



Academy Trust Board Scheme of Delegation (SoD) – November 2025

Introduction

An academy trust's board of trustees is accountable in law for all decisions about its academy. However, this does not mean that the full board is required to make all the decisions itself. Many decisions can be delegated to the Head teacher/principal (the senior executive leader in a single academy trust), trust board committees and individual trustees. It is vital that the decision to delegate a function is made by the full board of trustees and is recorded. Without such formal delegation, the individual or committee has no power to act.

What functions the board decides to delegate will vary. Once determined the SoD must be published on the trust website.

The purpose of scheme of delegation

This SoD is the key document defining which functions have been delegated and to whom. It is a simple yet systematic way of ensuring that members, trustees, committees and individuals are clear about who has responsibility for making which decisions in the trust. This overarching SoD covering all decision making in the trust should not be confused with the written scheme of delegation of financial powers referred to in the Academies Financial Handbook.

The detail of what functions are to be delegated is not set out in the articles of association, the academy trusts governing document. This is why it is critical that the academy trust agrees a SoD that explicitly establishes who makes which decisions, and ensures this is clear to all. A detailed yet clear SoD can help prevent confusion which can lead to a loss of trust and damaged working relationships.

Format, structure and clarity

Details on roles and responsibilities

We have used a grid format, with columns for each layer of governance which enables stakeholders to quickly determine who has the power to take which decisions within the trust. The grid is in four key areas to reflect both the governance framework and the three core functions of the governing board:

1. The governance framework:
 - a. People
 - b. Systems and structures
 - c. Reporting
2. Being strategic
3. Holding to account
4. Ensuring financial probity

This document is intended to be a working document that the trust board and executive leaders should be able to revise and adapt in response to their context and circumstances.

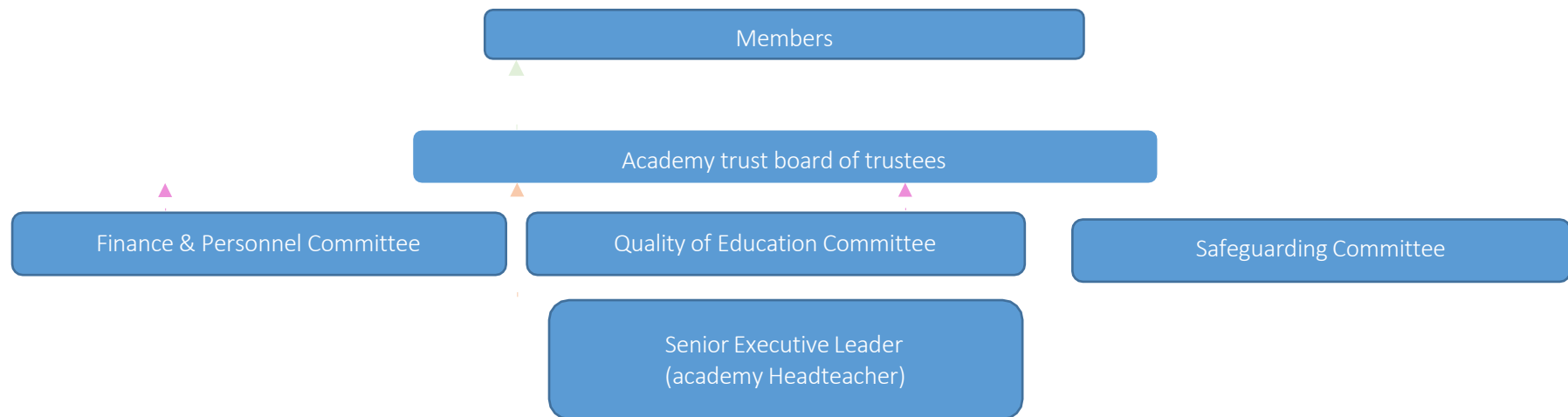
Review and adapt

The SoD should be reviewed annually, with revisions made as the context changes, if necessary, each year. This is not a failure, but a recognition of the need to be responsive to changing circumstances and to adapt accordingly. It is, however, important to ensure that all involved in governance are made aware of any changes and what these mean in practice.

An effective SoD will:

- Ensure the school leadership is clear about which decisions the trust board remain in control of
- Ensure that the role of the Head teacher/principal is fully understood
- Promote a culture of honesty and accountability
- Identify responsibility for the appointment and performance management of the Head teacher/principal
- Identify responsibility for policy and practice in the academy
- Identify responsibility for oversight of the academy's budget
- Identify responsibility for assessment of risk in the academy
- Identify responsibility for oversight of educational performance in the academy

Maplefields Academy Trust



Governance structure and lines of accountability

The academy trust board of trustee's delegates responsibility for the day to day running of the academy to the Head teacher/principal. The trustee board will hold the Head teacher/principal to account for the performance of the academy. The Head teacher/principal in turn holds other members of the senior leadership team to account by line managing them. While the board cannot ever delegate its accountability, it can delegate some of the detailed scrutiny, oversight and decision making.

The Head teacher/principal will report to the board on the performance of the academy, although this will be supplemented by the monitoring of trust board committees and individual trustees with any delegated responsibilities.

The Head teacher/principal is performance managed by the trust board.

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the members

The members of the trust have a different status to trustees. Originally, they will have been the signatories to the memorandum of association and will have agreed the trust's first articles of association (a document which outlines the governance structure and how the trust will operate). The articles of association will also describe how members are recruited and replaced, and how many of the trustees the members can appoint to the trust board. The members appoint trustees to ensure that the trust's charitable object is carried out and so must be able to remove trustees if they fail to fulfil this responsibility. Accordingly, the trust board submits an annual report on the performance of the trust to the members. Members are also responsible for approving any amendments made to the trust's articles of association.

While members are permitted to be appointed as trustees, in order to retain a degree of separation of powers between the members and the trust board, and in line with DfE expectations, not all members should be trustees. The DfE has amended the model articles to state that members are not permitted to be employees of the academy trust.

The role of the trustees

The academy trust is a charitable company and so trustees are both charity trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and company directors. Because trustees are bound by both charity and company law, the terms 'trustees' and 'directors' are often used

interchangeably. This document uses the term trustee as it avoids the possible confusion caused when executive leaders are called directors but are neither company directors nor trustees.

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 and its funding agreement, it is legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of the trust, and must approve a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements. In addition, it must carry out the three core governance functions:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction,
2. Hold the executive to account for the educational performance of the trust and its pupils, and the performance management of staff,
3. Oversee the financial performance of the trust and make sure its money is well spent.

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

The role of trust board committees

The trustees may establish committees to carry out some of its 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 the committee's terms of reference. It is usual for the trust board to appoint board committee chairs and committee members according to their skills.

The Academies Financial Handbook (which is updated annually) makes it clear that the board of trustees 'should have a finance committee to which the board delegates financial scrutiny and oversight'. In trusts with income above a certain level, there must also be a separate audit committee. As Maplefields does not meet this criterion it does not have a separate audit committee.

The role of the senior executive leader (the academy Head teacher/principal in a single academy trust)

The Head teacher/principal has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the trust.

The Head teacher/principal is the accounting officer so has overall responsibility for the operation of the academy trust's financial responsibilities and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability; avoiding waste and securing value for money.

The Head teacher/principal leads the senior leadership team (SLT) of the academy trust. The Head teacher/principal will delegate management functions to the SLT and is accountable to the trust board for the performance of the SLT.

Key

✓	Action can be taken at this level
	Not recommended for action to be taken at this level (this is a recommendation only; you can choose not to follow this if that works for your board)
	Action cannot be carried out at this level

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
Admissions	Determine the school's admissions arrangements annually, including the published admission number (PAN) and the oversubscription criteria	✓	✓			
	Make sure the school's admissions arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code and are fair, clear and objective	✓	✓			
	Establish an independent appeals panel when there are admissions appeals	✓				
Behaviour and exclusions	Arrange for suitable full-time education for any pupil of compulsory school age who is suspended for more than 5 school days	✓			✓	

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
	Convene a meeting to consider reinstating an excluded pupil and consider any representations from parents about a suspension or permanent exclusion	✓	✓	✓		
	Arrange an independent review panel to consider a permanent exclusion, where requested by parents	✓				
Curriculum	Make sure the school teaches a broad and balanced curriculum to the age of 16				✓	
	Make sure all pupils at the school are provided with independent careers guidance from year 7 to year 13	✓	✓		✓	
	Make sure all pupils at the school are provided with at least 6 encounters with technical education or training providers between years 8 and 13, as part of the school's career guidance offer	✓	✓		✓	
Finance and budgets	Make day-to-day spending decisions under the amount of £40K				✓	
	Appoint senior executive leaders as an accounting officer and a chief financial officer of the trust (these must not be the same person)	✓				
	Maintain adequate accounting records and prepare an annual report and accounts in line with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Accounts Direction	✓	✓			
	Appoint an auditor	✓	✓			

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
	Participate in annual accounts consolidation exercises as communicated by the Department for Education (DfE)	✓	✓			
	Refer novel, contentious and/or repercussive transactions to Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for explicit prior authorisation	✓				
	Make sure that the trust has adequate insurance cover or has opted into the academies risk protection arrangement (RPA)	✓	✓			
	Establish an audit and risk committee (If your trust's annual income is less than £50 million, you can combine it with another committee)	✓				
	Approve a balanced budget and an accurate budget forecast return (BFR) each financial year and submit the BFR to the ESFA	✓				
	Maintain a published register of interests , including the business and pecuniary interests of members, trustees, local governors and senior employees	✓				
	Monitor impact of pupil premium funding - A pupil premium link governor or committee should report back to the full board who has overall responsibility	✓	✓		✓	
	Monitor impact of PE and sport premium funding	✓	✓		✓	
Governing board procedures	Hold full governing board meetings at least 3 times a year	✓				
	Elect a chair and vice-chair of trustees	✓				
	Appoint a clerk	✓				

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
	Determine the constitution, membership and terms of reference of any committee it decides to establish and review this at least annually. Appoint or elect a chair for each committee	✓				
	Check that all statutory policies and documents are in place	✓				
	Delegate functions to committees and individuals	✓				
Health and safety	Monitor the implementation of the health and safety policy	✓	✓			
	Make sure there is an appointed person to make sure the school meets its health and safety duties	✓	✓		✓	
	Make sure that the estate is managed strategically and is maintained in a safe working condition	✓	✓		✓	
Parents and the community	Make sure the required information is published on the school website	✓	✓		✓	
	Approve a complaints procedure	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Establish a complaints panel to consider formal complaints about the school and any community facilities or services it provides	✓				
	Make sure the school complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000	✓	✓			
	Make sure the school complies with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)	✓	✓			A data protection committee or champion should report back to the full board which has overall responsibility

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
Pupil wellbeing	Make sure eligible pupils receive free school meals (this includes all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2)	✓	✓		✓	
	Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked-after children (LAC) and post LAC and that they undertake appropriate training	✓	✓		✓	
	Make sure the school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and publishes equality objectives and information about how it is doing this	✓				
	Make arrangements for supporting pupils with medical conditions	✓	✓		✓	
Safeguarding	Check that the school complies with statutory guidance on safeguarding	✓	✓			
	Make sure the school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place	✓				
	Make sure a governor takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding and that they receive appropriate training	✓	✓			
	Make sure governors receive safeguarding training	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Make sure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect pupils when they access the internet at school	✓	✓		✓	
	Appoint a member of staff to be the designated safeguarding lead				✓	
	Make sure that effective support is provided for any employee facing an allegation	✓	✓		✓	
SEND	Make sure that parents/carers are notified by the school when special educational provision is being made for their child				✓	
	Make sure the school produces its school SEN information report and publishes it online	✓	✓		✓	

Function	Task	FGB	Committee	Individual governor	Headteacher	We have delegated this to:
	Co-operate with the LA in developing the local offer		✓		✓	
	Make sure the school follows the statutory SEND Code of Practice	✓			✓	
	Make sure that the teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying pupils who have SEN and providing appropriate teaching				✓	
Staffing matters	Appoint a senior executive leader (who should be the academy's principal)	✓				
	Make sure safer recruitment procedures are applied (for example, disclosure and barring checks)	✓				
	Make sure employment law and guidance is being followed	✓	✓			
	Approve staffing structure changes	✓	✓			
	Dismiss the headteacher	✓				

