HMFA MAT Scheme of Delegation

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Reviewer	ATaylor/SMcGowan
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Document Control

Document owner: Company Secretary

Approver: Trust Board

Required on website: Yes

Document Change History

The table below contains the changes made between the different final editions of this document set for approval. This is to help provide information to this reviewing and approving the document of the changes being made.

Version	Date	Author	Summary
V1	01.07.25		The is a new Scheme of Delegation which is a live document.
V2	01.07.26	SMc	Reviewed

Introduction

The following scheme of delegation is based on the legal documents that inform the management and running of the Trust, namely:

- Articles of Association
- Master Funding Agreement
- Supplementary Funding Agreements relative to each Academy
- Deed of Variations
- Academy Trust Handbook
- Legislative Guidance
- Academy Trust Governance Guide

Underpinning the Scheme and the decision-making process across the Trust is the Trust vision:

Opening minds, creating opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment where children can explore and ignite a passion for a life-long curiosity to learn about themselves and the world around them.

And its **core values:**

- **Integrity** – the moral courage to be sincere, reliable, trustworthy, respectful and courteous at all times
- **Inclusivity** – having the confidence to be who you are, celebrating commonalities and differences
- **Resilience** – developing inner strength to face challenges and learn positively through failures to achieve success
- **Kindness** – the quality of being friendly, generous and considerate because it is the right thing to do
- **Curiosity** – encouraging inquisitive thinking such as exploration, investigation and love of learning; acquiring knowledge and skill

We uphold the highest standards of professionalism and governance across our Trust, ensuring transparency, trust and excellence in every aspect of our work to deliver lasting value and exceptional outcomes for all our stakeholders.

The purpose of the Scheme is to set out delegations for specific areas of activity or decision-making in a clear, usable format, avoiding duplication or overlap, and to place decision-making in alignment with this core belief and as close as possible to the point of impact. It has been developed to clarify the responsibilities and powers of the different levels of governance and leadership across the HMFA Trust in respect of key aspects of the management of the Trust and its Academies, and to ensure compliance with legal requirements.

a) It sits alongside the HMFA Financial Regulations and HMFA Financial Delegation Scheme & Policies that outline how financial responsibilities and delegations are managed within the trust.

b) Delegations cannot be exercised other than by the designated committee or individual unless otherwise directed or agreed by the Board.

c) The Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair has power to carry out functions of the Board or Local Committee in extreme circumstances where a delay in exercising a function is likely to be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Trust, a pupil at the Academies or their parents, or a person who works at the Academies. However, this power does not include matters relating to the alteration and closure of one of the Academies, a change of Academy category, approval of budget, discipline policies and admissions.

d) In the absence or incapacity of the CEO, the delegations to the Headteacher stand delegated to the Heads of School or nominated senior person unless otherwise directed or agreed by the Board of Trustees.

e) Instead of exercising their delegated powers a post holder or a committee may refer the matter to the appropriate committee.

f) For the avoidance of doubt, the Board may, at its discretion, exercise any of the powers delegated by this scheme to a committee or post holder.

Governance Framework

HMFA is a legal entity accountable for all the Academies within the MAT (Multi Academy Trust). There is one set of Articles which govern all the Academies in that Trust. HMFA has a Master Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State, and each Academy also has a Supplemental Funding Agreement.

The HMFA is a charitable company and is responsible for the strategic direction of the Academies and has two layers of governance: The Members of the Trust and the Board of Trustees.

The Members of the Trust

a. The Members of the Trust monitor the overall effectiveness of the Trust & that the Board acts in accordance with the Trust's charitable objects (to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom). They are akin to shareholders and have ultimate control over the direction of the HMFA receiving a copy of the financial accounts and annual report. Appointment and removal, of Auditors and majority of Trustees.

The Trust Board

a. As a charitable company limited by guarantee, the Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees (the Trust Board) which holds ultimate legal accountability and decision-making authority for all aspects of strategy and operational delivery across the Trust, ensuring fair and proportionate treatment of all schools.
b. The Trust Board oversees the overall management and performance of the Trust and delegates certain of its powers and functions to others: the Chief Executive Officer and Academy Leaders, who undertake day-to-day management, and the various Committees the Trust Board has established.
c. The Trustees, appointed by the Members, have delegated responsibility for the three core strategic functions (strategic direction, holding the Academy leaders to account for educational performance and overseeing the financial performance of the Academies). Trustees are responsible for ensuring there is robust governance in the Trust and assurance that the trust is compliant with regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements.

d. A Trustee is in effect an Academy Adviser, a Company Trustee and a Charity Trustee and they must also ensure compliance with Charity and Company Law and the Academy Trust's Funding Agreement.
e. The Board of Trustees can delegate to any Committee, Adviser, Academy Leader or any other holder of an executive office, any of its powers or functions, subject to any prescribed restrictions imposed by them and management of conflicts of interest.

The Board can establish any committee; and the constitution, membership and proceedings of any committee is decided by the Trustees. The establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee must be reviewed annually.

The Chief Executive Officer

a. The Chief Executive Officer has delegated responsibility and is accountable to the Trust Board for delivery of the Trust's strategy and the operational control, management and running of the Trust, including implementation of Trust policies, determining common systems and procedures across the Trust (such as school improvement systems) and performance management of the shared Trust's employees and Headteachers. The Chief Executive Officer will apply the principles of fairness and equality when supporting and representing all schools in the Trust.
b. As the Trust's Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive Officer has specific responsibilities for the management of the Trust's financial resources as detailed in the Academy Trust Handbook.
c. The CEO will be responsible for the leadership and management of the Senior Leadership Team and the Academy Leader will report to the Trust Board and its committees.

Committees of the Trust Board – Each committee has it's own Terms of Reference

Finance Audit & Risk Committee (FAR)

Maintain oversight of the Academy Trust's financial, governance, risk management and internal control systems. This committee may include individuals (excluding HMFA staff) who are not trustees, provided that a majority of members of the committee are trustees.

Pay Review Committee (PRC)

The Board delegate responsibility for achieving the aims of the pay policy to the Pay Review Committee and ensuring that processes operate fairly. This committee may include individuals (excluding HMFA staff) who are not trustees, provided that a majority of members of the committee are trustees.

Education Standards Committee (SC)

The Educational Performance Committee **(ESC)** is responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and supporting educational standards across a multi-academy trust (MAT). Its key duties include: educational standards, leadership oversight, inclusion, safeguarding (including attendance and behaviour), stakeholder engagement, data & accountability and strategic alignment across the Trust. This committee may include individuals (excluding HMFA staff) who are not trustees, provided that a **majority of members of the committee are trustees**.

The Local Committees

a) Local Committees will nurture the distinctive vision, values and culture of the school in alignment with the Trust vision and values.
b) Local Committees have delegated responsibility from and is accountable to the Trust Board for the strategic direction of their school within the Trust's overarching strategic framework, monitoring the Academy Leader in fulfilling their responsibilities for provision for children (including safeguarding) and stakeholder and community engagement. In other areas, the Local Committee a crucial challenge and support role in monitoring school outcomes, policy implementation and risk assurance.
c) It is important to remember, however, that even where responsibility is delegated to a local level, it is the HMFA Trust as the legal entity (not the Local Committee) that is ultimately accountable, for example in terms of finance and performance, and as the employer of staff.
d) In drawing up this Scheme of Delegation, the Board wishes to explicitly focus on maintaining the individual character of the Academies with strong and effective Local Committees working closely to support their Academy Leaders to manage the Academies.

To achieve this, it also recognised that there is a need for an effective Board of Trustees with strong committees to:

- Provide support on strategy, business planning, procurement and direction
- Financial planning including audit & risk
- Have oversight of educational standards
- Provide "umbrella" services more efficiently
- Ensure compliance with legal and statutory obligations

Role of the Chair of the Board of Trustees

No Trustee has authority to make a decision on behalf of Trustees outside any express authority delegated in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association. The Chair of the Board of Trustees has authority to make a decision as a single Trustee when a delay in doing so would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Trust or any of its schools, pupils or employees and it would not, in the reasonable opinion of the Chair of Trustees, be possible to postpone the decision to a meeting of the Trust Board (which may be convened on less than 7 days' notice, provided Trustees are afforded sufficient time to receive and give due consideration to any relevant document(s) relating to the decision). Every effort must be made by the Chair to inform and gather the opinions of all Trustees via electronic/verbal communication before any decision is made under this authority.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees is responsible for chairing all Board meetings. For these meetings they will:

a. Agree the agenda with the CEO and the Company Secretary before the meeting.
b. Ensure that Trustees receive notice of the meeting at least two weeks in advance.
c. Ensure that the meeting is conducted in a business like, professional manner and within a good humoured and convivial atmosphere.
d. Ensure during the meeting that all Trustees are given an opportunity to express their views.
e. When views differ within the Board, ensure that a majority decision is taken by a show of hands (only resorting to a secret ballot when specifically requested).

Scheme of Delegation framework and format

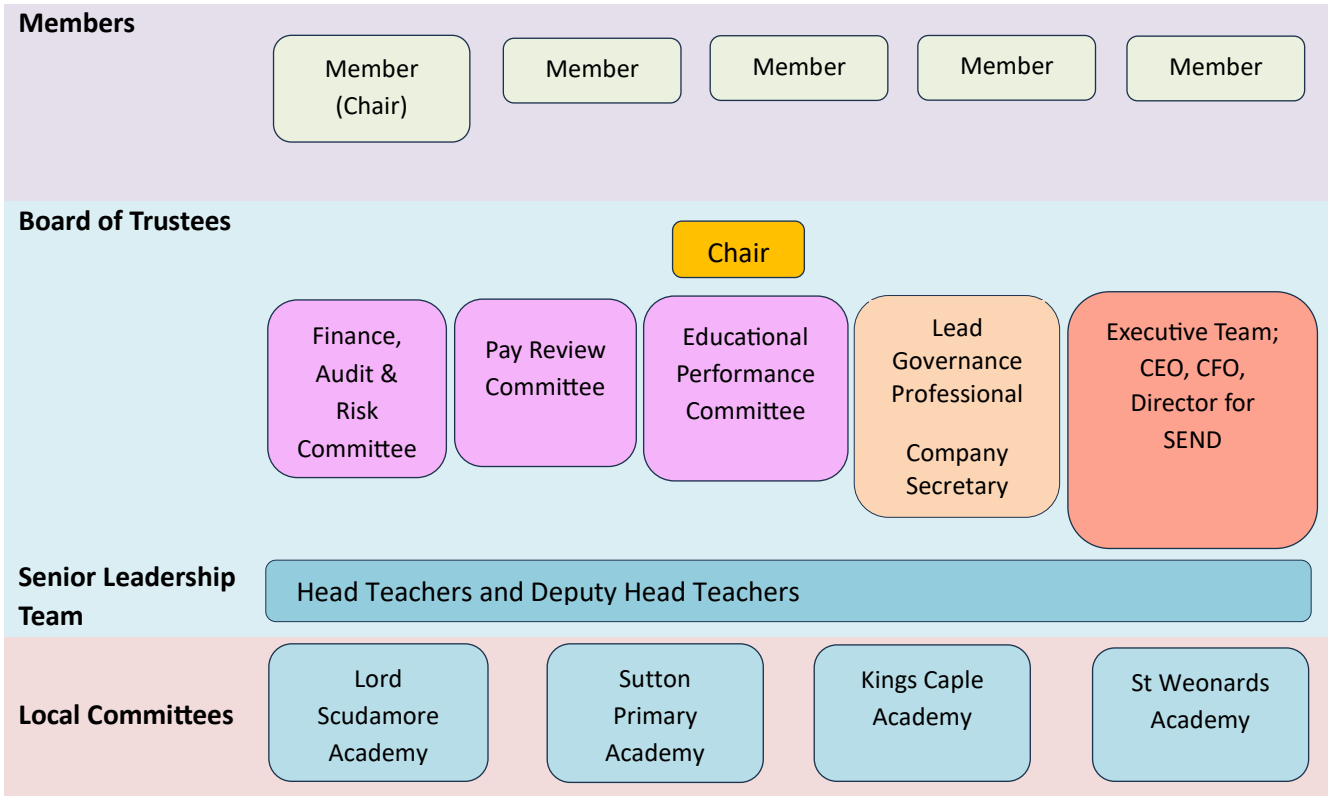
The Scheme of Delegation is written according to a 'RASCI' framework - Responsible, Accountable, Supportive, Consulted and Informed. A framework that assigns specific roles and responsibilities to stakeholders involved in a project or process, based on the various operational and strategic activities within the Trust. This is reflected in the key accompanying the roles and responsibilities.

Activities have been structured as follows:

- Vision and strategy
- Finance, audit & risk
- Staffing & HR
- Achievement, standards and wellbeing
- Premises and health and safety
- Governance
- Policies
- Community and stakeholder engagement

In addition, Trust policies allocate specific responsibilities between the Trust Board, the Chief Executive Officer, Local Committees and Academy Leaders and should be referred to and discharged accordingly and in conjunction with this Scheme. In the event of any inconsistency between the provision of any Trust policy and this Scheme, this Scheme shall take precedence and prevail. This framework enables all parties to fulfil their roles and responsibilities, and provides clarity on individual and collective responsibilities, and delegated responsibilities, as outlined below.

Structure



Definitions

Accountable and Responsible for action at this level - Responsible operationally for undertaking the particular activity delegated to them. In the case of the Chief Executive Officer, this will be at Trust level. In the case of an Academy Leader this will be at school level

Responsible for carrying out the action at this level.

Accountable the owner for the area of activity or decision and where appropriate determining how the activity will be undertaken, including defining appropriate milestones and targets to be reported against.

Supporting the area of activity or decision which may be through practical support or offering input or challenge to the process, procedure or provision.

Consulted by those accountable and/or responsible for decision making on the area of activity or decision for their views as part of the process of (and before) completing the activity or reaching the Decision.

Informed by those accountable and/or responsible of the area of activity or decision either before or after the activity or decision.

Table of activities

GOVERNANCE	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Trust governance structure, delegations and terms of reference	R A	A	R	C R S	C R S
Governance policies and practice (including management of conflicts of interest, governance expenses, whistleblowing)	R	R A	R	R	R
Appointment (including re-appointment) and removal of Trustees under Articles of Association	A	R A		I	I
Recruitment and skills audits of Trustees	R	R A	C	I	I
Appointment (including re-appointment) and removal of TB Chair and Vice Chair	A	A	C	I	I
Appointment and removal of link advisors of the local committees (including for Safeguarding and SEND)		A	I	R	C
Appointment (including re-appointment) and removal of Local Committee Chairs		A	C	R	I

GOVERNANCE	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Appointment and removal of Trustees	R	A	C	I	I
Appointment of Company Secretary and Lead Governance Professional		A	R	I	I
Schedule of TB and Local Committee meetings		A	R	A	R
Internal governance review		R I	I	R	
External governance review		A R	C S R	C S I	C S I
Ensuring transparency of information about governance structures and stakeholders		R	A	R	S
Adhering to Trust Articles of Association	R	R	R	R	R
Termly CEO Report for the Trust Board: receive and review		A R	R		
Annual schedule of business for Local Committee (including policies): agree		A	C	R	C
Termly Headteacher Report for the Local Committee Board: receive and review		I		A R	R

Monitor progress on key priorities: agree reporting arrangements		A		R		
Termly report on performance of the Trust: submit to Members on Governor Hub	I	A	R	C		
Self-review of the Trust Board: complete annually	I	A	R	I		
Trust Board Skills Audit: complete annually and recruit to fill gaps		A	R	I		
Trustee Succession – Governance Roles & Responsibilities: plan		A	R	C		
Trust and Academy websites are compliant: ensure		A		R		C
GOVERNANCE	**Members**	**Trustees**		**CEO & Executive Team**	**Local Committees**	**Academy Leads**
Governance Training & Development Programme: agree		A	R	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	

VISION & STRATEGY	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Determine Trust's vision, values and ethos		R A	R	C I	C R I
Determine the Trust's strategic plan, key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured		R A	R	C	C
Apply the Trust's vision and strategy to individual academies		A	R	C	R
Determine Academies strategic plans and key priorities: approve		I	A R	I	C
Effective implementation of strategy: Hold CEO to account		A	R		
Trust Expansion Plan & Due Diligence: agree		A	R		
Engagement with Stakeholders: ensure		A	R	R	R
Trust Contingency & Business Continuity Plans: agree		A	R		
Setting expectations for conduct		A R	R	R	R
Foster equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI		R	R	R	R
Compliance with equalities legislation		A	R	R	R
School Development Plan		I	R A S	R	R
IT resources and services		A R	R	R A	R

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Pupil achievement and progress including the analysis of termly data		I R	I R	R	C I R
Self-evaluation form (SEF)		I A	R A C I	I	C R
Approach to curriculum and assessment with regard to statutory requirements		A	R C S	I C R	C R
Curriculum policies including religious education, health, sex and relationships education and collective worship		A	R C S	A	C R
Confirmation of curriculum			C	I	R
Delivering Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in line with statutory requirements			A R S		R
Safeguarding oversight, policies and procedures		I R A	R	R	R
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) strategy and provision		I R A	R	R	R
Delivering support for looked after children			R I	I	R
Supporting pupils with relationships and positive behaviour adopting restorative practices		A R I S	R I	A R S	C R
Strategy and impact of grant funding – pupil premium, catchup funding PE & sport: agree and publish		A	R	I	R
Ensuring Trust and each school's readiness for inspection, including Ofsted		I R	R	I	R

STAFFING & HR	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
HR policies and practice (including performance management, appraisal, pay, capability, disciplinary, grievance, recruitment and retention, managing staff absence)		I A S	R A	I R S	I R S
Staffing structure		A	R C	I	A
Appointment of Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer		R A		I	S
Appointment of other senior Trust employees (including Chief Finance Officer, Directors, Safeguarding, Lead Governance Professional & Company Secretary)		R A	R	I	I

STAFFING & HR	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Appointment of Headteacher or Academy Leader		A	R C S	R C S	R
Appointment of Deputy and/or Assistant Headteachers		I	A	S C	R C
Appointment of other staff			R	I	R
Determination of pay/grading structures across the Trust		A R	R	I	I
Staff Appraisals including pay awards e.g TLR/UPR		A R	A R I	R C	R A
Staff Appraisals of CEO		A R			
Staff Development – setting budgets and link to SDP		A R	A	I	A R
Dismissal of staff		I R	R	I R	R
Suspension of staff		I	A		R
Staff restructuring, redundancy and reduction		A R	R	S	R
Decisions around recognition and facilities time for Trade Unions and professional associations		A R	R	I	I
Consultations and negotiations with staff and recognised Unions relating to HR policies, pay, terms and conditions and establishment of local agreements		A R	R	I	C I
Production and maintenance of single central record of recruitment and vetting checks		I R A	R	I R	R
Exit payments/early retirement/pension discretion (above a certain threshold) The new LGPS discretion policy does not reference Trustees		I	A		

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Finance related policies overall responsibility of Trust Funds		A	R	I	I
Appointment of external auditor	A R	R	R	I	I
Trust bankers		A R	R	I	I
Audited reports and financial statements	A R	A R	R	I	I
Setting delegated authority limits for financial transactions Trust Scheme of Financial Delegation: establish, monitor and review		I A	R	I	I
Setting annual Trust budget (including central service contribution %) Budget plan to support delivery of Trust strategic priorities: agree		R A	R	C I	R I
Setting school budgets		R A	R	I	R
Monitoring and reporting on Trust and school budgets and forecasts		I R	R	I	R
Managing cash position		I R	R		R
Trust and school capital plans and projects		A R	R S	R A	R
Trust reserves strategy		A R	R		
Use of purchasing power to ensure the Trust secures value for money		A R	R		R
Appointment of insurer and adequacy of insurance arrangements.		A	A R		I
Ensuring compliance with DFE requirements		I R	R	S	S
Choice of Trust wide finance systems including Trust pay roll provider, bank account and other financial instruments		A	R		
Benchmarking and Trust wide value for money		C	A R		
The Trust is compliant with its statutory and contractual duties		R	R	R	R
Management of risk-financial and non-financial: establish risk register and conduct annual review		A	R		

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Compliance (e.g safeguarding, H & S, employment law) auditing and reporting arrangements		A	R	I	C
Internal scrutiny - FAR Committee		A	R		
Register of business interests		A	R		
IT Acceptable Use Agreement		A	R		
Compliance with gifts, hospitality and bribery policy and procedures		A	R		
Compliance with UK GDPR & Data Protection policies and procedures		A	R		

ESTATE MANAGEMENT & HEALTH & SAFETY	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Trust property policies and strategy, estate improvement plans, priorities for premises maintenance and development, and accessibility plan		A R I	R	A R C	R C
Health and safety		I R	R	I	R

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	Members	Trustees	CEO & Executive Team	Local Committees	Academy Leads
Publication of information on Trust and school websites		R I	R	R	R
Trust branding		A	R	I	R
School prospectus and marketing			S	C I	R
Links with staff, parents, carers and local community		S I	S I R	R I	R

Relations with local authority and local government		S I	R	S	R

Relations with central government (including Regional Director)		S	R		
Public statements		A	R C	I C	R
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		
Determine academy level policies which reflect the school's ethos and values: approve		I	A	R	R

Trust Board's annual review of the Scheme of Delegation

The Trust Board will annually review this Scheme with the Chief Executive Officer, and Executive Team or Senior Leadership Team to be consulted so that the roles and responsibilities allocated reflect organisational realities and statutory updates and achieve the effective, efficient operation and governance of the Trust.

The Scheme is intended to be a living document that will be revised and adapted in response to the context and circumstances of the Trust. Suggested revisions to improve the Scheme are invited from all stakeholders between each annual review.

The Trustees remain ultimately responsible for the exercise of a delegated responsibility and for that reason the Trust Board may revise or adjust this Scheme as they consider appropriate between each annual review.

Adjustments and exceptions to the Scheme of Delegation

Although this Scheme is common to all schools in the Trust, the Trust Board reserves the right to agree adjustments or exceptions as explained in this section.

The Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer will use their shared knowledge of schools within the Trust to work proactively with the aim of ensuring the Scheme is reactive to the needs of schools at any given stage.

Where a school is assessed as being 'at risk', the Scheme may be adjusted by the Trust Board to the circumstances of that school. This could be enforced in a situation where the education and welfare of the pupils is seriously jeopardised and/or weak governance is identified as a barrier to the school's improvement. This may include Local Committees being relieved on a temporary basis of some or all of their delegated authorities. In these circumstances, an interim board will be formed by the Trustees to support the school. The interim board will be constituted by the Trustees from key personnel drawn from the Trustees and the Local Committee of other schools within the Trust and/or such other person(s) as the Trust Board, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, considered have the appropriate skills and expertise.