



Scheme of Delegation

Approved: May 2025

Review December 2025

INTRODUCTION

1. Our Mission and Vision

The Arden Forest MAT is a community of schools striving to give every child the hope and aspiration to achieve their potential—academically, personally, and spiritually.

We are committed to continuously improving our schools and the education we offer. By working together and sharing expertise, resources, and best practices, we enable the flourishing of our entire community.

All schools take a holistic approach to education, focusing on the development of the whole child. We recognise that life brings both joys and challenges, and our curriculums are designed to equip children with the resilience, wisdom, and courage to navigate both and to make positive choices in life.

By being part of our MAT, all schools will be working together to secure the best possible outcomes for our children and staff.

All of our schools share a vision:

‘Inspiring educational excellence for all.’

Governors and the MAT Board are committed to maintaining the distinctiveness of our Church of England schools and will ensure that all schools continue to inspire and serve others [4].

2. Our Values

Inspiration

Inspiration breathes life into our schools, encouraging creativity, curiosity, and the discovery of each child's unique gifts.

We provide an engaging curriculum filled with opportunities for personal and academic growth. Our staff are supported in their development, recognising the importance of lifelong learning.

Nurture

We believe in educating and caring for the whole child, ensuring that physical, emotional, and social well-being are as valued as academic achievement.

Every child and their family are valued and supported, creating an environment where they feel safe, respected, and encouraged to flourish.

Respect

Our schools are committed to fostering a culture of respect, dignity, and inclusion. We celebrate diversity and promote reconciliation through listening, understanding, and valuing different perspectives.

By promoting fairness, kindness, and justice, we nurture strong relationships and a sense of shared responsibility within our school communities.

Collaboration

We believe that we are stronger together. By sharing strengths, celebrating our distinctiveness, and working in partnership, we build a thriving community where everyone is encouraged to contribute and grow.

3. Strategic Plan

The Arden Forest MAT (AFMAT) has a Strategic Plan which provides the detail on how the AFMAT supports school leaders and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) in providing the support they need to ensure they provide high quality education for all. There are six objectives within this plan:

1. The provision of all schools in the MAT is of a high quality and accessible to all.
2. The MAT's collaborative school improvement approach effectively supports each individual school.
3. To create a high-performing working culture for all staff, which promotes collaboration, aspiration and support.
4. Effective financial and operational support for schools ensures best value to the children of each school.
5. The MAT and its individual schools are well led through effective governance.
6. Each Church Schools' Christian vision drives its work, and enables the school to live up to its foundation as a Church school.

4. The Nolan Principles of Public Service

We are committed to Ethical Leadership and adhere the 'Nolan Principles' of Public Service which are:

Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

5. About this document

This scheme of delegation has been approved by the Trust Board of Directors and sets out clearly who, within the Trust, has the authority to make decisions. This Scheme of Delegation sets out who is responsible and who is accountable:

- accountability means being ultimately responsible for the task or action, the group or individual with accountability may delegate the task or action to those responsible;
- responsibility means a group or individual with responsibility for the delivery of the task or action

The Scheme of Delegation is a critical document and reflects the commitment to our Missions, Vision and Values working within statutory frameworks such as the Academy Trust Handbook.

This Scheme of Delegation is a formal document which must be referred to in order to guide the operational process within our leadership and governance structure.

6. Sharing the Scheme of Delegation

A copy of the SoD will be made available to the Chairs of the Local Governing Boards (LGBs), the Executive Leadership Team (CEO, CFO and COO) and Headteachers; it will also be published on the AFMAT's website.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Trust has Directors, Members, LGBs and Executive Leaders who all must adhere to the Trust's Code of Conduct.

7. Members

As a company limited by guarantee, the Trust has five Members, who are the legal 'owners' of the Trust and provide the highest tier of nonexecutive oversight.

The Members ensure the Trust Board are held accountable to the Vision and Values, the statutory responsibilities of the Trust and the outcomes of the school's within it. Members have the authority, with the Articles of Association to:

- change the name of the Academy Trust;
- change the objects within the Articles of Association (which would require Charity Commission and Secretary of State consent);
- change the structure of the Trust Board;
- amend the Articles of Association through passing a special resolution;
- pass a resolution to wind up the Trust;
 - appoint external auditors

Member meetings are held annually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Trust. Member meetings are quorate if three Members are present.

8. Directors

The Trust has a Board of Directors, there are nine Directors. Directors may either be appointed by Members or co-opted onto the Board by other Directors.

The Trust is a company, individuals appointed as the Directors are directors in company law, however, the Trust is also a charity and the Directors are also considered trustees in charity law and are often referred to as Trustees by the DfE and Charity Commission. Within this SoD, they are referred to as Directors in line with the terminology referred to in the Trust's Articles.

Directors have ultimate accountability and decision-making authority for the work of the Trust and its Academies and are accountable for the performance of the Trust and its Academies to the Members and the Secretary of State. The Board of Directors are required to have systems in place through which they can fulfil their statutory requirements.

Directors are required to act, both collectively and individually, in the best interests of the Trust and its Academies and in line with our Code of Conduct and the MAT's mission, vision and values. Directors have a strategic role.

Directors cannot delegate their accountability for the performance of the Trust however, the responsibility for many aspects of the Trust's operation is delegated. Directors hold to account the bodies and individuals with 'delegated responsibility' on behalf of the Members and the Secretary of State.

The core functions of the Directors are to:

- establish the vision, mission and values of the Trust;

- ensure the business of the Trust is conducted solely in pursuit of the objects set out in the Articles;
- safeguard the assets of the Trust;
- ensure that financial controls and appropriate financial management is in place in accordance with the provision of the Academy Trust Handbook;
- set out and monitor the strategic objectives for the Trust;
- establish and monitor the risks to the Trust and ensure that mitigating measures are put in place;
- ensure that both the Trust Board and the ELT have the capacity and skill to lead and manage the Trust and that the ELT is appropriately supported and challenged;
- delegate authority for the day-to-day operation of the Trust to the CEO and, by extension, to the ELT;
- ensure that the Trust is led and managed in accordance with all applicable law.

9. Trust Board Committees

The Trust Board decides its committee structure and appoints members of the committees.

The Trust Board may delegate functions to its committees, which include LGBs (LGBs have no separate legal status in a Trust). LGBs are technically and legally committees of the Trust Board. Trust Board committees (not including LGBs) must contain a majority of Directors, but may also include other people the Trust Board chooses to appoint as stated in the Articles.

The Trust Board has established one committee, the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee to oversee specific areas of its work. The members of this committee are confirmed annually. The responsibilities and authority are outlined in the committee's Terms of Reference.

10. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)

There is an LGB for each academy within the Trust. The functions of the LGB are delegated by the Trust Board.

Best practice is that the principle of "significant separation" should also apply between the LGBs and the Trust Board. If local governors sit on the Trust Board this may reduce the objectivity with which the Trust board can exercise its powers.

Local governors may be conflicted in that, for the best possible reasons, they may wish to represent the interests of the school or schools where they serve on the LGC, rather than the interests of all schools in the group. Directors must not be partial – they must make decisions in the interests of all schools and all pupils, they must exercise independent judgement and avoid conflicts of interest. For this reason, the Confederation of School Trusts advises that all or a significant majority of Directors to be independent of local governance.

When the AFMAT was formed in 2018, it was formed of local governors from the three original schools. Since this time there has been a conscious effort to separate the Trust Board and LGBs.

The constitution of the LGB must be 25% parents of pupils currently at the academy 25% of staff – these positions must be elected. In Voluntary Aided (VA) C of E Schools there must be 50% foundation governors, in all other schools 25% are foundation and 25% are co-opted. There are separate application processes in place for both of these.

The Local Governing Body (LGB) may delegate to committees or individuals to carry out certain functions. The term 'LGB' will therefore include any such Committees or individual roles that may be formed appropriate to each Academy's setting.

In broad terms the LGBs are responsible for providing assurance to the Trust Board (and to external bodies, such as Ofsted) that the academy's work has been scrutinised with a clear focus on performance improvement and that Trust and statutory policies are being properly followed. There are detailed Terms of Reference which are reviewed annually.

11. The role of the Executive Leadership Team

The roles of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are accountable to Directors for the day-to-day operation of the Trust and for the achievement of its strategic objectives. Key executive roles within the Trust currently include:

- the CEO. The CEO acts as Accounting Officer and is accountable for fulfilling the expectations of that role. The accounting officer role includes specific responsibilities for financial matters. It includes a personal responsibility to Parliament, and to the DfE, for the Trust's financial resources. The accounting officer has a formal role in relation to the Trust Board. They must execute the strategy and decisions of the Trust Board and are therefore the formal link between the governance and operations of the organisation. The accounting officer is held to account by the Trust Board for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, the performance management of staff, and financial regularity, propriety and value for money. The accounting officer also has responsibilities for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for the management of opportunities and risks;
- the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) who has leadership responsibility for finance;
- the Chief Operations Officer (COO) who has leadership responsibility for human resources, governance, estates and data protection.

The accountabilities of these roles are detailed within specific job descriptions. The achievements and success of the ELT is monitored by Directors.

EXECUTION AND OVERSIGHT OF DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

12. Operational Procedures, Support and Guidance

There are operational procedures which directly impact the practical application of some areas of the SoD. These are set out in the AFMAT's Operational Procedures document which is reviewed annually.

In order to ensure the Trust Board and LGBs meet their collective responsibilities a 'cycle' is created and shared annually. This cycle informs the Board and LGBs when and what should be on the agenda for each meeting. There are supporting guidance documents to aid LGBs in their execution of certain delegated functions e.g. safeguarding and Health & Safety. There is a similar 'cycle' to aid Headteachers in the execution of their functions outlined in the SoD and job descriptions.

13. Deviation from the SoD

Through the delegated activities of the ELT, evidence of serious failures may lead to deviation in the SoD and support being put in place. In serious cases, the CEO may advise the Board to take action on behalf of either Members or the Board of Directors which may include reviewing or removing any power or responsibility which the Board has delegated or removing individuals from positions within the governance structure.

This may apply especially in circumstances where there are serious concerns in the running of an academy (including but not limited to) where:

- insufficient progress is being made against educational targets (including where intervention by the Secretary of State is being considered or carried out)
- there has been a breakdown in the way the academy is managed or governed
- the safety of pupils or staff is threatened, including a breakdown of discipline
- there are concerns about financial matters.

The Scheme of Delegation

A = Accountable	The individual/group that has the ultimate or final responsibility for ensuring completion of the task. This will include determining how the Trust and/or Academies (as appropriate) should undertake the task including determining appropriate milestones and targets to be reported against.
R = Responsible	The individual/group that has responsibility for undertaking or completing the task delegated to them and reporting on its delivery at suitable intervals. In the case of the CEO, this reporting will be at Trust Board level. In the case of the Headteacher, this will be at level.
S = Support	The individual/group who should provide support during the implementation of the task.
C = Consult	The individual/group that should be consulted as part of the process of the completing the task because they can provide valuable advice and/or input.
I = Inform	The individual/group that should be kept up-to-date about the progress of the task and/or the decisions in the task.

Strategy and Trust Board Leadership		Directors	CEO/ELT	LGB	Heads
Strategy	Set strategic objectives of the Trust	A	R	I	C
	Set strategic objectives of the Academies	A	R	C	C
	Develop the character, culture, mission & ethos of the Trust	A	R	I	C
Scrutiny	Scrutiny: Performance – review & challenge progress of the Trust against its strategic objectives and KPIs	A	R	C	S
	Scrutiny: Ethos – operation of the Trust & Academies against the agreed character, mission & ethos	A	R	C	S
Compliance	Compliance: Funding Agreement – comply with all obligations including the Academy Trust Handbook	A	R	C	S
	Compliance: Regulatory – with all regulations affecting the Trust (including all charity law, company law, GDPR, employment law and health and safety)	A	R	C	S
	Compliance: Financial Oversight - ensuring that there are appropriate financial controls so that there is regularity, probity and value for money in relation to the management of public funds	A	R	C	S
	Compliance – completing the register of business interests and put in place a procedure to deal with any conflicts of interest and connected party transactions	A	R	C	S
Registers	Register of Interests	A	R	C	S
	Trust Risk Register	A	R	C	S

Appointments	Appointment and removal of Directors– ensuring processes in place for appointment and removal of Directors (including ensuring that the Directors have the skills to run the Trust)	A (and Member approval where required)	R		
	Appointments of Governors – ensuring processes in place for appointment of governors (including ensuring that the Governors have the skills to run the Academies)	A	R	I	S
	Appointment of Company Secretary – Board	A	R		
	Appointment of Governance Professional – Governing Body	C	R	I	I
Policies	Review and approval of Trust wide policies (including admissions, DBS, charging and remissions policies, health & safety and safeguarding)	A	R	S/I	C/S
Committee Delegations	Establish and appoint Trust Board committees	A	S	I	I
	Establish and appoint Academy committees	I	A		R
	Prepare terms of reference for LGB's and Committees	A	R	C	C
Training	Training programme for Directors	A	R	I	I
	Training programme for Governors	A	R	I	I

Education and Leadership		Directors	CEO/ELT	LGB	Heads
Academy Performance (Standards)	School Improvement Plan - for each Academy in line with strategic aims of the Trust	I	A	C	R
	Quality of Teaching - ensuring appropriate levels of support, challenge and intervention to support delivery of education outcomes	I	A	C	R
	Curriculum – setting the curriculum for the Academies and reviewing its effectiveness	I	A	C	R
Pupils	Pupils (including attendance, punctuality, behaviour, exclusions for each Academy)	I	A	C	R
Safeguarding	Ensuring each academy has appointed a designated safeguarding lead, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and maintenance of single central record	A	R	R	S
SEND	Ensuring there is a SENDCo and a school SEND policy/information report in place for an Academy, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance	A	R	R	S
Stakeholder Engagement	Promoting partnership working between parents/carers and the Academies (including undertaking consultation with students, parents/carers and other stakeholders)	A	A	C	R

	Ensure stakeholder feedback is used to support the development of best practice and to promote the quality of the overall student experience)	A	A	R	S
Academy Calendar and Opening Hours	Setting term dates	A	R	I	S
	Academy Hours -setting the opening and closing times for the Academies	A	R	I	S
Admissions	Set admissions policy	A	R	I	I
	Admissions/appeal decisions	A	R	I	I
Ofsted	Ofsted Inspections Trust Support: CEO will support LGBs and Headteachers for individual Academy inspections	S	A	R	R

Financial		Directors	CEO/ELT	LGB	Heads
Appointments	Appointment of Finance, Risk and Audit Committee	A	R	I	I
	Appointment of Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer	A	R	I	I
	Recommend appointment of External Auditors to Members	A	R		
	Appointment of Internal Auditors	A	R		
HR and Operations		Directors	CEO/ELT	LGB	Heads
Funding Model and Budget	Agreeing a funding model across the Trust and developing an individual funding model for the Academies) so as to secure the Trust's financial health in the short term and the long term	A	R	C	
	Formulating and setting the Trust wide budget	A	R	I	C
	Formulating and determining the proportion of the overall budget to be delegated to each Academy (including uses of contingency funds/ balances)	A	R	C	S
	Expenditure and ensuring delivery of Annual Budgets	A	R	S	R
Financial Delegation	Establishing of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Trust's financial and reporting requirements	A	R	S	S
Investments	Agreeing the investment policy in line with the Academy Trust Handbook and the Scheme of Financial Delegation	A	R		

Appointments	Appointment of CEO	A with Member consultation	S	S	S
	Appointment of Headteacher at each Academy	I	A	R	
	Appointment of central Trust staff (in line with recruitment policy)	S	A/R		
	Appointment of Academy SLT (excluding Headteacher)	I	A/R	I	R
Dismissals	Dismissing CEO (in accordance with the Trust disciplinary and capability policies)	A/R with Member consultation			
	Dismissing central Trust Staff (in accordance with the disciplinary and capability policies)	A	R		I
	Dismissing Headteachers (in accordance with the disciplinary and capability policies)	A	R	S	I
	Dismissing all other staff (in accordance with the disciplinary and capability policies)	A	R/S	S	R
Policies and Terms & Conditions	Establishing Trust wide HR Policies (including recruitment , discipline, capability, grievance and absence policies) in accordance with all appropriate regulations	A	R	I	I
	Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment and Staff Handbook	A	R	I	I
	Setting Appraisal Performance Management Policy together with pay reviews (in line with the Trust's pay policy and all statutory regulations)	A	R	C	I
	Reviewing discipline and grievance policy	A	R	I	I

Procurement	Setting trust wide procurement policies (for suppliers including auditors, HR and payroll providers and solicitors) in accordance with the Funding Agreement, Academy Trust Handbook and the Trust's procurement policy	A	R	I	I
	Enter into contracts – up to limit of delegation set out in Scheme of Financial Delegation	A	R	C	R

Central Services	Determining and allocating central services provided to the Academies by the Trust	A	R	I	I
	Overseeing the effectiveness of services provided centrally by the Trust	A	R	C	C
	Arranging insurance for the Trust	A	R		S
Premises and Assets	Acquiring and disposing of Trust land (with the necessary Diocesan consents)	A	R	I	I
	Changing use of Assets	A	R	I	I
	Asset and Premises Maintenance Strategy – determining use of Academies’ premises and ensuring premises are adequately maintained	A	R	C	S
Media and PR	Media and PR - overseeing public relations activities to project the activities of the Trust and the Academies to the wider community	A	R	S	S
	Information management – including adopting and following policies for information security and compliance with FoI and DPA legislation and maintaining accurate records (staff, student)	A	R	S	S

Further detail describing the practical application of the SoD can be found in the Arden Forest MAT’s Operations Procedure document.