



# AMBITIONS

Academies Trust

## SCHEME OF DELEGATION

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

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, the Subsidiary Company (Ambers Group Ltd) and the Academy Committees. 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 (SoD) is the key document that defines lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT to ensure that the Members, Trustees, Board Committees, Subsidiary Company, Academy Committees, Executive Leadership and Academy Principals understand their role and responsibilities.

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

**Last Review Date:** **September 2020**

**Approved by the Trust Board:** **15<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Outstanding Achievement for All**

## Governance Structure and Accountability

- The Board of Trustees is responsible for the three core governance functions set out in the DfE's Governance Handbook:
  - 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
- The Board of Trustees 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 Business carrying out their performance management and setting their targets.
- The Trust Board has established Board Committees with delegated powers for Finance & Resources, Educational Outcomes and Strategy, Personnel and Audit & Risk Management. At least three Trustees sit on each Board Committee. Committees have a clear Terms of Reference.
- The Trust Board appoints a committee of Company Directors for Ambers Group Ltd to fulfil statutory responsibilities. This subsidiary company of Ambitions Academies Trust and comprises of Little Ambers (nursery provision) and Mini Ambers (wraparound care).
- 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 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.
- The Members of the Trust are the guardians of the governance of the Trust and as such have a different status to Trustees. Their primary role is to hold the Trust Board to account.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Members**

The Members Board appoints Trustees to ensure that the Trust's charitable object is carried out. They are able to remove Trustees if they fail to fulfil this responsibility. Members are responsible for approving any amendments made to the Trust's Articles of Association.

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.

The DfE Governance Handbook states that each Trust determines how best to keep Members informed so they can be assured that the Board is exercising effective governance and leadership of their Trust. By appointing the Chair of Trustees as a Member trusts can ensure that Members are kept informed and engaged. This maintains a robust governance structure as the majority of Members are independent of the Board of Trustees.

### **Trustees**

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) 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. 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 Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the Trust and, in accordance with the provisions set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, its Funding Agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook, they are legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of all schools within the Trust, and for the approval of a written Scheme of Delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements. The Trust Board is legally responsible and accountable to the Department for Education.

As a MAT 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.

### **Trust Board Committees**

The Trustees establish Committees to carry out some of their governance functions which may include making decisions, although any decisions made will be deemed decisions of the Trust Board. The membership (there must be at least three Trustees) and responsibilities of Board Committees are set out in each Committee's Terms of Reference. It is usual for the Trust Board to appoint Board Committee Chairs and Committee members according to their skills.

### **Ambers Group Directors**

The Directors of Ambers Group will be a majority of AAT Trustees. Non-Trustee Director appointments will be at the discretion of the Trust Board. Governance of Ambers Group is linked to the Trust Board and its committees. Ambers Group Directors are also registered with Ofsted.

## **The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Directors**

The CEO has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the Trust including the performance of the Trust's academies. The CEO leads the Trust's executive team and is accountable for its performance.

The CEO is the Accounting Officer with overall responsibility for the operation of the Trust's financial responsibilities and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability. The Directors for Education (for Primary, Secondary and Special Education), the Director for Outcomes, the Finance Director, Estates Director and Business Director report to the CEO.

## **The Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**

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

## **Academy Advisory Committees (AAC)**

The Trustees establish Academy Advisory Committees to carry out school level governance functions. An AAC meets termly. The Committee Chair is appointed by the Trust Board. The Trust Board can remove delegation to the committee at any time.

## **Academy Priority Support Committees (APSC)**

The Trustees and the Executive team establish an Academy Priority Support Committee for academies identified as requiring additional support. The committee is chaired by the Trust's Director of Outcomes. The APSC meets each half term.

## **Academy Principal**

The Principal is responsible for the day to day management of their Academy reporting to the Sector Educational Director. They report to the Academy Advisory Committee or the Academy Priority Support Committee, as applicable, on matters that have been delegated by the Trust Board.

## KEY

Responsible for action at this level



**Responsible and Accountable** for action at this level



**Responsible** for action at this level



**Accountable** for action at this level



**Support** to those accountable and/or responsible for decision-making



**Consulted** by those accountable and/or responsible for decision making



**Informed** by those accountable and/or responsible for decision making



Function **cannot** be legally carried out at this level

APPOINTMENTS	Members		Trustees		CEO & Directors	AAC	APSC	Academy Principal	
Members: Appoint/Remove	A	R							
Trustees: Appoint	A	R	A	R					
Trustees: Remove	A	R	A	R					TB accountable to Members
Chair of Trust Board: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					TB accountable to Members
Board Committee Chairs: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C				TB accountable to Members
Chief Executive Officer: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					TB accountable to Members
Chief Financial Officer for delivery of Trust's detailed accounting processes: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					CEO to advise TB
External Auditor: appoint	A	R							
External Auditor: recommend			A	R	C				
Internal Auditor: appoint and receive report			A	R					CFO to advise Audit Committee
Trust Directors: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					
Central Trust staff: appoint, remove, suspend			I	A R					
Academy Principal: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C				AAC Chair to join interview panel
Academy Principal of CofE School: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					TB to consult with the Diocese
AAC Chairs: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C	C		C	
Foundation Governors: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C	C	C	C	TB to consult with the Diocese
Ambers Group Directors: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C				
Parent AAC members: elect			C	I	A R			I	AAC accountable to TB
Parent AAC members: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	I	I		I	
Academy Committee Members (including Staff): appoint, remove, suspend			A	R	C	C	C	C	
Designated Trustee for Safeguarding			A	R	I	I			
Designated Trustee as Chair of Health & Safety Committee			A	R	I	I			
Designated Academy Committee Member for Safeguarding			I			A R	A R	I	
Designated Academy Committee Member for SEND			I			A R	A R	I	
Designated Academy Committee Member for Health & Safety			I			A R	A R	I	
Clerk to Trust Board: appoint, remove, suspend			A	R					TB accountable to Members
Clerk to Academy Committee: appoint, remove, suspend			A			R	R	C	

STRATEGY	Members	Trustees	CEO & Directors	AAC	APSC	Academy Principal	Accountability
Trust's vision, values and ethos: determine		A R	C				TB accountable to Members
Trust's strategic plan, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured: determine		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Academy's strategic plan, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured: determine		A	R	I	I	C	
Effective implementation of strategy: Hold CEO to account		A	R				TB accountable to Members
Progress against Trust Strategic Plan: review		A	R	I	I	I	CEO to advise TB
Trust-wide Estates strategy (including acquiring and disposing of Trust land): determine		A	R				
Trust-wide IT strategy: determine		A	R				
Asset Use and Maintenance Strategy: determine		A	R				
Trust-wide procurement strategies and efficiency savings programme: develop		A	R				
Trust-wide strategy for insurance arrangement to deliver financial efficiencies: agree		A	R				CFO to advise TB
Enhance Trust-wide collaboration			A				CEO accountable to TB
Trust Expansion Plan /due diligence		A	R				CEO to advise TB TB accountable to Members
National education policy changes: review			A R				CEO to advise TB

<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>Members</b>		<b>Trustees</b>	<b>CEO &amp; Directors</b>	<b>AAC</b>	<b>APSC</b>	<b>Academy Principal</b>	
Role descriptions for Members	A	R						
Role descriptions for Trustees/Chair/Committee/Academy Committee Members/Ambers Directors: agree			A R	C	I	I	I	
Articles of Association: review and agree	A		R	C				
Scheme of Delegation: review and agree			A R	C	I	I	I	
Governance structure (Committees) for the Trust: establish and review annually			A R	C	I	I	I	
Terms of Reference for Board Committees and for Academy Committees: agree annually			A R	C	I	I	I	TB accountable to Members
Annual schedule of business for Trust Board (including policies): agree			A R	C				
Trustee monitoring / support & challenge: agree			A R	C				
CEO Report format: agree			A	R				
Termly CEO Report: receive and review			A R					CEO Accountable to TB
Reporting arrangements for progress on key priorities: agree			A	R	R	R	R	
Annual report on performance of the Trust: submit to Members			A	C				TB accountable to Members
Self-review of Trust Board and Committees to assess structure for effectiveness: complete annually			A	C				TB accountable to Members
Trustee meeting attendance and contribution: review annually and publish attendance on Trust website			A R					
AAC Member meeting attendance and contribution: review annually and publish attendance on academy website					A R			
Annual schedule of business for the Academy Committee (including policies): agree			A	C	R	R	C	
Academy Committee member school visits/support and challenge: agree arrangements			A	C	R	I	C	
AAC Chair Report each term on the work of AAC: submit to Trust			I	I	A R		C	AAC Chair accountable to TB
Compliance with publishing requirements on Trust and Academy websites including governance: ensure			A	R			C	CEO accountable to TB for compliance of MAT and academies
Engagement with stakeholders	R		R	R	R	R	R	
Skills Audit: complete and recruit to fill gaps			A R	C	C	C	C	
Succession – Governance Roles & Responsibilities: plan			A R	C	C	C	C	Chair of TB
Trustee recruitment: undertake			A R					TB accountable to Members
Academy Committee member recruitment: undertake			A R	C	C	C	C	TB accountable to Members
Governance Training Programme: agree			A R	C	C	C	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>
Named Accounting Officer (CEO): agree		A R					TB accountable to Members
Overall responsibility of Trust Funds		A	R				TB accountable to Members
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
Budget plan to support delivery of Academy's key priorities: agree		A	R	I		C	
Central spend / Management Fee (top slice): agree		A	R				
Trust performance against Trust Budget: review		A	R				Finance Committee to advise TB
Internal and External Auditors' Report: receive and respond		A	R				CFO accountable to TB
Financial Controls are in place: ensure		A	R				
Annual report and accounts including accounting policies, signed statement on regularity, propriety and compliance, incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money: submit		A	R				
Scheme of Financial Delegation for the Trust: establish and review		A	R				TB Finance Committee to agree
Scheme of Financial Delegation for each Academy: establish and review		A	R	I		C	TB Finance Committee to agree
Financial outgoings not covered by the SoD: approve		A	R				
Benchmarking and Trust-wide value for money: ensure robustness		A	R				
Financial Contingency Plan/levels of reserves: agree		A	R				CFO and Finance Committee to advise TB
CEO pay award: agree		A R					
Academy Principal pay award: agree		A	R	C			

<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>
Trust Risk Register to manage risk: establish, review and monitor		A	R				
Auditing and Reporting arrangements for matters of Trust compliance (e.g. safeguarding, H&S, employment): agree		A	R	I	I	C	
Auditing and Reporting arrangements for matters of Academy compliance (e.g. safeguarding, H&S): agree		A	R	C	C	C	
Register of interests		A					

PEOPLE	Members	Trustees	CEO & Directors	AAC	APSC	Academy Principal	Accountability
Trust's staffing structure: recommend			R				CEO to recommend to TB
Trust's staffing structure: agree		A					TB accountable to Members
Academy's staffing structure: agree		A	R	I	I	C	
Appraisal of the CEO: undertake		A R					TB accountable to Members
Appraisal of Trust Directors: undertake		C	A R				CEO accountable to TB
Appraisal of Academy Principal: Trust Directors undertake			A R	C			AAC Chair to attend
Staff appraisal procedure and pay progression: review and agree		A	R				
Pay recommendations: agree		A	R	C			

<b>CURRICULUM &amp; STANDARDS</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 strategy for academy improvement		<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>C</b>	TB accountable to Members
Balanced and broad Curriculum: agree and monitor		<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>C</b>	TB oversight of Christian ethos for CofE Academies
Effective processes (ATAR & APSC) for evaluation and review of the quality assurance of teaching and learning, curriculum, inclusion and outcomes by year and by vulnerable group		<b>I</b>	<b>A</b> <b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>C</b>	
Academy RAP: set targets for pupil outcomes		<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	
Academy RAP: ongoing review and annual evaluation		<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	
Academy RAP: Academy Committee support and challenge		<b>I</b>		<b>A</b> <b>R</b>	<b>A</b> <b>R</b>		Academy Committee accountable to TB
Funding Agreements: ensure compliance		<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>			<b>R</b>	
Trust-wide forums: share best practice		<b>I</b>	<b>A</b> <b>R</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	

RAP – Raising Attainment Plan

ATAR – Academy Termly Accountability Review

APSC – Academy Priority Support Committee

<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: schedule and approve		A	R				CEO accountable to TB
Trust-wide HR Policies (including recruitment, pay, disciplinary, capability, conduct, grievance and absence): agree and ensure compliance:		A	R				
Trust Policies (other): review and agree		A	R				
Facilitate discussions with unions			A R				CEO accountable to TB
Determine academy level policies which reflect the school's ethos and values e.g. admissions; SEND; curriculum; behaviour: approve		A	R	C	C	C	TB oversight of Christian ethos for CofE Academies
Academy Policies: review and agree		I	C	A	A	R	
Trust-wide Expenses Policy: agree		A	R	I	I	I	
Trust-wide Charging & Remissions Policy: agree		A	R			I	
Trust Investment Policy: agree and ensure compliance		A	R				
Trust Complaints Policy: agree and ensure compliance		A R	R	I	I	R	
Trust Whistleblowing Policy: agree and ensure compliance		A R	R	I	I	R	TB accountable to Members
Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy: agree		A	R	I	I	C	
Trust Health & Safety Policy		A	R	I	I	I	
Academy's Admissions Policy: agree		I	C	A	A	R	Academy Committee accountable to TB. Where appropriate, the Diocese
Academy's Behaviour Policy & Exclusions Policy: agree		I	C	A	A	R	Academy Committee accountable to TB
Sector-wide SEND policy and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act requirements		A	R	I	I	C	
Academy's SEND Policy: agree		I	C	A	A	R	Academy Committee accountable to TB
Trust Lettings Policy: agree		A	R				
Trust Risk Management policies: in place and adhered to		A	R	I	I	C	CEO accountable to TB
Trust-wide Procurement policies (for suppliers including auditors, HR and payroll providers and solicitors): agree		A	R				CEO accountable to TB
Academy Procurement policies in accordance with the Funding Agreement and Trust Procurement Policy: agree		A	R			I	
Trust-wide Data Protection and Freedom of Information policies and procedures: agree		A	R				TB accountable to Members CEO to advise
Statutory policy changes: review		A	R				