



Scheme of Delegation 2024-2025



Document Detail	
Category	Statutory
Department	Academies within the Trust
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Approved by:	Directors Resources, Risk and Audit committee Chief Executive Officer Academy Committee
Status	Approved 18.9.24
Reviewed on:	Term 1 - 2024
Next review:	Term 1 -2025

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1. Introduction

As a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the Trust Board of Ad Meliora Academy Trust is accountable, in law, for all major decisions concerning their academies. The Trust Board is not required to carry out all the Trust's governance functions and many can, and are, delegated to the CEO and Executive Team and established sub-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 Members, Directors, Trust Board Sub-Committees, Academy Committees, School Performance Review Boards (SPRBs), Executive Leadership and Academy Headteachers 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 Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Academy Trust Handbook.

2. Governance structure and accountability

The Trust Board is responsible for the three core governance functions set out in the Department for Education's (DfE) 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 Trust Board appoint the Chief Executive Officer (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 for financial management.

The CEO manages the Trust Chief Finance Officer, Operations Manager and Governance Manager, carrying out their performance management and setting their targets.

The Trust Board has established Board Committees with delegated powers for Resources, Audit and Risk and a Pay Review Board. At least three Directors sit on each Board Committee, with each having clear, specific Terms of Reference.

At a local level, the Trust Board has established Academy Committees (AC), they are also a sub-committee of the Trust Board. Academy Committees have clear Terms of Reference detailing the committees' composition, remit and meeting requirements. Academy Committee minutes are shared with the Trust Board and Chairs are invited to meet with the Trust Board annually.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Members

The Ad Meliora Academy Trust Members appoint Directors to ensure that the Trust's charitable objects are carried out. They are able to remove Directors 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 a 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.

The Trust reports formally to Members through the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and via a written summary report and informal meeting between the Members and the CEO at the end of the Summer term.

Directors

As a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), the Ad Meliora Academy Trust is a charitable company and so Directors are both charity Directors (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act

2011) and Company Directors. Directors are bound by both charity and company law. The terms 'Trustee' and 'Director' are often used interchangeably. Ad Meliora Academy Trust uses the term 'Directors'.

The Directors 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 Trust Handbook, they are legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of all academies 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 (DfE).

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

Trust Board Committees

The Directors establish sub-committees to carry out some of their governance functions which may include making decisions, although any decisions made by established sub-committees in respects of functions and authorities delegated to them will be deemed decisions of the Trust Board.

The membership (there must be at least three Directors) 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 and experience. The Trust Board Committees are:

Resources, Audit and Risk Committee (RARC)

The Academy Trust Handbook states that academy trusts are required to establish an Audit and Risk committee. Trusts with an annual income over £50 million must have a dedicated Audit & Risk Committee. In addition to audit and risk, the committee is responsible for financial oversight and scrutiny, ensuring that the Trust complies with its policies and procedures with a focus on financial planning, risks, reporting, and monitoring.

Pay Review Committee (PRC)

The Pay Review Committee is responsible for ensuring that pay decisions are fair and in accordance with the Trust's Appraisal Policy.

Academy Committees (AC)

The Academy Committees are responsible for: -

- The effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements
- Academic standards
- The effectiveness of the curriculum
- The systems in place to support pupils' well-being
- The management of staff workload

- Community engagement

The committee will monitor, challenge, support and, where appropriate, advise on all aspects of school improvement and outcomes.

In the context of a MAT, the performance of every individual academy is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Board discharges this responsibility, primarily, through the function of the CEO and Trust Central Team, who themselves are responsible (to the Board) for the performance of the school leadership. This is reinforced by the work of Academy Committees, which are formal subcommittees of the Board. They have a brief to review and challenge performance at the working level within their delegated responsibilities in each academy and SRB, independently of Trust management.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and 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 Central 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 Chief Financial Officer, the Operations Manager and the Governance Manager report to the CEO.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

The CFO has delegated responsibility for the Trust's detailed financial procedures.

Governance Manager (GM)

The Governance Manager is the appointed Governance Professional to the Trust Board and its sub committees, as well as overseeing the local governance arrangements through the Academy Committees. The Governance Manager reports to the Trust Board, and to the CEO in an operational capacity as an employee of the Trust.

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of their academy, reporting to the CEO. They report to the Academy Committees, as applicable, on matters that have been delegated by the Trust Board.

Chairs Action between Trustee Meetings

No individual director is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Trust outside any specific authority set out in this scheme of delegation. However, as an exception, the Chair of Directors can decide as a single director when a delay in doing so would be:

- seriously detrimental to the interests of the Trust of any of its academies, and
- it would not be possible to postpone the decision to a meeting of Directors (which the Chair can convene with less than 7 days' notice if necessary, provided Directors will have sufficient time to receive and consider relevant documents relating to the decision).

The following types of decisions cannot be made by "Chair's Action":

- decisions in relation to admissions.
- approvals of financial spend above £10,000.
- decisions on executive pay

4. Scheme of delegation framework

The Trust Board hold the power to delegate certain authorities to other layers of governance in the Trust. This Scheme of Delegation outlines how these delegations are made to ensure clear and transparent governance arrangements. It aligns with the Trust's Articles of Association, internal Terms of Reference, and relevant government guidance as issued by the DfE and ESFA.

This Scheme of Delegation is written according to the 'RACI' framework, based on the various operational areas of activities at the Ad Meliora Academy Trust. It outlines who is:

- Responsible for delivering the area of activity/decision in line with agreed policies.
- Accountable for the area of activity/decision - this is usually the Trust Board as the legally accountable and liable body, there is only one person/group accountable for each item.
- Consulted on the area of activity/decision and entitled to give/receive feedback.
- Informed of the area of activity/decision through agreed communications channels. No feedback is required from this tier of governance.

5. Scheme of delegation format

The table which follows shows which tier(s) of governance are Responsible [R], Accountable [A], Consulted [C] or Informed [I] for each of the key areas of delivery. It outlines roles and responsibilities across key delivery areas between the Members; Trust Board; Resources, Audit and Risk committee; Pay Review Committee, Chief Executive Officer; Chief Finance Officer, Headteachers and Academy Committees.

The Trust has a detailed Financial Scheme of Delegation and policy schedule that sits alongside this Scheme of Delegation.

6. Scheme of delegation policy escalation process

The Scheme of Delegation sets out key policies which must be approved by either the Trust Board or its sub-committees in line with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook and the recommendations of the DfE.

The Trust Board has elected to delegate those policies applicable to all Trust academies and all staff which fall outside of this list to the CEO. Those policies which are specific to the academies and fall outside of this list are delegated to the Headteacher within each academy.

In the event of a significant change to any of the policies which fall outside of the scope specified within the SoD, the approver must consider whether those changes could constitute:

- A risk of failure to comply with any statutory obligation, or breach of a relevant law
- A risk to the reputation of the Trust
- A significant and/or untested departure from accepted industry standards

Where one or more of these criteria is satisfied, the CEO will refer a policy for consultation with the Committee whom historically approved that policy. This list of approvers is held centrally and should be referred to in the event of these circumstances arising. Any committee consulted with shall reserve the right to require a referred policy to be presented for approval at a formal meeting of that committee should it see fit.

Scheme of Delegation (1 of 5)								
Key: R = Responsible A = Accountable C = Consulted I = Informed *= if necessary via escalation process	Members	Directors	Resources, audit and risk	Pay review	CEO	CFO	Headteachers	Academy Committee
Governance framework								
To approve the scheme of delegation		R			C			
Approve any temporary delegated authority to individuals or committees		A			R			
Elect Chair and Vice Chair of Directors		A						
To appoint and remove Members	R							
Approve Terms of Reference for sub-committees of the Trust Board including the Academy Committees		R						
Appoint or remove Chair for sub-committees to the Board of Directors		R						
Approve appointment or removal of Chair of Academy Committees		R						
Approve membership and composition of sub-committees of the Board of Directors		R						
Agree which sub-committee will approve each Trust policy		R						
Appoint external auditors	R	C						
Approve the annual schedule for internal audit		R			A			
Approve the Trust strategic plan		A			C			I
Approve Governance Code of Conduct		R			C			
Ensure an effective programme of stakeholder and community engagement is delivered		A			C			R
Financial Management including Trust growth								
Set vision and targets for Trust growth		A			R			
Undertake due diligence review process on potential schools joining the Trust		A	C	C	R	R		
Approve new schools joining the Trust		R						

Scheme of Delegation (2 of 5)								
Key: R = Responsible A = Accountable C = Consulted I = Informed *= if necessary via escalation process	Members	Directors	Resources, audit and risk	Pay review	CEO	CFO	Headteachers	Academy Committee
Financial Management including Trust growth								
Develop and approve annual budget and three-year outturn		A	R		C	C		
Produce monthly management accounts in line with Academy Trust Handbook requirements		A			R	C		
Manage cash position including reporting on cashflow and internal 'loans'		A			R	C		
Manage procurement exercises in line with compliance requirements		A			R	C		
Approve the Trust's Reserves Policy		R	C		C	C		
Approve the Trust's Investment Strategy		R	C		C	C		
Premises/estates								
Develop the Trust estates strategy		A			R			
Procure new buildings in line with procedures and regulations		A			R			
Maintain buildings including properly funded maintenance programme		A			R	C		
Set Health and Safety Policy		A			R		R	
Respond to Health and Safety incidents in schools		A					R	
Appoint person in charge of first aid in schools		A					R	
Review risk assessments		A			R		R	
Risk Management								
Approve the Trust Risk Management Framework		A	R		C			
Approve the strategic risk appetite level		A	R		C			
Approve the Data and Cyber Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan		A	R		C			
Monitor and review the management of strategic risk		A	R		C			

Scheme of Delegation (3 of 5)								
Key: R = Responsible A = Accountable C = Consulted I = Informed *= if necessary via escalation process	Members	Directors	Resources, audit and risk	Pay review	CEO	CFO	Headteachers	Academy Committee
Risk Management								
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to the management of local risk		A	C		R			
Education Framework								
Approval of Curriculum Policy and plan		A			C		R	C
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to the effectiveness of the curriculum		I			A		R	R
Approval of school targets		A			R		C	I
Monitoring of school targets		A			R		R	C
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to achieving high academic standards		I			A		R	R
Approval of Trust Improvement and Development Plans		A			R			
Approval of School Improvement and Development Plans		A			C		R	I
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to the execution of the School Improvement and Development Plan.		A			R		C	C
Exclude a pupil for more than 15 days or permanently					C		R	
Welfare arrangements								
Monitor the effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements		A			R		R	R
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to effectiveness of systems in place to support pupils' well-being		I			A		R	R
To monitor the management of staff workload		I			A		R	R

Scheme of Delegation (4 of 5)								
Key: R = Responsible A = Accountable C = Consulted I = Informed *= if necessary via escalation process	Members	Directors	Resources, audit and risk	Pay review	CEO	CFO	Headteachers	Academy Committee
Appointments, Dismissals and Designations								
Appoint/dismiss/suspend the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	C	R						
Appoint/dismiss/suspend a member of the Trust Central Team		C			R			
Appoint/dismiss/suspend a Headteacher or Deputy Head		C			R		C	I
Appoint/dismiss/suspend school staff below Deputy Head					C		R	
Performance monitoring and holding to account								
Undertake performance management of the Chief Executive Officer		R						
Undertake performance management of the Trust Central Team		C			R			
Undertake performance management of Headteachers		R			R			
To determine the pay progression/award for the Chief Executive Officer		R				I		
To determine the pay progression/award for the Trust Central Team				R	C	I		
To determine the pay progression/award for the Headteachers				R	C	I		
To determine pay progression for school-based employees				R	C	I		
Provide independent challenge and support in relation to school leadership		A	I		R		C	C
Policy Management (for policies not specified elsewhere)								
Approve the Articles of Association and any amendments thereof	R	A			C	C	I	
Approve the Scheme of Delegation	I	R	I	I	C	I	I	I
Approve the Financial Regulation and Scheme of Financial Delegation		R	I		C	C	I	
Approve the Safeguarding Policy		A			R		C	I
Approve the Early Years Policy		A			R		C	C

Scheme of Delegation (5 of 5)

	Members	Directors	Resources, audit and risk	Pay review	CEO	CFO	Headteachers	Academy Committee
Key: R = Responsible A = Accountable C = Consulted I = Informed *= if necessary via escalation process								
Approve the Health needs of pupils who cannot attend school policy		A			R		C	C
Approve the GDPR Policy		A			R			
Approve any policy not specified elsewhere within the scheme of delegation		A	C	C	R	C	C	C