING TO ACCOUNT	
Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of compliance with statutory requirements, such as Health and Safety, Fire Management, Safeguarding and Information Governance	The Trustees' Audit Committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of compliance with these statutory requirements for individual Academies and the Trust as a whole and report to the Board of Trustees.
Performance Management of the Chief Executive Officer	The Board of Trustees is responsible for the performance management of the CEO. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees will conduct the CEO's annual appraisal.
Performance Management of the Trust Business Manager	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the TBM.

Performance Management of the Academy Trust School Improvement Lead (ATSIL)	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the ATSIL.
Performance Management of the Academy Trust Safeguarding and SEND Lead (ATSSL)	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the ATSSL.
Performance Management of the Academy Trust School Standards and Education Outcomes Lead (ATSSEOL)	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the ATSSEOL.
Performance Management of other members of the Executive Improvement Team	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the Executive Improvement Team.
Performance Management of Executive Academy Heads	The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the performance management of the EAHs.
Performance Management of Academy Heads	The ATSIL is responsible for the performance management of the AHs.
CEO Pay Award	The Board of Trustees approves the pay award for the CEO.
TBM Pay Award	The Board of Trustees approves the pay award for the TBM.
Executive Improvement Team Pay Award	The Board's Remuneration Committee approves the pay award for the EIT
Executive and Academy Heads Pay Award	The Board's Remuneration Committee approves the pay award for the EAHs and AHs
Teaching Staff Pay Award	The Board's Remuneration Committee approves the pay award for the teaching staff
Administrative Staff Pay Award	The CEO approves the pay award for the administrative staff
Executive Improvement Team – appoint and dismiss	The Board of Trustees determines the selection panel and appoints and dismisses members of the Executive Improvement Team.
Academy Head – appoint and dismiss	The Board of Trustees determines the selection panel and appoints and dismisses Academy Heads / Executive Academy Heads.
Teaching Staff – appoint and dismiss	The CEO determines the selection panel and appoints and dismisses teaching staff.
Administrative Staff – appoint and dismiss	The Chief Executive Officer and Trust Business Manager determine the selection panel and appoints and dismisses teaching staff.

TRUST STRATEGY	
The Trust Vision and Strategy – Determine, Deliver and Performance Manage	The Board of Trustees determines and performance manages the Trust Vision and Strategy, delegating responsibility for the delivery of the strategy to the CEO.
Growth of the Trust	The Board of Trustees will consider requests from other schools to join the Trust in consultation with the CEO. Once agreed in principle, the Chief Executive Officer will lead the Due Diligence process for conversion. The Board of Trustees is responsible for agreeing to proceed or not, subject to approval by the Head Teacher Board.
Trust Improvement – Determine, Deliver and Performance Manage	The CEO and the Executive Improvement Team will prepare the annual Trust-wide Strategic Improvement Plan. The Board of Trustees will approve the Trust-wide Strategic Improvement Plan. The Standards and Curriculum Committee will monitor the delivery and monitor its implementation and assess its impact.
Trust Policies – Determine, Review and Update	<p>All policies of the Trust should be approved by the Board of Trustees to ensure they take account of all individual or specific characteristics of any of its component academies in order to ensure equality of practice and legal compliance. All policies will be reviewed on an agreed timetable. Policies will apply to all academies in the Trust or all employees as appropriate. Changes will take account of a change of circumstances, updated legislation or best practice. Normally, a new policy or an updated policy will be routed through the relevant Trust Committee for consideration so that a recommendation for approval to the Board can be made.</p> <p>The Clerk to the Trust will maintain the cycle of policy review in consultation with the CEO and the HR Officer.</p> <p>The Local Board is responsible for adoption and compliance within its respective academies where applicable.</p>
Contribution to the Central Fund, Agree and Manage	The Board of Trustees determines, approves and manages the level of contribution. Academies will be given reasonable notice of any change to the level of contribution.
Centrally procured contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)	The Board of Trustees determines the contracts and SLAs to be procured on behalf of the academies and ensures that centrally procured services provide value for money. The Board’s Finance and General Purposes Committee puts in place and manages the centrally procured contracts and SLAs and the Local Board monitors the effectiveness of the delivery of these contracts and SLAs for its academies.

Trust Risk Management Policy and Risk Register – Establish, Monitor and Review	The Board of Trustees establishes, monitors and approves the Trust’s Risk Management Policy and the Risk Register. The Trustees’ Audit Committee will propose any amendments to the Policy to the Board for approval. The Audit Committee will monitor relevant committees’ engagement with the Register to ensure it remains up-to-date.
Academy Risk Register – Establish, Monitor and Review	The Executive/Academy Head establishes and monitors the individual Academy Risk Register, using the Trust Risk Register template. The Audit Committee approves the Academy Risk Register. The Local Board is responsible for reporting to the Trustees any issues which arise.
Budget Setting for Trust – determine, approve and monitor	The CEO and Trust Business Manager prepare the Budget for the Trust for discussion with the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The F&GP Committee submits the Budget and Financial Forecasts to the Board of Trustees for approval. The F&GP Committee monitors budget versus actual income and expenditure on a monthly basis and advises the Board of any variance from the budget, together with its impact on the Trust’s financial sustainability.
Budget Setting for Academy – determine, approve and monitor	The Academy Budgets are components of the Trust’s overall budget, based on income generated by pupil numbers through the General Academic Grant. The Trust Business Manager monitors budget versus actual income and expenditure and reports any adverse variance to the F&GP Committee.
Academy Staffing Structures	The CEO and TBM propose staffing structures for each academy based on the number of pupils within each age group and taking account of any additional requirements for Pupil Premium, SEND, PE and other grants.
ENSURING FINANCIAL PROBITY	
Trust Policy on Financial Delegation – Establish and Review	The Board of Trustees establishes the Financial Delegation Policy.
Appointment of External Auditors	The Audit Committee will conduct at least every five years a full contract review for the provision of the External Audit Service and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for agreement. The Board of Trustees will make a recommendation on the appointment to the Members for approval. Whilst the appointment may be in principle for up to five years, it will be subject to formal approval by the Members at the Annual General Meeting, based on the Board’s view of satisfactory service, as required by the Articles of Association.
External Auditor Reports – receive and respond	The Board of Trustees receives and responds, following detailed consideration by the Audit Committee.
Appointment of Internal Auditors	The Board of Trustees approves the appointment of the Internal Audit Service, as recommended by the Audit Committee.

Internal Audit Programme	The Audit Committee will consider the cyclical reviews conducted by the Internal Audit Service and recommend a programme for the following year to the final meeting of the academic year of the Board.
PERFORMANCE AND CURRICULUM	
Academy Improvement – Determine, Deliver and Performance Manage	The Executive/Academy Head, in consultation with the Local Board, will prepare the annual Academy Strategic Improvement Plan (ASIP) which will take account of the Academy Trust Strategic Improvement Plan (ATSIP). The Board of Trustees will approve the ATSIP. The S&C Committee will approve the individual ASIPs. The Local Board will monitor the delivery and implementation of the ASIPs and assess their impact.
Academy Curriculum Plan	The Local Board proposes and approves the Academy Curriculum Plan.
SCHOOL ORGANISATION	
Academy Day Times	The CEO, in consultation with the Local Board, proposes the Academy Day Times which are approved by the Board of Trustees.
Dates of Academy Terms and Holiday	The CEO proposes Academy Terms and Holiday periods for all schools, which is approved by the Board of Trustees.
INSET Days	The CEO determines INSET days as part of the Dates for Academy Terms
ADMISSIONS	
Admissions Arrangements	The Board of Trustees determines admissions arrangements.
Admissions Appeals	The Executive/ Academy Head works with the Local Authority and parents to manage the appeal process
	The appeal panel of Trustees is available if the process requires it.
EXCLUSIONS	
Exclusions	<p>The Executive/ Academy Head in consultation with the CEO will determine whether a pupil should be excluded according to the Trust Behaviour Policy in the first instance</p> <p>The Local Board considers representation of parents and carers, considers the reinstatement of an excluded pupil in accordance with the Exclusions Policy and statutory guidance and reports any decisions to the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Where necessary, the Local Board shall also organise an independent review panel. The Exclusions Policy provides guidance regarding the process that will be followed.</p>

PUPIL ATTENDANCE	
Policy	The Board of Trustees is responsible for preparing and approving the Attendance Policy and will receive information relating to attendance levels across all academies, holding the CEO to account.
Monitoring	The Local Board will understand and monitor the implementation of the Policy, receiving a termly report from the Executive/Academy Head. The Local Board will report to the Standards & Curriculum Committee.
Recording and Reporting	The Executive/Academy Head will ensure staff maintain records in accordance with the Policy and report on attendance to the Local Board.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	
Policy	The Board of Trustees is responsible for preparing and approving the Policy. Trustees will receive information on the outcome of annual and other checks and reviews, both internal and external and will ensure that any changes to buildings or practice do not adversely impact on the health and safety of pupils, their parents, staff, management, visitors, contractors, Governors and/or Trustees.
Monitoring	The Local Board is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy at local level and will ensure there is an opportunity to discuss any H&S related items on every agenda. Matters should be reported to parents via the Minutes; urgent matters must be reported to the E/AH, TBM or CEO.
Implementation	Executive/Academy Heads have day-to-day responsibility for H&S management within their school(s), liaising with the Estates & Premises HSO and the H&S Co-ordinator as necessary if they have concerns. All staff are responsible for adopting best H&S practice in the performance of their role for the benefit of all and to report any concerns, without delay, to the appropriate officer.
DATA PROTECTION	
Policy	The Board of Trustees is responsible for preparing and approving the Data Protection and associated Policies.
Monitoring	The CEO, TBM, Executive Improvement Team and Executive/Academy Heads are responsible for ensuring that staff in their respective areas are aware of their obligations relating to the collection, storage, processing and disposal of personal data. The Data Protection Officer will monitor adherence to the approved protocols and provide advice where necessary.
Implementation	All staff are responsible for adhering to policies relating to the collection, storage, processing, dissemination and disposal of information.

COMPLAINTS	
Complaints	The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that there is a Complaints Policy and that it provides guidance regarding the process that will be followed as the complaint may be about an academy or a matter for the Trust as a whole. The Complaints process will be adhered to and involve the specified personnel at each stage.
Complaint against the CEO , TBM or EIT member	Complaints should be addressed as follows if it concerns: - the Chief Executive Officer – to the Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees - the TBM – to the Chief Executive Officer or the Chair of the F&GP Committee - the Executive Improvement Team – to the Chief Executive Officer - an Executive/Academy Head – to the Chief Executive Officer
Complaint against a school action or teacher?	A complaint about a school action or an individual member of staff should be addressed to the Executive/Academy Head
Complaint against a Local Board	Complaints should be addressed to the Clerk to the Trust, for the attention of the Chair of Trustees

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Appendix A

