Three Spires TRUST

'Life in all its fullness'

Governance Framework and Scheme of Delegation

2026-27

Enabling life in all its fullness through courageous and future-ready education for everyone.

Contents

Section / Appendix	Page
Section 1 – Purpose and Introduction	2
Section 2 – Strategic Line of Sight	4
Section 3 – Governance Assurance Framework	6
Section 4 – Governance Assurance Map	9
Section 5 – Roles and Responsibilities	10
Section 6 – Academy Growth and Trust Support	14
Section 7 – Reporting Framework	16
Section 8 – Scheme of Delegation Decision Matrix	20
Appendix 1 – Governance Code of Conduct	27
Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference	28
Appendix 3 – Academy Committee Link Champion Role Descriptors	32
Appendix 4 – Trustee Link Role Descriptors	36
Appendix 5 – Governance Assurance Map	38
Appendix 6 – Summary of Financial Authorisation Levels	39

This document is the single governance framework for 2026-27. It brings together governance architecture, assurance, roles and responsibilities, terms of reference and formal delegations. Detailed operational policies and financial procedures remain controlled documents in their own right.

Section 1 – Purpose and Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Framework

This Governance Framework and Scheme of Delegation explains how governance operates across Three Spires Trust and how authority, responsibility, scrutiny and assurance are organised. It provides a clear line of sight from the Trust's vision and strategic priorities through executive delivery, local implementation, governance scrutiny and evaluation of impact.

The document brings together the Trust's governance architecture, assurance arrangements, roles and responsibilities, reporting framework, committee terms of reference and formal delegations. It is intended to provide clarity, consistency and transparency, while avoiding duplication or gaps between the Trust Board, its committees, Academy Committees and executive leaders.

The Trust Board retains overall legal accountability for the Trust and every academy within it. Responsibility may be delegated, but accountability cannot. All delegations are therefore exercised within the parameters set by the Trust Board and may be reviewed, varied or withdrawn where this is necessary to protect pupils, fulfil the Trust's charitable objects, manage risk or secure improvement.

This framework should be read alongside the Articles of Association, funding agreements, the Academy Trust Handbook, the Trust's strategic plan, Assurance Map, Policy Accountability Schedule, Financial Procedures, committee terms of reference and other approved Trust policies and procedures.

1.2 Trust Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities

The governance arrangements set out in this framework exist to support delivery of the Trust's vision:

Enabling life in all its fullness through courageous and future-ready education for everyone.

The Trust's values describe how the organisation behaves in pursuing that vision:

Transform	Serve	Thrive
We seek positive and sustainable change, remaining ambitious for every pupil, adult, academy and community.	We act with humility, integrity and a commitment to the common good.	We create the conditions in which children, adults, academies and the Trust can flourish.

The Trust's strategic plan is organised around four strategic priorities:

- Flourishing Children
- Flourishing Adults
- Flourishing Academies
- Flourishing Trust

The Trust Board approves annual priorities beneath these strategic headings. The Assurance Map identifies how the Board will obtain confidence that priorities are being delivered, statutory responsibilities are being met, resources are being used effectively and material risks are being controlled.

1.3 Governance Principles

Governance across Three Spires Trust is guided by the following principles:

- **Accountability is retained.** Responsibility may be delegated, but the Trust Board remains accountable for the Trust and its academies.
- **Governance is strategic.** Trustees and governors focus on direction, assurance, risk, impact and strategic engagement rather than operational management.
- **Evidence informs assurance.** Confidence is based on reliable and proportionate evidence, not on narrative reporting or self-assertion alone.
- **Assurance belongs to governance.** Leaders provide evidence, evaluation, risk and action. Trustees and governors determine the assurance obtained from that evidence.
- **Local context matters.** Academy Committees help the Trust Board understand how strategy, policy and practice operate within each academy and community.
- **Roles are distinct but connected.** The Trust Board, committees, Academy Committees, Link Champions, Trustee Links and executive leaders each contribute different evidence and perspectives.
- **Scrutiny is proportionate to risk.** The depth and frequency of governance activity reflect the significance, complexity and risk of the matter under consideration.
- **Concerns are acted upon.** Weak or conflicting assurance leads to further evidence, additional scrutiny, support, intervention or formal escalation.
- **Decisions are collective.** Individual trustees and governors do not exercise authority unless it has been expressly delegated to them.
- **Governance supports flourishing.** Decisions consider their effect on pupils, staff, academies, communities and the long-term sustainability of the Trust.

1.4 Governance and Flourishing

The Trust's understanding of flourishing provides the strategic context for governance. Governance should test not only whether required activity has taken place, but whether it is making a meaningful, equitable and sustainable difference.

Strategic priority	Governance considers
Flourishing Children	Whether pupils are safe, included, attend, learn well, achieve, develop personally and access ambitious opportunities.
Flourishing Adults	Whether staff are supported, developed, deployed effectively, treated fairly and able to contribute to the Trust's vision.
Flourishing Academies	Whether academies are well led, inclusive, financially and operationally sustainable, locally responsive and improving.
Flourishing Trust	Whether the Trust is strategically coherent, compliant, financially sustainable, well governed and able to deliver long-term public benefit.

Section 2 – Strategic Line of Sight

2.1 Strategic Architecture

The strategic architecture establishes a direct line from the Trust's purpose to delivery, scrutiny, assurance and impact. It helps every part of the organisation understand how its work contributes to the Trust's priorities and how governance gains confidence that intended outcomes are being achieved.

Element	Purpose	Application
Trust vision	Why the Trust exists	Enabling life in all its fullness through courageous and future-ready education for everyone.
Trust values	How the Trust behaves	Transform | Serve | Thrive.
Strategic plan	What the Trust aims to achieve	Flourishing Children | Flourishing Adults | Flourishing Academies | Flourishing Trust.
Annual priorities	What receives particular focus during the year	Priorities, outcomes and measures approved annually by the Trust Board.
Assurance Map	How trustees know	The evidence, scrutiny and governance activity through which confidence or concern is established.
Executive delivery	Who delivers	The CEO, Executive Team, Principals and staff implement the strategy and manage operations.
Executive reporting	What leaders provide	Progress, evidence, evaluation, risks, mitigations and matters requiring governance attention.
Committee scrutiny	How evidence is tested	Committees examine evidence within their remit, challenge leaders and report assurance and concerns to the Board.
Local assurance	How local implementation is tested	Academy Committees and Link Champions consider practice, context, stakeholder experience, risk and impact within individual academies.
Trustee link activity	How thematic assurance is strengthened	Trustee Links support the Board's understanding of key areas without replacing committee or collective Board accountability.
Assurance and escalation	What happens when confidence is insufficient	Further evidence, scrutiny, support, intervention, resources or formal escalation are commissioned.
Impact	What governance ultimately evaluates	The difference made for pupils, adults, academies, communities and the Trust.

2.2 Strategic Priorities

The four strategic priorities provide the organising framework for planning, reporting, committee scrutiny and the Assurance Map. Annual priorities and measures are approved by the Trust Board and reflected within Trust and academy plans.

- Flourishing Children
- Flourishing Adults
- Flourishing Academies
- Flourishing Trust

Reports should identify the strategic priority to which evidence relates. Governance should consider whether actions are producing the intended impact, whether improvements are consistent and sustainable, and whether any group, academy or area requires additional attention.

2.3 Governance Focus on Impact

Governance activity should move beyond confirming that a process, policy or action exists. Trustees and governors should consider the quality of implementation, the resulting impact, the sustainability of improvement and the level of residual risk.

From	To
Activity completed	Evidence of effective implementation
Information received	Evidence evaluated and challenged

From	To
Single-source reporting	Triangulated assurance
Headline position	Understanding variation, groups and context
Short-term action	Sustainable improvement and capacity
General update	Clear risk, action, owner and timescale
Assumption of confidence	Explicit governance assurance conclusion

Section 3 – Governance Assurance Framework

3.1 Purpose of Assurance

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that strategic priorities are being delivered, resources are being used effectively, statutory responsibilities are being met and significant risks are being appropriately managed. To fulfil this responsibility, governance must obtain reliable assurance regarding the performance, effectiveness and sustainability of the Trust's arrangements.

The Governance Assurance Framework establishes a consistent approach to obtaining, evaluating and acting upon assurance across the Trust. It provides a common methodology through which trustees, Academy Committees, executive leaders and governors understand how confidence is gained, where evidence is tested and how concerns are escalated.

The framework does not replace executive accountability, operational leadership, professional quality assurance or performance management. It provides the structure through which governance evaluates whether those arrangements are effective and whether they are delivering the intended impact.

Governance assurance considers what has happened, what the evidence means, how sustainable improvement is likely to be and whether remaining risks require further scrutiny, support or intervention.

3.2 Principles of Assurance

Principle	Meaning
Assurance over activity	Focus on impact, effectiveness, sustainability and risk, not simply whether tasks have been completed.
Evidence-informed decisions	Draw on appropriate evidence rather than relying solely on self-reporting.
Triangulation	Strengthen confidence by comparing information from different sources.
Proportionality	Match the depth and frequency of scrutiny to the significance and risk of the issue.
Consistency	Use a common assurance methodology across governance structures and reporting processes.
Independence of judgement	Leaders present evidence and evaluation; governance determines the assurance obtained.
Clarity	Record the evidence considered, the conclusion reached and any further action required.
Escalation	Act when assurance is weak, inconsistent, incomplete or indicates significant risk.

3.3 The Three Assurance Questions

All governance reporting, scrutiny and assurance activity should be structured around three core questions:

Question	Governance purpose	Examples
1. How do we know?	Evidence	What evidence supports confidence or concern? Consider performance and outcomes, development plans and self-evaluation, leadership and safeguarding reports, Link Champion and Trustee Link activity, stakeholder voice, internal scrutiny and external review.
2. So what?	Evaluation	What does the evidence mean? Consider impact, equity, consistency, effectiveness, risk, capacity and sustainability.
3. Now what?	Action	What needs to happen next? Identify further evidence, monitoring, support, escalation, resources, intervention or strategic decision-making.

The purpose of governance discussion is not simply to receive information, but to move systematically through these questions and arrive at a clear assurance conclusion.

3.4 Sources of Assurance

Assurance should draw on a combination of sources appropriate to the matter and level of risk. No single source should routinely be treated as sufficient where the issue is significant or contested.

Source	Contribution to assurance
Leadership reporting	Provides local evidence, evaluation, risk, action and impact.
Executive reporting	Provides Trust-wide analysis, comparison, strategic risk and organisational response.
Academy self-evaluation and development planning	Provides leaders' evaluation of strengths, priorities, implementation and impact.
Performance and benchmarking information	Provides outcome, trend, group and comparative evidence, including IDSR and ICFP where relevant.
Link Champion activity	Tests implementation, experience and evidence within an academy.
Trustee Link activity	Strengthens thematic understanding and triangulation at Trust level.
Committee scrutiny	Tests evidence, challenge, risk and controls within delegated committee responsibilities.
Internal scrutiny and audit	Provides independent or objective evidence about controls, compliance and effectiveness.
External assurance	Includes inspection, professional review, audit, statutory agencies and external evaluation.
Stakeholder voice	Provides the experience of pupils, parents, staff, governors, communities and other stakeholders.
Compliance and operational systems	Provides evidence from audits, dashboards, registers, incidents, complaints, training and statutory checks.

3.5 Assurance Conclusions

Trustees and governors should record an assurance conclusion where a matter is material to their responsibilities. The conclusion should reflect the totality of evidence considered and should not be supplied by the report author.

Conclusion	Meaning	Expected response
Strong assurance	Reliable and consistent evidence indicates effective arrangements, intended impact and controlled risk.	Continue planned oversight. Share effective practice where appropriate.
Reasonable assurance	Evidence is broadly positive, with some limitations, variation or actions still being embedded.	Monitor identified actions and seek confirmation of impact.
Limited assurance	Material weaknesses, evidence gaps, inconsistency or elevated risk reduce confidence.	Specify further evidence, action, support, scrutiny and escalation.
No assurance	Evidence is absent, unreliable or indicates serious failure or uncontrolled risk.	Escalate promptly and commission intervention, external support or other action as appropriate.
Insufficient evidence	Governance cannot reach a conclusion because the evidence is incomplete or not sufficiently reliable.	Obtain the evidence required before determining assurance.

Assurance terminology should be applied proportionately. It is not a grade for an academy or an evaluation of an individual. It records governance confidence in the arrangements and evidence considered at that point.

3.6 Annual Assurance Cycle

Term	Governance focus	Typical emphasis
Autumn	Readiness, capacity and risk	Priorities, baseline position, statutory readiness, resources, controls, planned improvement and emerging risks.

Term	Governance focus	Typical emphasis
Spring	Impact, implementation and consistency	Progress, quality of implementation, variation, stakeholder experience, mid-year evidence and corrective action.
Summer	Evaluation, effectiveness and sustainability	Outcomes, impact, value, lessons learned, sustainability, residual risk and priorities for the following year.

The cycle informs annual agendas, reporting schedules, Link Champion activity, Trustee Link activity and the Assurance Map. It does not prevent urgent or high-risk issues being considered at any point.

3.7 Assurance and Escalation

Where assurance is limited, absent or based on insufficient evidence, the trustees and governors must identify the response required. Responses should be proportionate to the issue and recorded clearly.

- requesting clarification or additional evidence;
- commissioning further Link Champion, Trustee Link or committee scrutiny;
- requiring a time-bound action plan and progress reporting;
- seeking executive support, peer support or specialist advice;
- increasing the frequency or depth of monitoring;
- referring the matter to another committee or the Trust Board;
- adjusting delegation or requiring specified approval;
- commissioning internal scrutiny, external review or independent assurance;
- initiating formal intervention, recovery or risk escalation arrangements.

Significant safeguarding, financial, legal, compliance, reputational or educational concerns must be escalated promptly through the routes set out in the Scheme of Delegation, committee terms of reference and relevant Trust policies.

Section 4 – Governance Assurance Map

4.1 Purpose

The Governance Assurance Map connects the Trust's strategic priorities, statutory responsibilities and key risks with the evidence and governance activity through which assurance is obtained. It provides a planned overview of what trustees and governors needs to know, who scrutinises it, how often it is considered and how conclusions are reported or escalated.

The map is not a list of every operational activity. It identifies the most important lines of assurance required by the Trust Board and helps prevent duplication, gaps and over-reliance on a single source of evidence.

4.2 How the Map Is Used

The Assurance Map is used to:

- align governance activity to strategic priorities and significant risks;
- identify the lead governance body and supporting assurance roles;
- specify expected evidence sources and reporting routes;
- plan committee agendas, Academy Committee agendas and link activity;
- record assurance conclusions, evidence gaps and required actions;
- support escalation from Academy Committees and committees to the Trust Board;
- inform the annual review of governance effectiveness and the following year's governance cycle.

The Governance Professional maintains the map on behalf of the Trust Board. Executive leads provide evidence and updates relevant to their responsibilities. Committees and Academy Committees use the map to plan scrutiny and to report assurance, concerns and evidence gaps.

4.3 Relationship with Academy Development Plans

Academy Development Plans describe the priorities, actions, resources, measures and intended outcomes for individual academies. The Assurance Map identifies how governance will test whether those priorities are being implemented effectively and whether the expected impact is being achieved.

Academy Committees should use the academy's Development Plan alongside the Trust Assurance Map. Local priorities should inform scrutiny, but they do not replace the Academy Committee's responsibility to obtain assurance across its delegated statutory and strategic responsibilities.

Where local evidence indicates material risk, slow progress, unequal impact or a need for additional support, the Academy Committee should record the concern and escalate it through the agreed reporting route. Executive and Trust-level evidence should, in turn, help Academy Committees understand comparative performance, Trust expectations and wider organisational risk.

Section 5 – Roles and Responsibilities

The current names and terms of Members, Trustees and Local Governors are maintained in the Trust's statutory governance records and published information, rather than hard-coded into this framework. This prevents the framework becoming out of date when office-holders change.

5.1 Members

Members have a distinct constitutional role from Trustees. They are guardians of the Trust's charitable purpose and governance constitution and exercise the powers reserved to them by the Articles of Association.

- appoint and, where appropriate, remove Trustees in accordance with the Articles of Association;
- appoint or remove Members and approve amendments to the Articles where the Articles require Member approval;
- appoint and remove the external auditor where this is reserved to Members;
- receive the signed annual report and accounts and the Trust Board's annual report on the performance and governance of the Trust;
- hold the Trust Board to account for ensuring that the Trust's charitable objects are fulfilled and that governance remains effective.

5.2 Trust Board

The Trustees are the charity directors of Three Spires Trust and are collectively responsible for the general control and management of the Trust in accordance with the Articles of Association, funding agreements, charity and company law and the Academy Trust Handbook. The Trust Board is the accountable body for every academy within the Trust.

The Board's core responsibilities are to:

- set and protect the Trust's vision, ethos, Christian character, values and strategic direction;
- hold the CEO and Accounting Officer to account for educational performance, organisational performance and the effective leadership of the Trust;
- oversee financial performance, sustainability, value for money and the safeguarding of Trust assets;
- ensure compliance with statutory duties, funding agreements and relevant regulatory requirements, including safeguarding, SEND, equality, curriculum and health and safety;
- approve the Trust strategic plan, annual priorities, budget, annual report and accounts, Scheme of Delegation and key governance policies;
- oversee performance and risk across the Trust and direct or commission action where performance, compliance, capacity or risk falls short of expectation;
- ensure governance remains appropriately skilled, independent, ethical and effective.

Assurance responsibilities

In addition to its legal and strategic responsibilities, the Trust Board establishes the Trust's assurance framework and determines whether sufficient confidence has been obtained that strategy is being delivered, statutory duties are being met, resources are being used effectively and significant risks are being managed.

- approve the Governance Assurance Map and annual governance cycle;
- receive assurance from committees, Academy Committees, executive reports, Trustee Links and other sources;
- test whether assurance is sufficiently reliable, independent and appropriately triangulated;
- identify evidence gaps and commission further scrutiny or assurance where required;
- evaluate impact across the four strategic priorities;
- decide when concerns require additional support, intervention, adjustment of delegation or formal escalation;
- review the effectiveness of governance and the operation of this framework annually.

5.3 Trust Board Committees

The Trust Board delegates defined scrutiny and decision-making responsibilities to its committees through approved terms of reference. Committees do not replace the Board's accountability. They examine evidence in greater depth, reach assurance conclusions within their remit and report significant matters, recommendations and concerns to the Board.

- Quality of Learning Committee
- Finance and Operations Committee
- Audit and Risk Committee
- Pay and Remuneration Committee

Finance and Operations and Audit and Risk remain separate committees. Their terms of reference distinguish operational and financial oversight from independent scrutiny, audit, risk and control assurance.

5.4 Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the executive leader of Three Spires Trust and is accountable to the Trust Board for the day-to-day operation and performance of the Trust and its academies. The CEO is also the Accounting Officer and therefore has personal responsibility for ensuring the Trust is run with regularity, propriety, financial effectiveness and value for money.

- translate the Board's strategy and annual priorities into effective executive delivery;
- lead, organise and performance-manage the Executive Team and hold academy leaders to account for performance, improvement and compliance;
- ensure the Board receives accurate, timely and candid information about performance, impact, risk, finance, safeguarding and compliance;
- exercise executive authority within the Scheme of Delegation and ensure any further delegation to executive leaders is clear and controlled;
- coordinate support, intervention and recovery where the interests of pupils, the Trust or an academy require it;
- challenge or direct academy-level action where a local decision or failure to act creates material risk or is not in the best interests of pupils or the Trust, within the authority delegated by the Board.

5.5 Executive Team

The Executive Team supports the CEO in delivering the Trust's strategy, managing performance and risk, securing compliance and using resources effectively. Individual executive leaders are responsible for the quality and reliability of evidence within their areas and for ensuring that material risks and concerns are reported transparently.

- translate Trust strategy and annual priorities into delivery plans;
- maintain effective operational quality assurance, performance management and risk management systems;
- provide timely, accurate and proportionate evidence to governance;
- evaluate progress, impact, variation, sustainability and risk;
- identify actions, owners and timescales where improvement is required;
- respond to governance challenge and requests for further evidence;
- coordinate support and intervention where assurance or performance is weak;
- avoid presenting a governance assurance judgement on their own area of responsibility.

5.6 Academy Committees – Assurance Responsibilities

Academy Committees provide local governance on behalf of the Trust Board within the authority delegated to them. They help the Board understand the academy's context, stakeholder experience, implementation of Trust strategy and policy, local risks and the impact of leadership action.

- scrutinise Leadership, Safeguarding and Business, Finance and Operations reports;
- test evidence by using the three assurance questions;
- consider performance, provision and impact for all pupils and significant groups;
- use Link Champion activity to triangulate evidence without undertaking operational inspection;
- engage with pupils, parents, staff, churches and communities as appropriate;
- record assurance conclusions, decisions, actions and evidence gaps;
- escalate significant risks, concerns or support needs through agreed routes;
- remain within the strategic and delegated role and avoid operational direction.

Academy Committees are committees of the Trust Board. They exercise only the authority delegated to them by this framework and their terms of reference. They may establish panels for admissions, complaints, suspensions/exclusions, staffing or other matters where the Scheme of Delegation and relevant policy permit. Any further delegation does not remove the Academy Committee's responsibility to report and escalate through the agreed route.

5.7 Executive Principal, Principal and Head of School

The Principal is the designated academy leader with responsibility for operational management and educational performance. Leadership structures may include a Head of School and/or Executive Principal. Where responsibilities are allocated within such a structure, the Trust will make the accountable executive leadership arrangement clear.

- lead the academy within the Trust's vision, policies, strategic priorities and delegated authority;
- implement the Academy Development Plan and maintain effective operational quality assurance, performance management, safeguarding, financial and compliance arrangements;
- provide the Academy Committee and Trust leaders with reliable evidence, evaluation, risks, actions and impact information;
- ensure local decisions are taken within the Scheme of Delegation and Financial Procedures and are properly recorded;

- escalate significant educational, safeguarding, financial, legal, workforce, compliance or reputational risk promptly;
- delegate operational tasks to senior leaders where appropriate while retaining accountability for effective academy leadership.

Principals and executive leaders provide evidence and professional evaluation. Trustees and governors determine the assurance obtained from that evidence. Operational quality assurance and governance assurance must not be conflated.

5.8 Governance Professional

The Governance Professional advises the Trust Board, its committees and Academy Committees on governance, constitutional and procedural matters. The role supports effective decision-making, assurance, compliance and the integrity of governance records.

- advise on the Articles, Scheme of Delegation, terms of reference and relevant statutory guidance;
- support the development and annual review of the governance framework, Assurance Map and annual governance cycle;
- work with chairs and executive leads to prepare focused agendas and ensure appropriate evidence is available;
- ensure minutes record challenge, assurance, decisions, actions and escalation accurately;
- maintain governance records, registers, terms of office and required statutory information;
- support induction, training, evaluation and development of trustees and governors;
- identify governance risks, gaps, duplication or non-compliance and advise on appropriate action;
- support communication and reporting between Academy Committees, committees and the Trust Board.

5.9 Link Champions

Academy Committee Link Champions provide focused local assurance in specified areas. They do not act as operational managers, auditors or inspectors and do not make decisions on behalf of the Academy Committee unless expressly authorised.

Link Champions use agreed tasks and evidence sources to understand implementation, impact and risk. They report findings to the Academy Committee so that the committee can reach a collective assurance conclusion and determine any action or escalation.

- Quality of Education
- Finance, Audit and Risk
- Health, Safety and Estates
- Safeguarding
- Inclusion
- Personal Development
- Christian Distinctiveness

Academy Committees may appoint optional EYFS or Post-16 links where relevant to their context.

5.10 Trustee Links

Trustee Links strengthen the Board's thematic understanding and support triangulation of evidence. They operate on behalf of, and report to, the collective Board. They do not replace committee scrutiny, executive accountability or the responsibility of all trustees to consider the evidence presented.

- Quality of Education Trustee
- Safeguarding and Inclusion Trustee
- Finance, Audit and Risk Trustee
- Health, Safety and Estates Trustee
- Personal Development and Christian Distinctiveness Trustee

Trustee Link activity is planned through the Assurance Map and annual governance cycle. Reports should identify evidence considered, key messages, assurance gained, evidence gaps and matters requiring committee or Board attention.

Section 6 – Academy Growth and Trust Support

The Trust's approach to academy growth is founded on human flourishing, collective responsibility and the principle that improvement is done with academies rather than to them. Every academy has strengths to contribute and areas in which it can learn from the wider Trust. Local identity and responsiveness are protected within a common framework of standards, evidence, support and accountability.

6.1 Academy Growth Model

The academy growth cycle provides a consistent framework for identifying need, agreeing priorities, implementing improvement, developing capacity, monitoring progress and evaluating impact. Academies are not assigned a single governance grade and no individual visit, drop-in or data point is treated as a sufficient indicator of performance.

Stage	Purpose
1. Capacity	Diagnose strengths, need, leadership capacity and risk through professional discussion and evidence.
2. Strategic priorities	Agree a small number of clear priorities aligned to the academy context, Trust strategy and statutory responsibilities.
3. Implementation	Deliver the Academy Development Plan, drawing on academy, Trust and external capacity as required.
4. Development	Build professional and organisational capacity through networks, collaboration, coaching and specialist support.
5. Monitoring	Use proportionate evidence, milestones and operational quality assurance to understand progress and variation.
6. Evaluation	Evaluate impact, sustainability and remaining risk and use this evidence to inform the next cycle.

6.2 Core Trust Offer

Every academy receives a common core offer. The precise annual programme is planned by the Executive Team and may be adapted to phase, context and risk, but normally includes:

- structured academy growth and review activity across the year, including a mid-year developmental review;
- executive and specialist support for educational performance, safeguarding, SEND and inclusion;
- professional networks and collaborative development opportunities for leaders and staff;
- Trust-wide support for finance, estates and capital, health and safety, people/HR, governance, ICT/data protection and other shared services;
- access to benchmarking, performance information, compliance systems, internal scrutiny and external assurance as relevant;
- Trust templates and reporting arrangements designed to reduce duplication and support consistent evidence and assurance.

Trust Share and resourcing

The core Trust offer is supported through the Trust Share and other Trust resources. The basis and rate of Trust Share are approved annually by the Trust Board. From September 2026 the Trust Share for all academies is 5% GAG. Additional commissioned support may be charged or funded separately where this has been agreed through the appropriate delegated route.

6.3 Additional Support

Additional support is provided where evidence indicates that an academy requires greater capacity, expertise, challenge or resource than the universal core offer. The level and duration of support should be proportionate to need and should be clear about intended outcomes, ownership, milestones and review.

Children	Adults	Academy / organisation
Outcomes or progress are materially weak or deteriorating; significant groups are not flourishing; attendance, behaviour or participation create concern.	Leadership or professional capacity is insufficient; staff development, workload, culture, recruitment or retention create material risk.	Safeguarding, compliance, finance, governance, curriculum or operational arrangements are weak, inconsistent or unsustainable.

Children	Adults	Academy / organisation
Evidence is incomplete or significant variation cannot be explained.	Implementation is not secure or leaders require specialist capacity to deliver improvement.	External review, audit, inspection, risk or performance evidence indicates the need for additional support or oversight.

Additional support may include more frequent executive contact, specialist Trust support, academy-to-academy support, external expertise, enhanced quality assurance, targeted professional development or a time-bound improvement plan. Where concerns become serious, sustained or increasing, the intervention and recovery arrangements in section 6.5 apply.

6.4 School Improvement Support

School improvement support is commissioned in response to evidence of need, strategic priority, capacity or risk. Support may be provided through Trust leaders, academy-to-academy collaboration, professional networks, external partners or other specialist arrangements.

The scope, intended outcomes, responsibilities and review arrangements should be clear. Governance does not direct the operational delivery of support, but should obtain assurance that support is proportionate, implemented effectively and producing the intended impact.

Where support is material, the relevant Leadership or Executive Report should identify the reason for support, intended outcomes, evidence of progress, remaining risks and any decision or resource required from governance.

6.5 Intervention and Recovery

Where evidence indicates serious, sustained or increasing risk, the Trust may move from support to a more formal intervention or recovery arrangement. The response will reflect the nature and urgency of the concern and may include a Rapid Action Plan, enhanced executive oversight, additional reporting, independent review, changes to delegated authority or other action approved under the Scheme of Delegation.

Any intervention or recovery plan should include:

- a clear statement of the concern and associated risk;
- the required outcomes and measurable success criteria;
- specific actions, accountable leaders and timescales;
- resources, support and external expertise where required;
- the evidence and milestones through which progress will be assessed;
- the governance body responsible for oversight;
- the escalation route where progress is insufficient;
- the criteria and authority for closing or stepping down the arrangement.

The purpose of intervention is to protect pupils, secure compliance, control risk and build sustainable capacity. Governance should receive evidence of impact and should not rely solely on confirmation that actions have been completed.

Section 7 – Reporting Framework

7.1 Principles of Reporting

Governance reporting should enable trustees and governors to understand progress, test evidence, identify risk and determine assurance. Reports should be concise, focused and proportionate to the significance of the matter. Reports should:

- state the relevant strategic priority, statutory responsibility or risk;
- provide reliable evidence rather than unsupported narrative;
- evaluate impact, variation and sustainability;
- identify strengths, risks, evidence gaps and actions;
- distinguish fact, evaluation and proposed action;
- include appropriate benchmarks and trends, including IDSR and ICFP where relevant;
- identify groups or academies experiencing different outcomes;
- make clear what governance is being asked to note, challenge, decide or approve;
- avoid assigning a governance assurance conclusion on behalf of trustees or governors.

Trustees and governors consider the evidence, apply the three assurance questions and records the assurance obtained, evidence gaps and further action required.

7.2 Academy Committee Reports

Leadership Report

The Leadership Report is the principal's evidence-based account to the Academy Committee of delivery, impact and risk within the academy. It should align with the Assurance Map, academy priorities and the annual assurance cycle.

Safeguarding Report

The Safeguarding Report provides the Academy Committee with evidence about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and culture. It should protect confidentiality and avoid information that could identify individual children, families or staff unless this is necessary and lawful within a restricted report.

- safeguarding profile, themes and trends;
- attendance, children missing education and persistent or severe absence;
- suspensions and exclusions;
- training, induction and safer recruitment assurance;
- Single Central Record assurance and any actions;
- referrals, allegations, low-level concerns and multi-agency activity in anonymised form;
- online safety, filtering and monitoring assurance;
- audit findings, policy implementation and outstanding actions;
- pupil and staff voice relating to safety;
- risks, mitigating action and matters requiring escalation.

Business, Finance and Operations Report

The Business, Finance and Operations Report provides the Academy Committee with evidence about local financial and operational delivery within its delegated responsibilities. It should align with Trust financial reporting and avoid duplicating the work of the Finance and Operations or Audit and Risk Committees.

- budget position, forecast and material variances;
- financial risks, controls and value for money;
- pupil number assumptions and material funding issues;
- estates condition, maintenance and capital priorities;
- health and safety compliance, incidents and outstanding actions;
- business continuity and emergency planning;
- workforce and operational capacity where relevant;
- risk register changes and escalation;
- audit or compliance actions relevant to the academy;
- decisions, recommendations or matters requiring Trust-level attention.

7.3 Executive Reports

Executive Reports provide Trust-wide analysis and strategic assurance evidence. They should compare academies or functions where appropriate, identify systemic themes and variation, explain executive action and highlight matters requiring committee or Board attention.

CEO Strategic Assurance Report

- delivery of the strategic plan and annual priorities;
- cross-Trust performance, capacity and organisational health;
- material strategic, educational, financial, operational and reputational risks;
- impact of executive action and support;
- significant external developments;

- matters requiring Board decision, support or escalation.

Director of Education Assurance Report
- quality of education, curriculum and outcomes;
- academy development priorities and impact;
- performance of pupil groups and variation between academies;
- internal and external review evidence;
- support, intervention and capacity;
- risks, actions and matters for committee assurance.

Director of Safeguarding and SEND Assurance Report
- Trust-wide safeguarding effectiveness and culture;
- safeguarding, attendance, exclusion and vulnerability themes;
- SEND and inclusion evidence, variation and risk;
- audit, training, safer recruitment and compliance;
- quality and consistency of systems and practice;
- support, escalation and statutory agency engagement.

Director of Operations / CFO Assurance Report
- financial performance, forecast, sustainability and ICFP;
- estates, capital, health and safety and operational compliance;
- workforce, HR and organisational capacity;
- IT, data protection, cyber security and business continuity;
- risk, controls, audit actions and value for money;
- matters requiring committee or Board decision or escalation.

7.4 Committee Assurance Reports
Each committee should provide a concise report to the Trust Board following every meeting. The report should not repeat the minutes. It should communicate the assurance obtained, significant evidence considered, matters of concern and any recommendation or decision required.

Quality of Learning Committee
The committee reports assurance across Quality of Education, Inclusion, Personal Development, Safeguarding and Christian Distinctiveness, drawing on executive reports, performance information, external evidence, Trustee Link activity and other sources identified in the Assurance Map.

Finance and Operations Committee
The committee reports assurance on financial performance and sustainability, budgets, estates, health and safety, workforce and operational delivery. It identifies matters that require Audit and Risk scrutiny without duplicating that committee's independent assurance role.

Audit and Risk Committee
The committee reports assurance on internal scrutiny, external audit, risk management, compliance and the effectiveness of the control framework. It highlights overdue actions, control weaknesses and matters requiring Board attention.

7.5 Annual Assurance Reporting

Governance Effectiveness
The Trust Board receives an annual evaluation of governance effectiveness, including Board and committee performance, Academy Committee effectiveness, skills and development, attendance, succession, stakeholder feedback, implementation of the Scheme of Delegation and progress against governance improvement actions.

Safeguarding Assurance
The Trust Board receives an annual safeguarding assurance report drawing together local and Trust-wide evidence, audit activity, training, compliance, themes, risks, stakeholder voice and the effectiveness of improvement actions.

Academy Trust Handbook Compliance
The Trust Board receives annual confirmation and supporting evidence regarding compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook and related governance, finance and reporting requirements. Any exceptions, overdue actions or areas of limited assurance are reported with a responsible owner and timescale.

Section 8 – Scheme of Delegation Decision Matrix

8.1 Delegation Principles

- The Trust Board retains overall legal accountability for the Trust and all academies.
- Delegation transfers authority to act within defined parameters; it does not transfer the Board's accountability.
- Delegated authority must be exercised consistently with the Articles, funding agreements, law, Trust policy and this framework.
- Decisions should be taken at the most appropriate level, with local decision-making supported where it is consistent with Trust strategy, policy, capacity and risk.
- No individual trustee, governor or employee may exercise authority unless it has been expressly delegated.
- The Board may vary, suspend or withdraw delegation where risk, performance, compliance, capacity or the interests of pupils require it.
- Those exercising delegated authority must maintain appropriate records and report decisions through the specified route.
- Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed.
- Material concerns must be escalated even where the immediate decision falls within delegated authority.
- Operational quality assurance, governance assurance and formal decision-making should be distinguished clearly.

8.2 Decision-Making Framework

The delegation matrix uses the following definitions:

Code	Definition
R – Responsible	The person or body that carries out the activity or prepares the work.
A – Accountable	The person or body with authority for ensuring the matter is completed appropriately and, where applicable, making or approving the decision.
C – Consulted	Those whose views or specialist advice are sought before action or decision.
I – Informed	Those who receive information about the action, decision or outcome.
QA – Operational Quality Assurance	The executive or professional process through which implementation, quality or compliance is checked. This is distinct from governance assurance.
GA – Governance Assurance	Trustees and governors scrutinise evidence and determines the assurance obtained. Use only where this additional code is adopted consistently throughout the matrix.

Before exercising delegated authority, the responsible and accountable parties should confirm:

1. the decision falls within the delegated scope and financial limits;
2. the relevant evidence, consultation and professional advice have been obtained;
3. conflicts of interest have been identified and managed;
4. the effect on pupils, staff, academies, equality, safeguarding, finance and risk has been considered;
5. the decision and rationale will be recorded appropriately;
6. required reporting, assurance and escalation routes are clear.

8.3 Scheme of Delegation Decision Matrix

The matrix below records formal delegations and assurance routes. Read it in conjunction with Appendix 2, Appendix 6 and the Trust's current policies.

Decision matrix

Trust Governance

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
TG1	Vary the Articles of Association	A, R	C	C					
TG2	Calling the Annual General Meeting	A			R				
TG3	Appoint the Chair of the Trust Board	A, R	C						
TG4	Appoint the Vice Chair of the Trust Board		A, R						
TG5	Appoint Member appointed Trustees (x4)	A, R							
TG6	Appoint Co-opted Trustees		A, R						Only the 4 Member appointed Trustees
TG7	Removal of members of the Trust Board	A, R							According to appointing body
TG8	Set up and agree ToR for Trust Committees		A, R						
TG9	Appoint Chair of Trust Committees		A, R	C					
TG10	Removal of Chair of Trust Board	A, R		I					
TG11	Appointment and removal of the Governance Professional		A, R						Requirement of the Academy Trust Handbook

Academy Governance

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
AG1	Agree size and composition of each Academy Committee		A, R	C		C	C	C	
AG2	Agree Academy Committee ToR		A, R	C		C	C	C	
AG3	Appoint and remove Chair of Academy Committee		A, R	C		C	C	C	
AG4	Appoint Foundation Governors (church nominated)		A, R			C		C	Parish incumbent and PCC
AG5	Appoint Community Governors		A, R			C	C	C	Nominated by Principal
AG6	Appoint Link Champions					A, R	C	C	In line with AC ToR
AG7	Review performance of Academy Committee		A, R	R	C	R		C	
AG8	Remove/suspend Academy Committee members (excl. Chair)		A, R	C		R	C	C	Usually TB chair and vice chair
AG9	Remove Chair of Academy Committee		A, R	C		C	C	C	In line with the Code of Conduct

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
AG10	Ratify appointment of Staff and parent governors		A, R	I		I	I	I	

Strategy, Assurance and Risk

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
SR1	Set vision and strategic objectives of the Trust	A	R	R	R				
SR2	Set vision and strategic objectives of the academies		A	QA	QA	GA	R	QA	
SR3	Monitor the implementation of the vision of the academies	A	R	QA	C	R	R	QA	
SR4a	Oversee implementation of the strategic objectives of the Trust		A	R	R				
SR4b	Oversee implementation of the strategic objectives of the academies			A		GA	R	R	
SR5	Agree the Trust Strategic Growth plan		A	R	R				
SR6	Complete annual review of Scheme of Delegation		A, R	R					
SR7	Approve new schools joining the Trust		A	R					
SR8	Agree and develop Central Support Services		A	R	R	I	I	I	
SR9	Develop Academy to Academy support			A	R		R	R	
SR10	Create and review Trust risk register		C	A	R				
SR11	Create and review Academy risk register		I		C	GA	R	QA	
SR12	Appoint External Auditors	A, R	C	C	C				
SR13	Appoint Internal Auditors		A, R	C	C				

Business Administration and Policy

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
BA1	Determine Trust policies and cycle of review		A	R	R	I	I	I	
BA2	Set Academy owned policies			C	C	A	R	C	
BA3	Pay policy		A	R					
BA4	Set HR related policies (absence, appraisal etc.)		A	R	R				

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
BA5	Set Finance related policies (insurances, reserves etc.)		A	R	R				
BA6	Set up and monitor register of business interests		A	R	R		R		

Christian Distinctiveness

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
CD1	Embed the Christian values of the Trust	GA	A	R	R	R	R	R	
CD2	Embed Christian Distinctiveness within academy development planning.					GA	A, R	QA	
CD3	Conduct daily worship			A	R	I, C	R	R	In line with policy guidance
CD4	Establish worship council				A	I, C	R		Expectation of student leadership in this area but no set format required
CD5	Facilities for prayer (any faith)			A	R	I, C	R		All settings to have communal reflection spaces. Room for prayer as required by settings.
CD6	Religious Education			A	R	I, C	R	QA	Follow diocesan scheme adapted for needs of students in each setting. High timetable priority.
CD7	Celebration of Christian and non-Christian festivals		I			I, C	A, R		

Safeguarding

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
SG1	Approve the Trust safeguarding policy and framework		A	R	R	GA	R	QA	Policy approval is a Board responsibility; local governance tests implementation.
SG2	Safeguarding culture and local statutory implementation		GA	QA	QA	GA	A, R	QA	Evidence includes safeguarding report, audit, training, pupil/staff voice and trends.
SG3	Trust-level Single Central Record oversight		GA	A	R	I	I		
SG4	Academy Single Central Record maintenance and assurance		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	
SG5	Safeguarding reporting, audit actions and escalation		GA	QA, R	QA, R	GA	A, R	QA	Material concerns must be escalated promptly.
SG6	Online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements		GA	QA	QA, C	GA	A, R	QA	

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
SG7a	Suspension		I	I	I	A	R	C	Panels operate under policy and statutory requirements.
SG7b	Permanent exclusion decisions and statutory review		I	I	C	A	R	R	Panels operate under policy and statutory requirements.

Inclusion

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
IN1	Trust inclusion strategy		GA	A	R	GA	R	QA	
IN2	SEND statutory arrangements, provision and impact		GA	A	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
IN3	Pupil Premium strategy, use and impact		GA	A	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
IN4	Looked-after / previously looked-after children, young carers and other agreed vulnerable groups		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	
IN5	In-year transfers, mobility and equitable access to provision		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	
IN6	Equality, accessibility and reasonable adjustments		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	
IN7	Inclusion reporting: participation, attendance, outcomes and barriers for significant groups		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	Aligned to the Assurance Map and Leadership Report.

Personal Development

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
PD1	Trust approach to personal development		GA	A	R	GA	R	QA	
PD2	Careers education, guidance, employer engagement and destinations		GA	I	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
PD3	Enrichment, trips, clubs, awards and pupil leadership		GA	I	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
PD4	PSHE / RSE curriculum and relevant policy arrangements		GA	I	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
PD5	Behaviour, attendance, attitudes, pupil voice and leadership		GA	I	QA	GA	A, R	QA	
PD6	Equity of participation and impact across pupil groups		GA	A	QA	GA	R	QA	

Academy Organisation and Performance

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
AL1	Changes to admissions policies		A	R	C	C	C	C	
AL2	Changes to Published Admissions Number (PAN)		A	R	C	C	C	C	
AL3	Changes to student organisation (e.g. change from single year to mixed, nursery sessions etc.)		A	R	C	C	C	C	
AL4	Changes to Nursery provision (e.g. offering 2yr old places)		A	R	C	C	C	C	May require DfE significant change business case
AL5	Policies relating to curriculum			C	C	A	R	R	
AL6	Internal monitoring of progress and attainment incl. ISDR		I	C	C	GA	A, R	C	
AL7	Establishment of Trust-wide MIS		I	I	A, R	I	I	I	
AL8	Establishment of Trust-wide Assessment Data reporting systems		I	I	A, R	I	I	I	
AL9	Collection of and how to report data			A	R	I	I	I	Secondary only: Uploaded to Arbor SISRA analytics serves are primary tool for analysing KS4 data Teacher predictions (TPs) will be collected as the data TPs are defined as the grade a teacher believes a student will most likely achieve in the summer GCSE/Vocational examinations IDSR headline measures for attainment and progress would be applied to the dataset for reporting to ACs and Trustees. The following will inform TPs: classwork, homework, verbal contributions, assessments/mini-assessments and mock exams. Mock exam papers will be constructed thoughtfully to reflect students' progress, incl. content taught on GCSE/Voc specification at the time of testing, purposeful question sets, focus on testing "tricky content" and awareness of relevant tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary. Papers will undergo internal QA, including the marking of mock papers.
AL10	Assessment data (import/monitoring)		I	A	R	R	A, R	A, R	
AL11	Production of ADP, SEF and AC reporting			A	R	I, C	R	QA	Must use Trust proformas and tailor to setting. ADP / SEF pillars are mandatory.

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
AL12	Participation in internal and external reviews			A, R	R	I	R	R	Agreed number of reviews and access to relevant data as part of collaborative review process.
AL13	Set term dates		A	R	C	I	C	C	Principals should consult each other to agree commonality.
AL14	Set 5 out of 6 INSET days			C	C	I	R	C	
AL15	Set common INSET day (Trust Conference)	I	I	A	R	I	C	C	
AL16	Publish a fully compliant website			QA	A, R	GA	R	QA	
AL17	Emergency Academy closure		I	C	C	I	A, R	C	Consult with DO in first instance.
AL18	General design of academy uniform / PE kit		I		C	C	A, R	C	Religious head coverings permitted across the Trust.
AL19	Participation in charitable events / national and Trust focus days and weeks					I	A, R	C	E.g. World book day, anti-bullying week, safer internet day, mental health awareness week, careers week.

Quality of Education

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
QE1	Curriculum Design Exam boards to be agreed at KS4 / KS5. Within the guiding principles outline by TST. Primaries/ Middle Schools have full autonomy over curriculum design, including content and chosen schemes, while being guided by the National Curriculum and the Trust's ethos to best meet the needs of their setting.			A	R	GA	R	QA	
QE2	Schemes of Work			I	C	I	A, R	QA	Phonics schemes must be accredited
QE3	Pedagogy		I	C	R	GA	A, R	QA	Within the guiding principles outlined by the Trust
QE4	Educational visits and experiences					I	A, R	QA	
QE5	Participation in Trust wide awards Duke of Edinburgh Forest Schools/bushcraft Archbishop Award (year 5/8) Staff industry placements APP Flourishing secondment Young carers in school award			A	R		R	QA	

Finance

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
F1	Set Trust budget for financial year		A	R					CFO

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
F2	Propose individual Academy budget			C		A	R	C	
F3	Approve individual Academy budget		A	R					
F4	Monitor Trust budget		A	R					CFO
F5	Monitor Academy budget			C		A	R	QA	CFO
F6	Set limits for devolved financial authority		A, R	C	C	I	I	I	
F7	Authority to spend to limit where funds available		I	A	R	C	R	R	CFO
F8	Manage financial systems across the Trust		I	A, R					CFO
F9	Adhere to all DfE regulations		A	R		R	R	R	
F10	Approval of end of year accounts	I	A	R		I	I	I	CFO
F11	Reporting of losses above £5,000		I	A, R		I			CFO
F12	Running of wrap around care clubs and nursery provision		GA	R	C	I, C	A, R	QA	Including setting of fees to cover costs.
F13	Completion of statutory accounting returns (e.g. BFR, AAR)		I	A	R				CFO

Estates, Health and Safety

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
EH1	Develop Trust Business Continuity Plan	I	GA	A, R	R				
EH2	Develop Academy Business Continuity Plan			I	C	I, C	A, R	QA	
EH3	Set Trust Health and Safety Policy		A	R	R	I	C	C	
EH4	Develop local H&S procedures				I	A	R	QA	
EH5	Develop Trust Estates Management Plan		I	A	R	I	C	C	DO
EH6	Set Academy maintenance strategy		I		I	A	R	QA	

Human Resources and People

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
HR1	Appoint the Chief Executive Officer	I	A, R						

Ref	Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	Executive Team	Academy Committee	Principal	Executive Principal	Notes
HR2	Appoint the Chief Financial Officer		C	A, R					
HR3	Appoint Trust central team		C	A, R					
HR4	Appoint Academy Principals		C	A, R	R	C			LDBE involvement also. DO leads.
HR5	Appoint Academy Senior Leaders				C	A, R	R	R	Exec team present at interviews
HR6	Appoint other Academy staff					C	A, R	R, C	
HR7	Approval of Academy staffing structures			A	R	C	R	R	This includes creation of new posts
HR8	Appraisal of CEO		A, R						External advisor to support at least every three years in line with Pay policy
HR9	Appraisal of CFO and other Trust staff		I	A, R					
HR10	Appraisal of Academy Principals		I	A	R	C			External advisor to support
HR11	Appraisal of wider academy teaching staff		I	I		A	GA	QA	Targets to be framed: Flourishing children Flourishing adults Flourishing academies All targets to be uploaded to Arbor.
HR12	Appraisal of wider Academy support staff		I	I		A	GA	QA	To follow professional growth procedure and all targets to be uploaded to Arbor.
HR13	Dismissal of CEO	I, C	A, R						
HR14	Dismissal of CFO	I	I, C	A, R					
HR15	Dismissal of other Trust staff	I	I	A, R					
HR16	Dismissal of Academy Principal	I	I, C	A, R		C			
HR17	Dismissal of other Academy staff			C	C	A	R	C	
HR18	Agree appeals procedures		A		R				
HR19	Agree and manage redundancies and restructures		GA	A	R	C	R	QA	DO leads.
HR20	Trust CPD opportunities requiring release time				R		A, R		Expectation that academy representatives attend all network meetings.
HR21	Participation in NPQ or equivalent programmes				R		A, R	QA	Expectation to use TST / Church of England as provider
HR22	Ability to support student teachers, work experience placements and apprentices				C	I	A, R	QA	Must ensure capacity and capability to support TST Institute of Education incl. SCITT then priority should be to do so

GA is a governance assurance designation, not a transfer of executive responsibility. Trustee Links and Academy Committee Link Champions support triangulation but do not exercise decision-making authority unless a separate, explicit delegation is recorded.

Appendix 1 – Governance Code of Conduct

This Code applies to Trustees and members of Academy Committees and is adopted annually. It should be read with Sections 1, 3 and 5 of this framework. It supports collective, strategic, evidence-informed governance and the principle that responsibility may be delegated but accountability is retained by the Trust Board.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Principle	Commitment
Selflessness	Act solely in the public interest and in the best interests of the Trust's pupils and charitable purpose.
Integrity	Avoid improper influence and declare and manage interests and relationships that could create conflict.
Objectivity	Take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best available evidence.
Accountability	Accept responsibility for decisions and scrutiny and cooperate with appropriate assurance and oversight.
Openness	Act transparently and give reasons for decisions, subject to lawful confidentiality.
Honesty	Be truthful and declare private interests relevant to governance responsibilities.
Leadership	Demonstrate these principles through conduct and support a culture in which they are embedded.

Governance commitments

Area	Commitment
Strategic role	We will focus on strategy, assurance, impact, risk and stakeholder engagement. We will not undertake operational management or individual inspection activity.
Collective responsibility	We will respect collective decisions and recognise that individual Trustees, governors and link roles have no authority unless expressly delegated.
Evidence and challenge	We will ask how we know, so what and now what; test evidence proportionately; distinguish fact, evaluation and opinion; and record the assurance obtained.
Commitment and competence	We will prepare for meetings, attend regularly, undertake induction and training, contribute our skills and participate in evaluation and development.
Relationships	We will support and challenge leaders constructively, treat others with dignity and respect, and avoid conduct that undermines effective governance.
Confidentiality and data	We will protect confidential, personal and sensitive information and use Trust information only for proper governance purposes.
Conflicts of interest	We will maintain an accurate register of interests, declare actual or perceived conflicts and withdraw from discussion or voting where required.
Safeguarding and conduct	We will uphold the highest standards of safeguarding, equality, inclusion and professional behaviour and raise serious concerns through the appropriate route.
Transparency	We accept the publication and statutory recording of governance information required by law, regulation and Trust policy, including names, roles, attendance and relevant interests.
Escalation	We will ensure limited, absent or insufficient assurance results in proportionate further evidence, action, support, scrutiny or escalation.

Potential or actual breaches of this Code will be considered seriously and may result in formal action under the Articles, terms of reference, relevant policy or the appointing body's powers.

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference

A. Common provisions for Trust Board committees

- Committees are constituted by the Trust Board and exercise only the functions delegated through these terms of reference and the Scheme of Delegation.
- Committees support, but do not replace, the collective accountability of the Trust Board and must not assume an executive management role.
- Membership and chairs are approved by the Trust Board annually. The Board may appoint appropriately skilled non-Trustee members where permitted and useful.
- The Governance Professional, or an approved clerk, supports meetings, advises on procedure and ensures minutes record evidence, challenge, assurance, decisions, actions and escalation.
- Unless a committee-specific provision states otherwise, the quorum is 50% of voting membership rounded up to the next whole number.
- Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed. No person participates in a decision where they have a disqualifying conflict.
- Committees should receive papers sufficiently in advance for effective scrutiny and should normally meet at least termly where their remit requires ongoing assurance.
- After each meeting, committees report assurance conclusions, material evidence gaps, delegated decisions, recommendations, risks and actions to the Trust Board using the Section 7 reporting framework.
- Committees will usually meet at least termly.

B. Trust Board

Objective: To provide strategic leadership, governance assurance and accountability for Three Spires Trust and every academy within it.

Membership and meetings

- Constitution is determined by the Articles of Association. The Chair is appointed in accordance with the Articles and a Vice-Chair is elected as required.
- The Board meets at least four times in each academic year and more frequently where business, risk or statutory requirements demand.
- The CEO attends as Accounting Officer and principal executive adviser but is not a Trustee unless separately appointed under the Articles.

Responsibilities

- approve vision, strategy, annual priorities and the Governance Assurance Map;
- hold the CEO to account for educational and organisational performance and executive leadership;
- oversee financial sustainability, budgets, resources, value for money and use of public funds;
- ensure effective safeguarding, SEND, equality, health and safety, legal and regulatory compliance;
- maintain the risk management and internal control framework and commission appropriate independent assurance;
- approve the Scheme of Delegation, committee terms of reference and policy accountability arrangements;
- receive and evaluate assurance from committees, Academy Committees, executive reports, Trustee Links, audit, scrutiny and external sources;
- adjust delegation, support or intervention where assurance, capacity, performance, compliance or risk requires it;
- review governance effectiveness, skills, succession, training and conduct.

C. Quality of Learning Committee

Objective: To provide detailed Trust-wide scrutiny and assurance on the quality, equity and impact of education and pupils' experience.

Scope

- Quality of Education: curriculum ambition and implementation, teaching, assessment, outcomes, destinations and improvement impact;
- Inclusion: SEND, Pupil Premium, looked-after and previously looked-after pupils, young carers, in-year transfers, equality, accessibility and other vulnerable groups;
- Personal Development: careers, enrichment, PSHE/RSE, behaviour, attendance, pupil voice, leadership and equitable participation;
- Safeguarding: culture, statutory compliance, audit, trends, online safety, safer recruitment and effectiveness of arrangements to keep pupils safe;

- Christian Distinctiveness: vision, worship, RE, spiritual development, SIAMS, church/community links and stakeholder experience.

Responsibilities and reporting

- scrutinise Director and executive assurance reports, performance and benchmarking information, Academy Committee assurance and relevant external evidence;
- test variation between academies and significant pupil groups and challenge whether improvement is effective and sustainable;
- record assurance conclusions and commission further evidence or escalation where confidence is limited or insufficient;
- report after every meeting to the Trust Board in accordance with section 7.4.

D. Finance and Operations Committee

Objective: To provide detailed oversight and assurance on financial performance and sustainability and on the effective delivery of the Trust's operational infrastructure. The committee is distinct from Audit and Risk and does not provide independent audit assurance.

Scope

- management accounts, budgets, forecasts, reserves, cash flow, ICFP and medium-term financial sustainability;
- resource allocation, procurement, contracts, value for money and the effectiveness of financial planning;
- estates strategy, capital investment, asset management, planned and reactive maintenance;
- health and safety performance, compliance, incidents and material actions;
- people strategy, workforce data, capacity, recruitment/retention, restructures and organisational development;
- business continuity, ICT and other significant operational delivery where assigned by the Board.

Responsibilities and reporting

- scrutinise financial and operational performance against approved plans and recommend the annual budget to the Board;
- identify sustainability, workforce, estates, health and safety or operational risks and ensure appropriate mitigations are owned and monitored;
- refer matters requiring independent review of controls, internal scrutiny, external audit or strategic risk assurance to the Audit and Risk Committee;
- report after every meeting to the Trust Board in accordance with section 7.4.

E. Audit and Risk Committee

Objective: To provide independent and objective governance assurance on risk management, internal control, compliance, internal scrutiny and external audit. The committee remains separate from routine financial and operational oversight.

Membership and independence

- The committee will normally include at least three Trustees. Employees of the Trust are not voting members.
- The Chair of the Trust Board is not a member of the committee but may attend by invitation or as an observer.
- The CEO, CFO and other executive officers attend to provide information but do not determine the committee's independent assurance conclusions.
- The committee may meet auditors or internal scrutiny providers without executive management present where appropriate.

Scope and responsibilities

- approve or recommend the risk management and internal scrutiny programme and monitor the Trust risk register;
- review the design and effectiveness of internal controls, financial controls, fraud prevention, whistleblowing and compliance arrangements;
- receive internal scrutiny reports, track agreed actions and consider whether management responses are timely and effective;
- oversee the relationship with external audit, review audit findings and the annual accounts assurance process, and meet auditors where required;
- consider material control failures, regulatory issues, suspected fraud or irregularity and ensure appropriate investigation and escalation;
- report assurance, concerns and recommendations promptly to the Trust Board and at least after every scheduled meeting.

F. Pay and Remuneration Committee

Objective: To oversee executive remuneration and any other remuneration matters delegated by the Board through a robust, evidence-based, independent and defensible process.

- Membership comprises non-executive Trustees appointed by the Board; no executive participates in a decision about their own pay or remuneration.
- The committee chair is appointed annually by the Board and should be distinct from the Chair of the Finance and Operations Committee.
- The quorum is two Trustee members.
- The committee meets at least annually and otherwise as required.
- It reviews remuneration policy and benchmarking; considers role scope, performance, affordability, public-sector value for money and regulatory requirements; and makes recommendations or decisions within its delegated authority.
- All decisions and rationale are fully documented and reported to the Board, with conflicts managed rigorously.

G. Academy Committee

Objective: To provide local strategic engagement and governance assurance on behalf of the Trust Board, testing how Trust strategy, statutory responsibilities and improvement priorities are implemented within the academy and escalating material risk or support needs.

Membership and quorum

- The Trust Board determines the constitution and appoints the Chair. The committee will normally include two elected parent governors and other governors appointed in accordance with the Trust's governance arrangements.
- The Principal / Head of School attends to provide evidence and advice but does not determine the committee's assurance conclusion.
- The quorum is 50% of the voting membership, rounded up to the next whole number, and must never be fewer than three voting governors.
- The committee meets at least termly. Additional meetings or panels are convened where delegated business requires.

Responsibilities

- scrutinise the Leadership, Safeguarding and Business, Finance and Operations Reports and the Academy Development Plan;
- use the three assurance questions and the Link Champion framework to triangulate evidence and reach collective assurance conclusions;
- consider Quality of Education, Inclusion, Personal Development, Safeguarding, Christian Distinctiveness, finance, risk, health and safety, people and stakeholder experience;
- engage proportionately with pupils, parents, staff, churches and communities and use stakeholder voice as a source of assurance;
- monitor local risk and the impact of agreed actions without assuming operational management responsibility;
- exercise delegated panel or approval functions set out in the Scheme of Delegation and relevant policy;
- report assurance, concerns, evidence gaps and support needs through the agreed route to the Trust Board and its committees.

H. Academy Admissions Committee

Objective: To exercise admissions functions delegated by the Trust Board as admissions authority and to ensure local admissions arrangements are lawful, fair, transparent and consistent with approved policy.

- The committee has a minimum of three governors. Other governors may be co-opted for a meeting where required and permitted.
- The quorum is two governors, excluding the Principal.
- The committee elects a chair for the meeting where a standing chair is not appointed.
- It considers applications or other admissions decisions assigned to it, supports statutory consultation and ensures accurate records and notifications are maintained.
- It reports significant recommendations, concerns and decisions to the Academy Committee and Trust Board through the Governance Professional.

I. Working groups and governance networks

The Board or its committees may establish time-limited working groups, review groups or governance networks to strengthen evidence, engagement or coordination. Unless the Trust Board expressly creates a committee and

records delegated decision-making authority, such groups are advisory and have no power to approve decisions reserved to the Board or a committee.

- The Monthly Accounts Review Group provides enhanced Trustee scrutiny and assurance on management accounts, forecasts, variances and financial recovery and report its findings to the Finance and Operations Committee and/or Board.
- A Chairs Network supports communication, development, consistency and shared learning between Academy Committee Chairs and Trust governance leaders.
- Any such group should have a clear purpose, membership, reporting route and record of actions; it must not duplicate formal committee accountability.

Appendix 3 – Academy Committee Link Champion Role Descriptors

The following common provisions apply to every Link Champion role:

- act on behalf of the Academy Committee and report to the collective committee;
- remain strategic and do not undertake operational management or inspection;
- agree activity in advance with the Principal or relevant leader;
- use the three assurance questions and triangulate evidence;
- respect confidentiality, safeguarding and data protection;
- record evidence considered, assurance gained, evidence gaps, risks and recommended follow-up;
- participate in relevant Trust briefings and training;
- escalate urgent or significant concerns promptly through the agreed route.

Quality of Education Link

Purpose: To support the Academy Committee in obtaining assurance about curriculum ambition, teaching, assessment, outcomes and the impact of improvement activity.

Scope

- curriculum intent, implementation and impact;
- attainment, progress and destinations;
- performance of significant pupil groups;
- quality and consistency of teaching and assessment;
- academy priorities, review findings and improvement impact.

Evidence sources

- Leadership Report and Academy Development Plan;
- SEF and internal review evidence;
- IDSR and other performance information;
- curriculum and subject evaluation;
- pupil and staff voice;
- external review or inspection evidence.

Core tasks

- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Finance, Audit and Risk Link

Purpose: To support local assurance about financial stewardship, controls, value for money, risk and completion of audit actions, without replacing Trust-level committee responsibilities.

Scope

- budget performance and forecast reliability;
- financial controls and delegated authority;
- academy risk register;
- audit and internal scrutiny actions;
- Pupil Premium and other designated funding assurance;
- value for money and financial sustainability.

Evidence sources

- Business, Finance and Operations Report;
- management accounts and forecast;
- academy risk register;
- audit and scrutiny reports;
- financial policies and delegated limits;
- published funding strategies and impact reports.

Core tasks

- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;

- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Health and Safety Link

Purpose: To support assurance that health and safety, premises and statutory compliance are managed effectively and that identified actions are addressed.

Scope

- health and safety local arrangements;
- statutory testing and compliance;
- risk assessments and incident trends;
- fire, asbestos, legionella and other relevant controls;
- estates condition and maintenance priorities;
- audit actions and staff training.

Evidence sources

- Business, Finance and Operations Report;
- health and safety audits and action plans;
- compliance dashboard;
- incident and near-miss data;
- risk assessments;
- estates and maintenance plans.

Core tasks

- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Safeguarding Link

Purpose: To support the Academy Committee in obtaining assurance about safeguarding culture, statutory compliance and the effectiveness of arrangements to keep children safe.

Scope

- safeguarding culture and leadership;
- training, induction and safer recruitment;
- Single Central Record assurance;
- referral, allegation and concern themes;
- attendance, exclusions and children missing education through a safeguarding lens;
- online safety, filtering and monitoring;
- audit actions and pupil voice.

Evidence sources

- Safeguarding Report;
- safeguarding audit and action plan;
- training records;
- SCR check evidence;
- anonymised themes and trend information;
- pupil and staff voice;
- policy and compliance evidence.

Core tasks

- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Inclusion Link

Purpose: To support assurance that the academy identifies and removes barriers, deploys resources effectively and secures equitable access, participation and outcomes for vulnerable pupils.

Scope
- Pupil Premium;
- SEND;
- looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- young carers;
- in-year transfers and mobility;
- other vulnerable or under-represented groups;
- equality, accessibility, attendance, participation and outcomes.

Evidence sources
- Leadership Report;
- SEND information report and provision evidence;
- Pupil Premium strategy and impact;
- attendance, behaviour and outcome data by group;
- pupil and parent voice;
- accessibility and equality information;
- external advice and review evidence.

Core tasks
- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Personal Development Link
Purpose: To support assurance that pupils benefit from a coherent and inclusive personal development offer that prepares them for future life and active participation.

Scope
- careers education, information, advice and guidance;
- enrichment and wider opportunities;
- PSHE and related curriculum provision;
- behaviour and attitudes;
- attendance as part of engagement and participation;
- pupil voice and leadership;
- participation and impact for vulnerable groups.

Evidence sources
- Leadership Report;
- personal development curriculum and plans;
- careers programme and destination evidence;
- participation and attendance data;
- behaviour information;
- pupil, parent and staff voice;
- external awards or review evidence where relevant.

Core tasks
- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Christian Distinctiveness Link
Purpose: To support assurance that the academy's Christian vision is lived, evaluated and reflected in leadership, curriculum, worship, relationships and service.

Scope
- Christian vision and values;
- collective worship;
- religious education;
- spiritual development;

- partnership with churches and the Diocese;
- preparation for and response to SIAMS;
- inclusion and flourishing of the whole community.

Evidence sources

- SIAMS self-evaluation and improvement plan;
- collective worship evaluation;
- RE curriculum and outcomes;
- pupil, staff and parent voice;
- chaplaincy and church partnership evidence;
- external diocesan support and review.

Core tasks

- attend relevant Trust briefing and training;
- agree at least termly assurance activity with the Principal or relevant lead, proportionate to the annual cycle and risk;
- review agreed evidence and meet relevant leaders;
- include stakeholder voice or direct contextual evidence where appropriate;
- report findings to the Academy Committee using How do we know? So what? Now what?;
- recommend further evidence, action or escalation where assurance is insufficient.

Optional EYFS Link

Where appointed, the EYFS Link supports assurance about the quality, inclusivity, safeguarding and impact of early years provision. Activity should align with the Quality of Education, Safeguarding, Inclusion and Personal Development roles and should avoid duplication.

Optional Post-16 Link

Where appointed, the Post-16 Link supports assurance about curriculum, destinations, careers, personal development, inclusion, safeguarding and the effectiveness and sustainability of post-16 provision. Activity should align with the relevant core Link Champion roles.

Appendix 4 – Trustee Link Role Descriptors

Trustee Links support the Trust Board's collective assurance. They do not exercise delegated executive authority, conduct inspections or provide assurance independently of the Board. Activity is planned through the Assurance Map and reported to the relevant committee and/or Trust Board.

Quality of Education Trustee

Scope

- Trust-wide curriculum, teaching, assessment and outcome evidence;
- variation between academies and pupil groups;
- academy growth, review and support impact;
- external benchmarks, reviews and inspection evidence;
- matters requiring Quality of Learning Committee attention.

Core tasks

- agree an annual programme of activity aligned to the Assurance Map;
- review relevant executive, committee and external evidence;
- engage with a proportionate sample of academies, leaders, Link Champions or stakeholders;
- identify Trust-wide themes, variation, evidence gaps and risk;
- report evidence and findings without substituting individual judgement for collective governance;
- escalate urgent or significant concerns promptly.

Safeguarding and Inclusion Trustee

Scope

- Trust-wide safeguarding culture, compliance and audit;
- attendance, exclusion and vulnerability themes;
- SEND, Pupil Premium, looked-after children, young carers and mobility;
- equity of access, participation and outcomes;
- matters requiring Quality of Learning Committee or Board escalation.

Core tasks

- agree an annual programme of activity aligned to the Assurance Map;
- review relevant executive, committee and external evidence;
- engage with a proportionate sample of academies, leaders, Link Champions or stakeholders;
- identify Trust-wide themes, variation, evidence gaps and risk;
- report evidence and findings without substituting individual judgement for collective governance;
- escalate urgent or significant concerns promptly.

Finance, Audit and Risk Trustee

Scope

- financial performance, sustainability, ICFP and value for money;
- financial governance, controls and compliance;
- internal scrutiny and external audit;
- risk management and the effectiveness of the control framework;
- completion of agreed audit, scrutiny and risk actions;
- independence, quality and reliability of financial and risk assurance;
- evidence arising from Finance, Audit and Risk Link Champion activity;
- matters requiring Finance and Operations Committee, Audit and Risk Committee or Trust Board attention.

Core tasks

- agree an annual programme of activity aligned to the Assurance Map and Finance, Audit and Risk Link Champion theme;
- review relevant executive, committee, Link Champion, internal scrutiny, external audit and other independent evidence;
- engage with a proportionate sample of academies, leaders, Link Champions or stakeholders;
- identify Trust-wide themes, variation, evidence gaps, control weaknesses and risk;
- distinguish matters requiring Finance and Operations Committee attention from those requiring independent Audit and Risk Committee scrutiny;
- report evidence and findings without substituting individual judgement for collective governance or duplicating committee scrutiny;
- escalate urgent or significant financial, control, compliance or risk concerns promptly.

Health, Safety and Estates Trustee

Scope

- Trust-wide health and safety culture, compliance and assurance;
- estates condition, maintenance and statutory compliance;
- capital planning, investment and prioritisation;
- significant incidents, emerging hazards and completion of remedial actions;
- business continuity and emergency planning relevant to premises and safety;
- evidence arising from Health, Safety and Estates Link Champion activity;
- matters requiring Finance and Operations Committee or Trust Board attention.

Core tasks

- agree an annual programme of activity aligned to the Assurance Map and Health, Safety and Estates Link Champion theme;
- review relevant executive, committee, Link Champion, audit and external evidence;
- engage with a proportionate sample of academies, leaders, Link Champions or stakeholders;
- identify Trust-wide themes, variation, evidence gaps, statutory compliance issues and risk;
- consider whether estates and capital priorities reflect condition, safety, educational need and available resources;
- report evidence and findings without substituting individual judgement for collective governance or undertaking operational inspection;
- escalate urgent or significant health, safety, estates or compliance concerns promptly.

Personal Development and Christian Distinctiveness Trustee

Scope

- careers, enrichment, PSHE, behaviour, attendance, pupil voice and leadership;
- equity of participation and impact;
- Christian vision, worship, RE, spiritual development and SIAMS;
- stakeholder experience and Trust-wide consistency;
- matters requiring Quality of Learning Committee or Board attention.

Core tasks

- agree an annual programme of activity aligned to the Assurance Map;
- review relevant executive, committee and external evidence;
- engage with a proportionate sample of academies, leaders, Link Champions or stakeholders;
- identify Trust-wide themes, variation, evidence gaps and risk;
- report evidence and findings without substituting individual judgement for collective governance;
- escalate urgent or significant concerns promptly.

Appendix 5 – Governance Assurance Map

This is the framework table for completion through the annual governance planning process. Annual priorities, executive leads, frequency and evidence should be updated each year without rewriting the main framework.

Strategic / assurance area	Executive evidence	Local assurance	Trust-level scrutiny	Board outcome
Quality of Education	Director of Education report; performance and review evidence; IDSR	Leadership Report; Quality of Education Link; stakeholder voice	Quality of Learning Committee; Quality of Education Trustee	Assurance on curriculum, teaching, outcomes and improvement impact.
Safeguarding	Director of Safeguarding and SEND report; audits; compliance and trend evidence	Safeguarding Report; Safeguarding Link; pupil and staff voice	Quality of Learning Committee; Safeguarding and Inclusion Trustee	Assurance that pupils are safe and statutory arrangements are effective.
Inclusion	Executive inclusion and group evidence; SEND and Pupil Premium evaluation	Leadership Report; Inclusion Link; pupil and parent voice	Quality of Learning Committee; Safeguarding and Inclusion Trustee	Assurance on access, participation, outcomes and removal of barriers.
Personal Development	Executive evidence on careers, enrichment, PSHE, behaviour and attendance	Leadership Report; Personal Development Link; pupil voice	Quality of Learning Committee; Personal Development and Christian Distinctiveness Trustee	Assurance on breadth, quality, participation and impact.
Christian Distinctiveness	Executive/Diocesan evidence; SIAMS position	Christian Distinctiveness Link; stakeholder voice	Quality of Learning Committee; Personal Development and Christian Distinctiveness Trustee	Assurance that Christian vision is lived and evaluated.
Finance and sustainability	CFO report; accounts; forecasts; ICFP	Business, Finance and Operations Report; Finance, Audit and Risk Link	Finance and Operations Committee; Finance and Operations Trustee	Assurance on sustainability, performance, value and resource use.
Audit, risk and controls	Risk register; internal scrutiny; external audit; compliance reports	Local risk register and relevant audit actions	Audit and Risk Committee; Audit and Risk Trustee	Assurance on risk management, controls, compliance and audit response.
Estates, health and safety	Operations report; compliance dashboard; capital and estates plans	Business, Finance and Operations Report; Health and Safety Link	Finance and Operations Committee; Finance and Operations Trustee	Assurance on safe, compliant and sustainable premises.
People and organisational capacity	CEO/Operations reports; workforce data; succession and development	Leadership Report; local workforce evidence	Finance and Operations and/or Board as allocated	Assurance on capacity, development, culture and workforce risk.
Governance effectiveness	Governance Professional report; evaluations; skills and compliance evidence	Academy Committee self-evaluation and action plans	Trust Board and relevant committee	Assurance that governance is effective, compliant and improving.

Appendix 6 – Summary of Authorisation Levels

This must be read with the current Financial Procedures and Policy Manual, approved budget and any Board-approved temporary or revised financial controls. Where a more recent Board-approved financial control sets a different limit or route, that controlled financial document prevails and this schedule should be updated at the next framework review.

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
General purchasing control – all operating and capital expenditure	Any	Relevant delegated authorisers	No order or financial commitment may be entered into until a purchase order has been fully authorised at all relevant levels. This includes orders, online confirmations, verbal instructions, charge card use and contractual or informal agreements. **Retrospective authorisation is not permitted.** Applies to academies, central services and all cost centres.
ICT purchasing – all licensing, software and hardware	Any	Head of ICT and Systems	All ICT-related purchasing must be approved centrally by the Trust, in addition to the relevant financial authorisations below.
Trust-specified suppliers	Any	Trust-specified supplier / relevant budget holder	Where the Trust has specified a supplier for a defined category of goods or services, that supplier must be used by all academies and central services regardless of value or purchasing route. Exceptions must be agreed in advance and documented.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	Under £500	Business Manager	Must be within an approved budget. Fully authorised PO required before any commitment is made.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£500–£999.99	Business Manager and Executive Principal / Principal / Head of School	Must be within an approved budget. Fully authorised PO required before any commitment is made.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£1,000–£1,999.99	As above plus CFO	Must be within an approved budget. Two oral quotations required between £1,000 and £3,000. Documentation to be retained.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£2,000–£2,999.99	Business Manager, Executive Principal / Principal / Head of School, CFO and CEO	Must be within an approved budget. Two oral quotations required. Documentation to be retained.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£3,000–£9,999.99	Business Manager, Executive Principal / Principal / Head of School, CFO and CEO	Must be within an approved budget. Minimum of two written quotations required. Documentation to be retained.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£10,000–£49,999.99	Business Manager, Executive Principal / Principal / Head of School, CFO and CEO	Must be within the approved budget and identified within the budget. Minimum of three written quotations required. Documentation to be retained. Authority required to accept other than the lowest quotation/tender.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£50,000–£117,999.99	Business Manager, Executive Principal / Principal / Head of School, CFO, CEO and Budget Holder	At least three tenders required based on cumulative value. Documentation to be retained. Authority required to accept other than the lowest quotation/tender.
Ordering Goods and Services – raising requisitions / purchase orders	£118,000 and over	As above plus Trust Board	Formal tendering process required, including use of the applicable public procurement process. Trust Board approval required. Authority required to accept other than the lowest quotation/tender.
Trust Purchase / Charge Cards	Up to approved card limit	Cardholder, subject to normal PO approval hierarchy	Charge cards may only be used as a last resort where no PO or invoice payment route is possible. A fully authorised PO must exist before use. Cards must not be used to bypass normal approval arrangements. Exceptional transactions above the card limit must be referred to the Trust Accountant.
Operating Leases	Any	CFO and Principal	All operating leases must be signed off by the CFO and Principal.
Award Contracts – total contract value excluding VAT	Up to £20,000	Primary: Principal	Subject to the purchasing/PO approval hierarchy above. All contracts above £10,000 must be notified to the CFO/CEO before agreement to support opportunities for Trust-wide procurement.

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
Award Contracts – total contract value excluding VAT	£20,000–£50,000	Secondary: Principal; CEO/CFO	Subject to the purchasing/PO approval hierarchy above. All contracts above £10,000 must be notified to the CFO/CEO before agreement to support opportunities for Trust-wide procurement.
Award Contracts – total contract value excluding VAT	£50,000–£117,999.99	CFO, CEO and Budget Holder	Subject to the relevant procurement/tender requirements and PO approval hierarchy.
Award Contracts – total contract value excluding VAT	£118,000 and over	Trust Board	Formal procurement/tender requirements apply. Trust Board approval required before award.
Recruitment – new or replacement posts	Any	Director of Operations	All recruitment, whether to a new or replacement post, requires a full business case and final approval by the Director of Operations. Business case to be submitted jointly by the Principal and Business Manager and address whether the vacancy can remain unfilled, whether the need can be met differently and whether the post is consistent with the staffing model and medium-term affordability. Where approval is withheld, escalation may be made to the CEO.
Payroll – monthly payroll authorisation	Monthly payroll for each academy	Principal	Principal to review and sign the payroll report.
Payroll – Primary academies: ad-hoc changes to hours, including overtime	Any	Principal	Must be within the approved academy budget.
Payroll – Primary academies: permanent or temporary changes to hours or working weeks	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required before the change is agreed or implemented.
Payroll – Primary academies: temporary or permanent additional payments, including TLRs, allowances or honoraria	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required before the commitment is made.
Payroll – Primary academies: cover / agency staff	Up to 5 consecutive days for the same or similar reason	Principal	Must be within the approved academy budget.
Payroll – Primary academies: cover / agency staff	More than 5 consecutive days for the same or similar reason	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Payroll – Secondary academies: ad-hoc changes to hours, including overtime	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Payroll – Secondary academies: permanent or temporary changes to hours or working weeks	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Payroll – Secondary academies: temporary or permanent additional payments, including TLRs, allowances or honoraria	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Payroll – Secondary academies: use of cover / agency staff	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Payroll – Secondary academies: cover / agency staff for more than two consecutive days for the same or similar reason	Any	Director of Operations	Prior approval required.
Additional teaching hours – tutoring / curriculum catch-up	Any	Not delegated	Teaching staff in all academies may not claim additional hours for group or one-to-one tutoring and/or curriculum catch-up.
Payroll – discretionary payments	Up to £3,000	Principal	Business case must be produced, approved and retained for all discretionary payments. Subject also to the payroll approval requirements above.

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
Payroll – discretionary payments	£3,000–£20,000	Principal plus CEO	Business case must be produced, approved and retained for all discretionary payments. Subject also to the payroll approval requirements above.
Payroll – discretionary payments	£20,000–£50,000	As above plus Finance & Operations Committee	Business case must be produced, approved and retained for all discretionary payments.
Payroll – discretionary payments	£50,000 and over	As above plus DfE	Business case must be produced, approved and retained for all discretionary payments.
BACS Authorisations – Purchase Ledger	Up to £500,000 batch value	CFO	Signature on BACS report or email authorisation where physical signature is not manageable.
BACS Authorisations – Purchase Ledger	Over £500,000 batch value	Chair of Trust and Chair of Finance & Operations	Signature on BACS report or email authorisation where physical signature is not manageable.
BACS Authorisations – Payroll	Any	CFO	Signature on BACS report or email authorisation where physical signature is not manageable.
Budget variations / virements	Up to £10,000	Principal	Must remain within the approved overall budget.
Budget variations / virements	£10,000–£25,000	Academy Committee	Approval to be minuted at the Academy Committee meeting.
Budget variations / virements	£25,000–£50,000	CEO	Approval to be formally recorded/minuted.
Budget variations / virements	Over £50,000	Trust Board	Approval to be formally minuted at the Trust Board meeting.
Signatories for cheques, DfE grant claims and DfE returns	Any	Two signatories, or as required by the DfE, from: Principal; Business/Finance Manager; Senior Staff; CFO; CEO	In accordance with the authorised signatories mandate.
Disposal of Assets	Up to £20,000 purchase value	Principal	Completion of disposal form. CFO must be notified where original cost price exceeds £1,000.
Disposal of Assets	£20,000 and over purchase value	Principal plus Finance & Operations Committee	Completion of disposal form and appropriate committee approval.
Write-off of bad debts	Up to £1,000	Principal	Written request required and approval by the appropriate delegated authority retained.
Write-off of bad debts	£1,000–£10,000	CFO and CEO	Written request required and approval by the appropriate delegated authority retained.
Write-off of bad debts	£10,000–£45,000	CFO and CEO plus Finance & Operations Committee	Written request required and approval by the appropriate delegated authority retained.
Write-off of bad debts	Over £45,000	As above plus DfE approval	Written request required and approval by the appropriate delegated authority retained.
Purchase or sale of any freehold property	Any	DfE approval required	Appropriate DfE consent must be obtained before proceeding.
Granting / taking up leasehold or tenancy agreements exceeding three years	Any	DfE approval required	Appropriate DfE consent must be obtained before proceeding.
Raising invoices to collect income	Up to £50,000	Business Manager	In accordance with Trust financial procedures.
Raising invoices to collect income	£50,000–£100,000	Business Manager plus CFO	In accordance with Trust financial procedures.
Raising invoices to collect income	Over £100,000	As above plus Finance & Operations Committee	In accordance with Trust financial procedures.
Permanent exclusion	Any	Director of Safeguarding and SEND	Director of Safeguarding and SEND must be consulted and agree the outcome. The relevant local panel is advisory. Where agreement cannot be reached, escalation is to the CEO.

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Method
External alternative provision placement	Any	Director of Safeguarding and SEND	Prior agreement required. A nil-cost placement does not require financial pre-approval but must still follow Trust assurance processes.
Refusal of an in-year admission	Any	Director of Safeguarding and SEND	Director of Safeguarding and SEND must be consulted and agree the outcome.
Commissioning online or one-to-one tutoring	Any	Director of Safeguarding and SEND	Prior consultation and agreement required.
Staffordshire EAPDR expenditure	Any	Director of Safeguarding and SEND	Expenditure agreed through an EAPDR meeting must be approved before the commissioning form is submitted to the Local Authority.
Pause of expenditure or recruitment decision	Any	CEO and/or CFO	CEO and CFO may pause any expenditure or recruitment decision, regardless of other delegated authority, where affordability, timing or risk is a concern.