



GOVERNANCE

The vision for our academies

Our vision is to create a mutually supportive group of outstanding schools that give every Great Schools' student the opportunity to go to university or pursue the career of their choice.

The mission of each academy

To create a family of mutually supportive schools in which each of our students will develop the academic skills, intellectual habits, qualities of character and leadership traits necessary to succeed at all levels in society and become successful citizens in tomorrow's world.

The ethos of our academies

We firmly believe that if young people come to a school where they feel valued, safe and teachers have their best interests at heart, then they will commit themselves; they will work harder; suffer fewer distractions; become more motivated and achieve more. Research shows that pursuing a character-driven approach to education, based on a firm set of values, is the lever that produces such an ethos.

Our values

The Great School's 'seven pillars of character' are bound within the ASPIRE Code. The pillars are:

- A** **aspiration and achievement** – through the development of these character traits we want our students to develop not only the highest of aspirations but also the drive and determination to achieve those aspirations
- S** **self-awareness** – by becoming more self-aware our students will gradually develop a greater understanding of themselves as a person as well as their strengths and, perhaps more importantly, the areas in which they need to develop
- P** **professionalism** – by taking a 'professional' approach to life we encourage our students to develop 'self-pride' in all that they undertake. This includes being punctual, attending daily, dressing well, presenting their work to the highest professional standards, and adopting a professional approach to their behaviour
- I** **integrity** – we help our students understand that integrity is not just about telling the truth. It is about being true to their beliefs and upholding them; it is about having pride in all that they do, always working to their true ability and behaving correctly to other people at all times

- R** **respect** – we help our students understand that respect is not simply about being polite, courteous and good mannered. It is about respecting your own ability and working hard to achieve well. It is about valuing British Values and the differences in others, their background, faith and culture, and looking after our planet and its limited resources
- E** **endeavour** – by endeavour we mean working hard to achieve success; being focussed on the task in hand; tackling it conscientiously and diligently; having the perseverance, resilience, tenacity and grit to keep going when others start to give up

Our Motto

Credimus – We believe

1. Introduction

This document sets out in outline the Trusts' governance and delegation structures. For further detailed information on roles and responsibilities please refer to the Scheme of Delegation set out in Appendix 1 and the Trust's Governors' Handbook as on the Trust's website: www.greatschoolstrust.com

1.1 About the Trust

Great Schools is a non-profit making trust, a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. It is a multi-academy trust approved by the Department for Education (D.f.E) to help raise the standards of education in our schools. The Trust brings together expertise from the education field and the professionalism and influences of commercial partners. Our Education Team has proven expertise and experience and has been very successful in substantially improving schools, both in the UK and internationally.

1.2 The vision of the Trust

The founding sponsors of the Great Schools Trust share the same vision for all of its academies. This vision is to create a mutually supportive group of outstanding academies that that give every student the opportunity to go to university or pursue the career of their choice.

The Trust has developed a personal 'flight path' approach for learning that enables each pupil to reach the highest level of personal achievement through the further development of their character and leadership traits; exposure to an innovative and challenging curriculum; evidenced based approaches to teaching and data driven remediation all within an ethos of high expectations and no excuses.

When an academy joins the Great Schools Trust we will make a commitment to working together; sharing knowledge and best practice and making a commitment to help that academy provide the very best education for each of its pupils. We will achieve this by working with the academy to improve the quality of teaching and learning; helping implement the Trust 'character and leadership' programmes and by supporting the academy to become outstanding as soon as it is able.

2 Structure of Governance

Please refer to the chart in appendix 1

3. The Trust Board

The Trust is governed by its Board of Directors, whose responsibility it is to oversee the management and administration of the Trust and the academies which it operates and to ensure that all children attending its academies are able to achieve their full potential. These governance arrangements are laid down at multi-academy trust level as they were agreed with the D.f.E and are set down in the Trust's Master Funding Agreement. It is the responsibility of the Trusts' Sponsors to appoint the Trust Board Members. The Trust Board is the overarching governing body for all of its academies.

3.1 Accountability

The Trust Board has overall accountability to the Department for Education for the management and performance of all of its academies. The Trust Board also has corporate responsibility for these.

This responsibility is exercised through:

- The determination of an overall vision, mission, ethos and values for its academies
- The determination of guiding policies for all academies
- The setting of individual performance targets for each academy
- Overarching strategic planning to ensure the smooth and effective functioning of each academy; achievement of individual performance targets and the management of overall performance
- Implementing a financial control system which approves the overall business plan and budget; sets financial standards and manages overall financial performance

The C.E.O. is accountable to the Trust Board and it is his / her responsibility ensure that:

- All academies implement the vision, mission, beliefs, values, ethos and curriculum strategies set out by the Board
- All academies comply with Trust directives, whilst maintaining the highest of standards
- The ethos of each academy supports the Trust's philosophy of 'high expectations and no excuses'
- All academies achieve their individual performance targets
- Each academy is led and managed in a smooth and effective manner
- Each academy is implementing a financial control system which ensures effective financial management
- Each academy works actively with its local community in meeting its hopes and aspirations for the young people of that community

Academies and their Executive Principals/Principals are accountable, and report to the Trust through the C.E.O.

The Trust is responsible for the appointment and performance management of Executive Principals/Principals.

3.2 Delegated Powers

The system of delegation of powers is set out in the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation. The Trust Board delegates powers to:

- The Chief Executive Officer
- Executive Principals / Principals
- Chief Finance and Operating Officers
- Local Governing Bodies

The Chief Finance and Operating Officers have, in consultation with the C.E.O. the power to delegate to persons as appropriate to carry out financial and operational duties and responsibilities in line with the Trust’s expectations and standards.

3.3 The Trust Board

Name	Position
Sir Iain Hall	Chief Executive Officer
Shane Ierston	Director – Teaching and Learning
Michael Taylor	Director – School Improvement
Colin Scotland	Director
Aiden Harper	Director
Deborah Vaughan Massey	Director
Claire Morgans	Director
Andrew Reay	Non-executive Director - Leadership

For details about each member please refer to the Trust website www.greatschoolstrust.com

3.41 Terms of reference for the Trust Board

See appendix 2 for terms of reference of the Trust Board

3.42 Board Task Groups

In addition to the Scheme of Delegation the Trust Board may, from time to time, convene time limited task groups to consider particular issues or opportunities that may impact on all Trust opportunities.

4. The Academy

The system of delegation of powers is set out in the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation in appendix 1, which provides a delegation checklist setting out the levels at which decisions are made

4.1 The Executive Principal

The Executive Principal, where in place, is responsible for working with their allocated academies to ensure the successful development and implementation of the Trust’s vision, mission, ethos, beliefs, curriculum strategies, standards and outcomes. Responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation include the line management of Principals.

The Executive Principal is accountable, and report, to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Executive Principal has the right to attend all in-school meetings as well as meetings of the Local Governing Body.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Principal to report any financial, child protection, staffing or operational concerns directly to the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

4.2 Executive Principals' Performance Management

The Trust is responsible for the performance management of the Executive Principal through the office of the C.E.O.

4.3 The Principal

In the absence of an Executive Principal the responsibilities of the role fall to Principal.

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day running of the academy in accordance with the Trust's scheme of delegation. This allows for flexibility in delegation of powers as the Trust Board sees fit. The trust may delegate maximum autonomy, within the Trust wide vision, mission, values and beliefs to highly successful academies.

The Principal is accountable and reports to the Executive Principal or, where there is no executive Principal, directly to the C.E.O.

In exceptional circumstances the Principal is able to report issues of concern directly to the Trust Board.

Unless the Trust agrees other specified arrangements with the Principal and Local Governing Body, he or she will work with the appointed Senior Leadership Team to execute their responsibilities for managing the school, implementing the Trust wide vision, mission, values, beliefs, curriculum strategies, standards and outcomes as well as raising and sustaining the performance of the academy.

4.4 Principals' Performance Management

The Trust is responsible for the performance management of the Principal through the office of the C.E.O. The Chair of Governors attends the Principal's appraisal in an advisory capacity.

5. Local Governing Bodies

5.1. Constitution of Local Governing Bodies

Each Great Schools Trust academy has a Local Governing Body made up of the following:

- 5 Trust Appointed Governors appointed by the Trust Board
- 2 Staff Governors drawn from the school's staff
- 2 Parent Governors, elected by the registered parent body
- The Academy's Principal – in an ex officio capacity
- The C.E.O. as the Trust's representative

The term of office for governors is three years

5.2. Status and delegated duties

The governing bodies in the Trust's academies are referred to as Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) because their role is at a local, i.e. academy, not Trust level. LGBs are sub-committees of the Trust Board. Their

powers are determined by the Trust and their responsibilities are not the same as those in maintained schools or in single (standalone) academy trusts.

LGBs are responsible for ensuring that the academy Senior Leadership Team implements the Trust's vision, mission, ethos, beliefs, curriculum strategies, standards and outcomes.

Additionally, it is not the LGB's responsibility to recruit the Principal or to hold the Principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) directly to account for school performance. As the overarching governing body, all of these are the Trust's responsibilities and are delegated as set out in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

LGBs are able, however, to bring their influence to bear on decisions and have an important and valued monitoring and advisory role. They also have a vital role to play in acting as advocates for the academy, promoting its achievements to local stakeholders and the wider community.

The Trust may also choose to delegate wider responsibilities to the LGB of an individual highly successful academy. The Trust's Scheme of Delegation allows for flexibility in the delegation of power as the Trust Board sees fit.

5.3. Statutory duties

Routinely delegated duties to the LGB are the Trust's statutory responsibilities for:

- Pupil Exclusions - delegated to the Pupil Exclusions Committee
- Admissions - delegated to the Admissions Committee

5.3.1. Pupil Admissions and Exclusions Committee

Admissions

The Admissions Committee meets to advise the Trust as required in line with the Trust's and the academy's admissions and exclusions policy as approved by the Secretary of State.

Exclusions

The academy Principal is responsible for day-to-day pupil discipline. The Pupil Exclusions Committee is primarily in place to enable parents/carers and students to appeal against any exclusion decision taken. It is made up of the governors selected from the LGB.

The committee meets only when required.

5.4. Trust Appointed Governors

There are a number of specific areas of focus where the Trust's Board considers the LGB's input particularly valuable. Directors wish to ensure that the skills related to these areas of focus are consistently in place. To achieve this, the Trust Appointed Governors, of which there are five on each LGB, have specific delegated duties covering the following roles:

- Safeguarding Governor
- SEN/Pupil Premium Governor
- Educational Standards Governor
- Finance Governor

- Community Liaison Governor

5. Chair and Vice Chair roles

The Chair and Vice Chair roles on the LGBs are annual appointments (or reappointments) made by the Trust. Only Trust Appointed Governors are eligible for these roles. Therefore governors who are Chairs or Vice Chairs have dual roles as they also fulfil one of the Trust's designated roles set out in 5.4 above.

5.6. Parent and Staff Governors

The LGB is responsible for the appointment of the Staff Governors by inviting nominations and, where required, through holding elections. This includes managing that process.

The LGB is also responsible for the appointment, through election, of the Parent Governors and for making all the necessary election arrangements. This includes ensuring that appointees are parents of registered students at the school – a Parent Governor must be a parent of a registered pupil at the school at the time she/he is elected.

5.7. Terms of Reference for LGBs

These are to:

- Hold Local Governing Body meetings in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation
- Ensure that the academy Senior Leadership Team implements the Trust's vision, mission, ethos, beliefs, curriculum strategies, standards and outcomes
- Agree the academy's self-evaluation analysis and monitor and evaluate the academy's annual development plan to secure students' academic achievement and personal development
- Discharge statutory duties relating to pupil admissions and exclusions
- Receive and consider reports on curriculum, attainment, finance, premises and staff (except performance appraisal of Principal)
- Provide feedback and advice to the Trust on the academy's priorities
- Monitor the performance of students and the academy
- Monitor in relation to the academy's budget expenditure
- Monitor that the academy's curriculum is broad and balanced
- Monitor the academy's provision in respect of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Monitor the academy's approach to safeguarding
 - Monitor that the academy provides for all of its students
- Make contact and communicate with parents and the local community
- Develop community engagement and activity
- Support the Directors and the academy in projecting the activities of the Trust and its academies to the wider community
- Make appropriate comments and recommendations to the Directors
- Request and/or gather information from appropriate bodies or
- Make suggestions and/or proposals for improvement to Directors.

5.8. The LGB role in Ofsted inspections

As the overarching governing body for all its academies, the Trust takes the lead role in the formal governor interview with Ofsted Inspectors. The Trust's delegated representatives in those interviews are the C.E.O. and the Executive Principal (where these exist). The Chair of Governors also attends the interview in a supporting role, together with any additional invited governors. In the event that neither the C.E.O. nor the Executive Principal is able to attend, the Trust Board will delegate attendance to an appropriate Director or senior member of the Trust's Education Team. Where the Chair of Governors cannot attend, the Vice Chair will deputise. All governors are encouraged to attend the Ofsted Inspection feedback session at the end of the inspection process.

5.9. LGB meetings

The LGB conducts its business primarily through full LGB meetings. Trust Appointed Governors may also attend In-School Working Group meetings in line with their duties. For further information about LGB meetings and who attends please refer to the Trust's Governors' Handbook.

5.10. Chair of Governors details for each academy's LGB

As at August 2015 these are as follows:

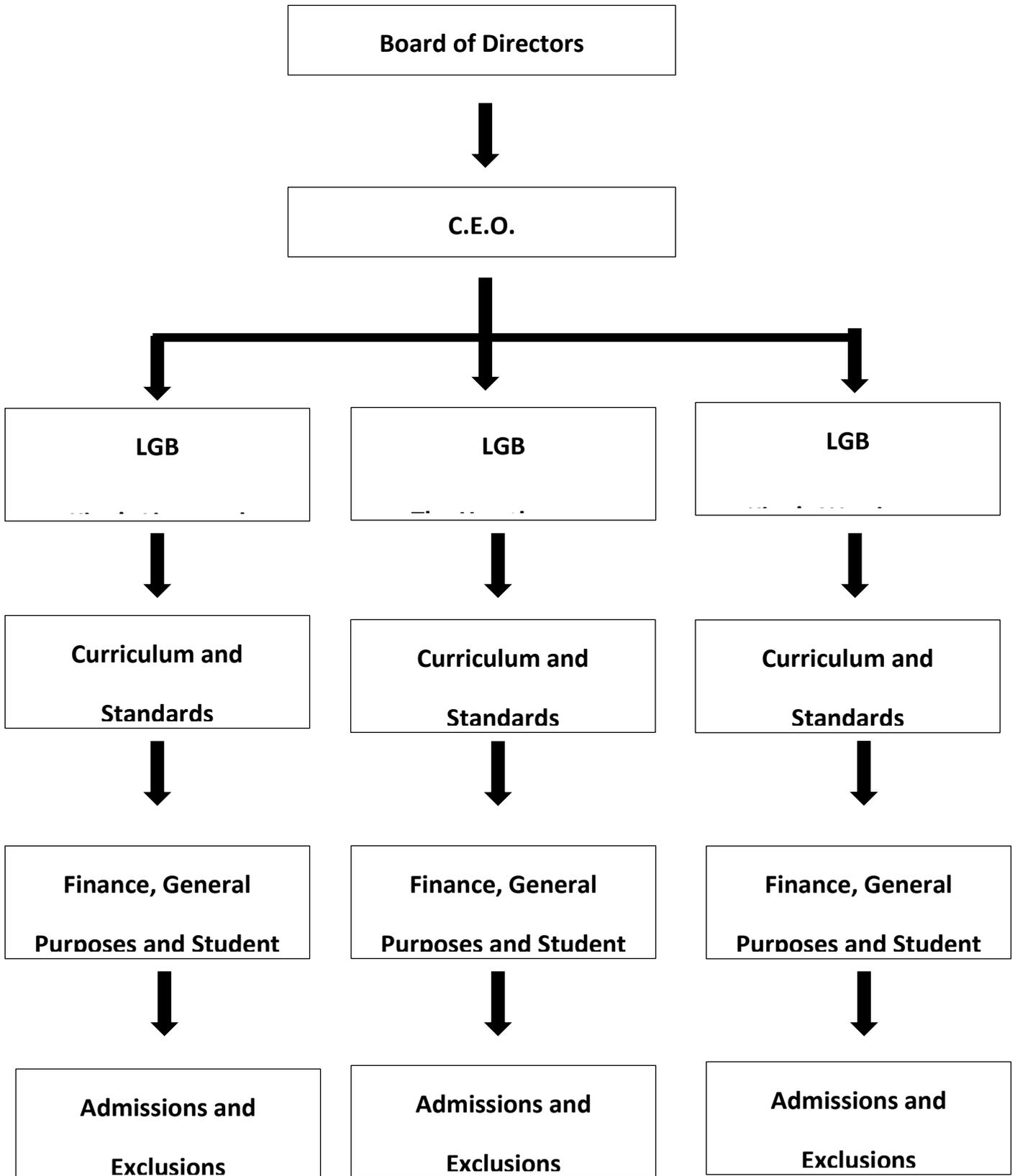
Academy	Governance	Chair
King's Leadership Academy Liverpool	Interim I.E.B.	Sir Iain Hall
The Hawthornes	LGB	Hilary Wilcock
King's Leadership Academy Warrington	LGB	Debra Vaughan Massey

For full membership and details of each LGB please refer to the individual academy's website.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Structure of Governance



Appendix 2:

Terms of reference for trust Board

The Board will consult Local Governing Bodies before putting in place any arrangements which directly affect LGBs and individual academies and before taking any decisions on policy or procedural matters except where there is a legal requirement to do so.

The Board of Directors (The Board)

Purpose

- Ensure the trust's compliance with charity and company law, its Memorandum and Articles of Association, all other applicable legislation, and DfE and EFA requirements relating to the trust and its academies.
- Ensure proper and regular use of public funds and compliance with the Funding Agreement.
- Ensure the trust is solvent, well run, and meets the needs of students and staff in its academies.
- Ensure the trust acts in accordance with its constitution and powers, promote the success of the trust, and exercise sound judgement and diligence in all its affairs.
- Ensure all directors are skilled in understanding, interpreting, and comparing academy performance data and are kept fully apprised of the performance of each academy all times.
- Ensure all directors have the skills, knowledge, and information to assess the trust's financial performance.
- Ensure the CEO and all senior staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to run the trust and its individual academies and to effectively manage its financial, human, and physical resources and assets.

Terms of Reference

Governance

The main changes here are that the trust board will determine the overall mission, values, ethos, core curriculum and key performance indicators. Appoint five LGB governors, chair of LGB and terms of reference of LGBs

- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, and approve the trust's mission, vision, beliefs, values, strategy and long term business plan for *"advancing for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing mainstream academies offering a broad and balanced curriculum, alternative provision, 16-19 academies, or special educational provision"* (GST Articles)
- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, curriculum plans, key performance indicators and targets for the trust and individual academies
- Monitor the trust's, and individual academy's, performance against approved plans, key performance indicators and targets
- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, the trust's approach to, and approve, trust wide policies and procedures for the operation and performance of all academies within the trust.
- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, constitutional matters, including procedures where the Board has discretion
- Determine and establish arrangements and procedures for:
 - Holding at least three Board meetings a year.

- Appointing and removing the chair and vice chair of the Board.
- Appointing directors to standing committees and ad-hoc committees.
- Appointing and removing the company secretary and clerk to the Board
- Appointing directors and patrons
- Suspending and removing any director or patron, appointed by the Board.
- Maintaining and publishing a register of members, directors, local governors, and senior members of staff and their business interests and putting in place measures for avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, and establish arrangements and procedures for:
 - Appointing annually the chair of any committee of the Board
 - Appointing annually, following a recommendation from each LGB, the chair of each LGB
 - Appointing Trust Governors to LGBs and for suspending and removing any governor.
 - Appointing/electing Parent and Staff Governors
- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, the committees of the Board, including LGBs and their sub-committees, and determine their terms of reference.
- Determine, following consultation with LGBs, which functions of the Board will be delegated committees, including LGBs, the Chief Executive Officer, Principals, groups and other individuals
- Review, in consultation with LGBs, the constitution, membership, terms of reference, and scheme of delegation of the Board and its committees, including LGBs, annually.
- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, arrangements for making agendas, papers, and minutes of meetings of the Board and its committees, including LGBs. [*statutory requirement*]
- Receive reports from any committee, including LGBs, or individual, or group to whom a has been delegated and to consider whether any further action by the Board is

Curriculum and Standards

- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, the trust's overall approach to and arrangements and policies and procedures for:
 - Implementing the Trusts approach to character and leadership education in each academy
 - Monitoring and evaluating academy performance and improvement
 - Providing support and challenge and holding the CEO and academy Principals to account.
 - Taking action to secure improvement/ pace of improvement in academies.
- Approving, monitoring and evaluating the impact of education related policies and procedures and plans- to include:

- Data requirements to inform LGBs and the Board of standards and attainment in consultation with LGBs;
- Setting KPIs and challenging targets for each academy in the trust in consultation with LGBs
- Trust-wide leadership and management arrangements.

Finance, General Purposes and Student Support

Financial Planning, Controls, Monitoring and Management

- Ensure the trust complies with all matters of regularity, propriety, and value for money in its use of public funds and develops and implements effective financial policies and procedures
- Ensure the trust develops effective and efficient systems and procedures for financial planning, internal controls, monitoring and management, propriety, audit, and for observance and compliance with all financial regulations, EFA guidance, and the Academies Financial Handbook
- Appoint external auditors: determine internal audit arrangements: determine action to be taken arising from audit reports.
- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, the financial scheme of delegation and financial authorities to the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Chief Operating Officer
- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, the trust's policies and procedures for:
 - Accounting practices
 - Asset management
 - Audit
 - Income
 - Ordering goods, works and services
 - Authorising payroll and pension decisions
 - Managing conflicts of interest
 - Gifts and hospitality
 - Letting and fees
 - Staff severance and compensation payments
 - Charging and remissions [statutory policy]
- Determine and establish, following consultation with LGBs, banking arrangements
- Determine, establish, and maintain in consultation with LGBs, a 3 year financial plan and an investment policy and strategy
- Approve all annual returns to the EFA, Companies House and for publication on GST's website
- Determine and establish, in consultation with LGBs, arrangements for the setting and approving of the consolidated budget and individual academy budgets as well as trust-wide services and end of year financial reports
- Receive and consider information regarding the overall financial performance of the trust as well as that of individual academies at least three times per year
- Monitor individual academy budgets and significant variations at least termly
- Establish an appeals mechanism if GAG is pooled
- Monitor pupil admission numbers and forecasts so as to ensure constancy of future income
- Determine and establish, in consultation with LGBs, arrangements for bidding for and allocating capital funding and for allocating funding for the maintenance, improvement, and expansion of the trust's buildings and estate

Human Resources

- Ensure the trust complies with all legislation and develops and implements sound policies

- and procedures relating to the recruitment and employment of staff.
- Determine and establish, in consultation with LGBs, arrangements, and a scheme of delegation, for all matters relating to the recruitment and employment of staff to include the development of policies, procedures, and plans:
 - To recruit (in compliance with safeguarding requirements), remunerate, retain, performance manage, and develop all staff.
 - To establish a central record of recruitment and vetting checks
 - To establish trust wide salary, pensions, severance, records, and terms and conditions, policies and procedures.
 - For conduct, discipline, capability, grievance procedures. [*statutory policy*]
 - For allegations of abuse against staff procedures. [*statutory policy*]
 - For equalities information and objectives for publication. [*statutory policy*]
 - For accessibility. [*statutory policy*]
 - For industrial relations.
 - For workforce succession planning.
- Establish, following consultation with LGBs, a staffing structure for central/ trust wide staff.
- Establish arrangements for the recruitment, appointment, remuneration and performance management of the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Operating Officer
- Establish, in partnership with the Chairs of LGBs, arrangements for the recruitment, appointment, remuneration and performance management of academy principals

Buildings and Sites, Health and Safety, and ICT

- Establish arrangements, following consultation with LGBs, for developing, approving, implementing and reviewing:
 - Improvement and maintenance plans for the trust's buildings and sites and ICT
 - Premises management policy and plans. [*statutory policy*]
 - Plans for the purchase or disposal of any freehold property, and for granting or taking up of leasehold or tenancy of land or buildings.
- Establish arrangements for ensuring, following consultation with LGBs, full compliance with all health and safety legislation and for developing, approving, implementing and reviewing policies and procedures for:
 - Health, safety and security. [*statutory policy*]
 - Data protection. [*statutory policy*]
 - Freedom of information. [*statutory policy*]
- Establish arrangements, following consultation with LGBs, for ensuring that health and safety issues are appropriately prioritised for action and staff are appropriately trained.

Procurement

- Establish, following consultation with LGBs, the trust's overall approach to, and policies and procedures and arrangements for, the procurement of goods, works, and services for the trust as a whole and for individual academies within the trust.
- Determine , following consultation with LGBs, which goods, works, and services will be procured centrally on behalf of all academies in the trust and determine which goods, works, and services may be procured, in line with the trust's procurement and competitive tendering policy and list of approved suppliers, by individual Local Governing Bodies
- Ensure a competitive tendering policy is in place and is applied for all relevant procurement.

- Ensure compliance with best practice in procurement, the European Procurement Directive, and the requirements and guidance in the academies financial handbook for regularity, propriety, and value for money in procurement.
- Approve, following consultation with LGBs, a scheme of delegation for all procurement activity and a manual of guidance and ensure all staff engaged in procurement have the appropriate skills and training to effectively procure and manage contracts for goods, works, and services.
- Ensure that any contracts for services provided by a director, or persons/bodies related to the director, are properly procured and represent value for money. Ensure that any fees and consultancy rates included within any such contracts are provided with no element of profit, are reasonable, represent value for money and are good use of public funds.
- Seek prior, written permission from the EFA, and if required approval from HM Treasury, for any situations where a transaction is irregular, improper or does not provide value for money.

