

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Approved by Trustees December 2025

Due for Review September 2026

Version 1

SDLT Decision Making Matrix

R – Responsible The person or people who do the work to complete the task. They are responsible for action and implementation.

A – Accountable The person who is ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the task. This includes delegating the work and reviewing it. There should only be one "A" per task to ensure clear ownership.

C – Consult People who provide input, advice, or expertise necessary to complete the task. These are typically subject matter experts.

I – Inform People who need to be kept up to date on progress or decisions but do not need to be consulted or contribute directly.

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|------------|--|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|--|
| Governance | Appoint or remove Members | A | I | | | | | |
| Governance | Appoint or remove Member appointed Trustees | A | I | | | | | |
| Governance | Appoint or remove Co-Opted Trustees | | A | | | | | |
| Governance | Amend/Approve Scheme of Delegation | | A | | R | | I | Supported by Governance Professional |
| Governance | Approve Annual Report | | A | | R | | | Trustees approve then submit to members at the AGM |
| Governance | Review and Approve governance structures for existing and new schools that join SDLT | | A | C | R | I | I | |
| Governance | Amend/Approve Articles of Association and Recommend updating the Articles | A | R | C | R | I | I | |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|------------|---|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|--|
| Governance | Appointing and Removing Committee Chairs | | A | C | C | C | C | |
| Governance | Appointing and Removing Co-Opted LGC governors | | A | | R | I | C | |
| Governance | Approving Co-Opted trustee and governor terms of office extensions. Each extension over the maximum best practice 2 terms of office will be reviewed annually | | A | | I | I | I | |
| Governance | Approving Member appointed trustee terms of office extensions. Each extension over the maximum best practice 2 terms of office will be reviewed annually | A | C | | C | I | I | |
| Governance | Review and Approve the Governance Charter and Scheme of Delegation annually | | A | | R | C | I | Supported by Governance Professional and working party |
| Governance | Agreeing terms of reference for all committees and reviewing annually | | A | C | R | C | I | Supported by Governance Professional |
| Governance | Ensure all trustees and governors receive appropriate induction and ongoing training to fulfill their roles effectively. | | A | I | R | I | I | Supported by Governance Professional |
| Governance | Develop and maintain a succession plan for key governance and leadership roles to ensure continuity and stability. | | A | C | R | C | C | |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|--|---|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|---|
| Governance | Publish governance arrangements on the trust and schools' websites | | A | | R | | I | Supported by Governance Professional |
| Strategic Leadership and External Partnerships and Community | Approve trust vision and strategy | | A | C | R | C | C | |
| Strategic Leadership and External Partnerships and Community | Approve KPIs to measure trust performance | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Strategic Leadership and External Partnerships and Community | Approve transitional SOD for new schools | | A | C | R | I | I | |
| Financial Management | Approve trust-wide budget | | A | C | R | I | | |
| Financial Management | Approve scheme of financial delegation contained in the SDLT Finance Manual | | A | R | C | I | | |
| Financial Management | Approve financial procedures in accordance with legal and DFE requirements | | A | R | C | I | | A&R lead the process, trustees formally approve |
| Financial Management | Approve and appoint external auditors and accounts | I | A | R | C | | | A&R lead the process, trustees formally approve |
| Financial Management | Approve that any writing off debts complies with financial procedures | | A | C | R | C | | |
| Financial Management | Monitor school-level budgets | | A | | C | R | C | Supported by EBM |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|----------------------|---|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Financial Management | Approve EHT reports on financial viability of new schools | | A | R | | | | Supported by EBM |
| Financial Management | Approve the opening and closing of bank accounts and the banking provider and mandate | | A | C | R | I | | Supported by EBM |
| Education | Approve curriculum policy | | A | | C | R | I | |
| Education | Approve all statutory policies that require trustee approval | | A | C | R | C | I | |
| Education | Approve statutory policies that do not require trustee approval | | A | | I | R | I | |
| Education | Approve non statutory trust policies | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Education | Monitor educational standards | | A | | R | R | R | |
| Education | Approve Changes to school day | | | | A | R | I | |
| Education | Approve Changes to the school year | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Education | Approve school improvement plans | | A | | R | C | C | |
| Education | Approve branding changes (logo, website) | | A | | R | C | C | |
| Education | Induction process for curriculum alignment | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Education | Quality assure SEF processes | | I | | A | R | I | |
| Education | Permanently exclude a student | | I | | A | R | I | |
| Education | Create, Implement and Monitor the School Development Plan (SDP) | | I | | R | A | C | |
| Staffing and HR | Appoint/Performance Manage EHT | I | A | R | | | | |
| Staffing and HR | Appoint/Performance Manage Executive Team | | A | | R | C | | |
| Staffing and HR | Appoint academy Headteacher | | A | I | R | I | I | |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|-------------------------------|---|---------|----------|-----------------------|-----|----|-----|------------------------|
| Staffing and HR | Recruiting and approving teaching and non-teaching school staff | | I | | A | R | I | |
| Staffing and HR | Approve pay policy | | A | R Pay Committee | C | C | | A&R review and approve |
| Staffing and HR NEW | <p>Approve pay awards</p> <p>Where the Board of Trustees is not able to approve executive pay decisions due to conflicts of interest (e.g. trustees involved in the appraisal process), the Pay Committee comprising of trustees independent of the appraisal may approve incremental pay progression for the Executive Headteacher and Headteachers.</p> <p>This arrangement complies with the Academy Trust Handbook 2025, which requires that no individual involved in appraisal may take part in remuneration decisions. All decisions must be clearly documented and based on robust appraisal evidence.</p> | | A | R | C | C | | |
| Staffing and HR | Approve overall staffing structure for new and existing schools | | A | | R | C | | |
| Staffing and HR | Approve HR provider and contracts | | A | I | R | C | | |
| Staffing and HR | Approve applications for early retirement or leave of absence | | | | A | R | | |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|----------------------------------|---|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|--|
| Staffing and HR | Confirm HR induction plan for new schools | | A | | R | C | | |
| Risk Management and Safeguarding | Approve the risk register for the Trust | | A | R | C | I | I | A&R review, monitor and recommend approval |
| Risk Management and Safeguarding | Monitor risk register | | A | R | C | C | I | |
| Risk Management and Safeguarding | Financial risk assessment for new schools | | A | C | R | C | C | Supported by EBM |
| Risk Management and Safeguarding | Educational risk assessment for new schools | | A | C | R | C | C | |
| GDPR/Compliance | Ensure the Trust and its schools comply with data protection regulations, including secure handling of personal data and regular audits | | A | C | R | C | I | Supported by Trust DPO |

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|---|--|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|----------------------------|
| Pupils, Parents, Community and Admissions | Making recommendations/ changes to admissions policy including PAN for trustees to approve | | A | I | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Pupils, Parents, Community and Admissions | Monitor stakeholder engagement | | A | | R | R | C | Supported by PR/Comms Lead |
| Pupils, Parents, Community and Admissions | Agree communication plan for new school integration | | A | | R | C | | Supported by PR/Comms Lead |
| Premises and Estates | Approve estates strategy | | A | | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Premises and Estates | Oversee health and safety compliance | | A | C | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Premises and Estates | Review site condition surveys for new schools | | A | C | R | C | | Supported by EBM |
| Premises and Estates | Approve capital works for onboarding schools and existing schools | | A | C | R | | | Supported by EBM |
| Premises and Estates | Approve and Monitor Crisis Management Plans | | A | C | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Premises and Estates | Approve Maintenance Schedules | | A | | R | C | I | Supported by EMB |
| Premises and Estates | Monitor Energy Efficiency and Sustainability | | A | | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Trust Growth | Approve new schools joining the trust | | A | C | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Trust Growth | Approve new school due diligence | | A | C | R | | | Supported by EBM |
| Trust Growth | Integration planning for new schools | | A | | R | C | | Supported by EBM |
| Trust Growth | Monitor new school conversion timeline and milestones | | A | C | R | | | Supported by EBM |
| Trust Growth | Post-conversion review and impact assessment | | A | C | R | | | Supported by EBM |

Scheme of Delegation Addendum: New School Joining the Trust

This addendum outlines the temporary specific governance and delegation arrangements that apply when a new school joins the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). It overrides the main scheme of delegation and ensures clarity of roles, responsibilities, and oversight during the first 12 months period and supports the consistent integration of the new school into the trust.

1. Governance Structure

When a new school joins the Trust, it will receive enhanced support from SDLT Trustees and the Governance Professional during the first 12 months to embed trust-wide governance standards and compliance. The level of support will be more intensive in this initial period to ensure a smooth transition. After the first year, ongoing support will continue as needed, but at a level proportionate to the school's maturity and requirements.

2. Delegated Authority Levels

During the first 12 months the Headteacher's financial authorisation limit will be capped at £5,000. Staffing and significant procurement decisions will require approval from the Executive Headteacher.

3. Line Management & Reporting

The Headteacher will report to the Executive Headteacher.

4. School Improvement Oversight

School improvement will be centrally led by the Trust Executive Team for the first academic year to secure rapid improvement and align with trust priorities. The local governing committee will be engaged in monitoring but will not hold direct accountability during this period.

The Trust will conduct a comprehensive full school review within the first 12 months,

5. Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will maintain oversight of safeguarding practice. Termly safeguarding audits will be conducted in the first year with local DSLs reporting to the central team.

6. Finance & Budget Monitoring

The school's budget will be reviewed and finalised by the Executive Business Manager and approved by the Trust Board. All financial decisions must align with trust-wide financial procedures and authorisation levels.

7. Performance Management

Performance review of the Headteacher will be undertaken by the Headteacher performance management panel.

8. Governance Development

All new local governors will complete the trust's induction programme within two months of appointment to build capacity for a fully functioning local governing committee. Mentoring and training will be provided to support their effective contribution.

9. Adoption of Trust-Wide Policies

Upon joining the MAT, the new school will adopt all trust-wide policies, procedures, and service agreements (including safeguarding, finance, HR, complaints, and operational systems).

Addendum: New Schools Joining the Trust

This addendum supersedes the main Scheme of Delegation for new schools during their first 12 months in the Trust.”

| Category | Decision Area / Function | Members | Trustees | A&R Committee | EHT | HT | LGC | Comments |
|----------------------|---|---------|----------|---------------|-----|----|-----|--------------------------------------|
| Governance | A Local Governing Committee will be established for an initial period of 12 months. Following this period, a formal review will be conducted. | | A | | R | C | C | |
| Governance | New governors' complete induction within initial 2 months | | A | | R | | I | Supported by Governance Professional |
| Governance | Adoption of trust-wide policies on joining | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Financial Management | HT financial authorisation limit capped at £5,000 for the first 12 months. Amounts over this need approval from the Executive Headteacher | | A | C | R | C | | |
| Financial Management | Budget reviewed by Executive Business Manager, approved by Board | | A | C | R | C | | |
| Staffing and HR | Significant staffing/procurement decisions approved by Executive HT | | A | I | R | C | I | Supported by EBM |
| Staffing and HR | HT performance management conducted by Headteacher performance review panel | | A | C | R | | | Supported by External Advisor |
| Strategic Leadership | HT reports to Executive Headteacher | | A | | R | | | |
| Education | School improvement led by Executive HT for first year | | A | | R | C | I | |
| Safeguarding | DSL oversight and termly audits by Trust DSL | | A | | R | C | I | |
| SEND | Trust Send Lead oversight and termly audits by Trust SEND lead | | A | | R | C | I | |

SDLT Financial Scheme of Delegation and Finance Manual

Summary Document

1. Delegated Financial Authority Limits

| Role | Financial Limit | Conditions |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| Curriculum Leaders / Budget Holders | £0 – £5,000 | Within budget, ensure probity and value for money |
| Headteacher + Executive Business Manager | Over £5,000 – £25,000 | Within budget, 3 written quotes required |
| Executive Headteacher | £25,000 – £50,000 | 3 written quotes; Trustees' agreement required |

2. Petty Cash Limits

| School Phase | Cash in Hand | Expenditure Limit |
|---------------------|--------------|--|
| Primary & Secondary | £300 | Up to £20 (over £20 requires co-signature by senior staff) |

3. Business Charge Card Limits

| School | Total Limit | Cardholders & Limits |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Primary Phase | £4,000 | Sarah Stiles: £3,000 Lynsey Swingler: £1,000 |
| Secondary Phase | £17,500 | Tracy Comfort: £15,000 Angela Hayden: £2,500 |

4. Cheque Signing Authority

| Amount | Signatories Required |
|--------------|---|
| Up to £5,000 | Two Finance Assistants (Primary) or Business Manager + Finance Team (Secondary) |
| Over £5,000 | One must be Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher (Primary) or Headteacher/Head of School (Secondary) |

5. Write-Offs and Disposals

| Authority | Limit |
|--|--------------|
| Executive Business Manager / Headteacher | Up to £500 |
| Local Governing Committees (LGCs) | Up to £2,500 |
| Trust Board | Over £2,500 |

6. Payroll Authorisation

Authorised Signatories: Headteacher, Executive Business Manager, Deputy Headteachers (Secondary)

Restrictions: Cannot authorise documents related to themselves

7. Procurement & Orders

Orders must be within financial limits and signed by authorised personnel.

All purchases must follow value-for-money principles and be supported by quotes as per thresholds. Orders must be entered into the budget system (FMS) and tracked.

8. Banking & Payments

Two signatories required for all cheques, BACS, and bank transfers.

No overdrafts or private bank accounts allowed.

Loan agreements require Secretary of State approval (except with SDLT).

9. Asset Management

All assets over £50 or deemed desirable must be recorded and tagged.

Annual inventory checks required.

Write-offs must be reported and authorised per limits.

10. Tax Compliance

Payments only made on valid VAT invoices.

SDLT guidance must be followed for VAT and CIS (Construction Industry Scheme).

SDLT Key Person Dependency Register

The Key Person Dependency Register outlines critical roles within the SDLT structure, identifying current role holders and contingency plans. It serves as a strategic tool to support succession planning, ensure operational continuity, and mitigate risks associated with key personnel dependencies.

| Key Role | Current Holder | Contingency / Cover |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Chair of Trustees | Rebecca Conroy | Vice Chair of Trustees |
| Vice Chair of Trustees | Alex White | Another Trustee appointed by Board |
| Ratton Chair of Governors | Carole Bradbrook | Vice Chair |
| Ocklynge Chair of Governors | Alex White | Vice Chair |
| Governance Professional | Lisa Davis | Chair of Trustees / Admin Support / External Clerk |
| Accounting Officer (CEO/Exec Headteacher) | Paul Murphy | Nominated Headteacher/s with Trustee oversight |
| Executive Business Manager | Tracy Comfort | Deputy Finance Lead / Accounting Officer / External provider |
| Headteacher – Ratton | Gavin Peevers | Deputy Headteacher (Ratton) with Exec HT oversight |
| Headteacher – Ocklynge | Paul Reilly | Deputy Headteacher (Ocklynge) with Exec HT oversight |
| Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | David Brown | Deputy DSL(s) |
| Trust SENDCO | Lienna Walsh | Deputy SENDCo or Trust-wide SEND resource |
| IT Network Manager | Darren Taggart | Deputy IT staff / External IT support |
| HR/Payroll | Tracy Comfort & LA | LA / Outsourced provider |
| Exams Officer (Secondary) | Kath Winborn | SLT trained cover |
| Health & Safety Lead | Paul Murphy | Site Manager |
| Data Protection Officer (DPO) | Mark Hatton | Trust Executive Assistant |