

VISION Academy Learning Trust



Scheme of Delegation

Effective date: January 2021

Introduction

As a charity and company limited by guarantee, VISION Academy Learning Trust (the “Company”) is governed by a Board of trustees who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Company and the academies run by the Company.

The Trustees are accountable to external government agencies including the Charity Commission and the Department for Education (including any successor bodies) for the quality of the education they provide and they are required to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of quality, safety and good practice

The VISION multi academy trust’s (MAT) board of trustees is accountable in law for all decisions about its schools / academies. Many decisions will be delegated to the CEO, board committees and local governing bodies. The decision to delegate a function is made by the full board of trustees and is recorded.

The purpose of scheme of delegation

This Scheme of Delegation has been put in place by the Trustees from the Effective Date in accordance with the provisions of the Company’s Articles of Association (the “Articles”) and it should be read in conjunction with those Articles. References in this Scheme to numbered Articles are to the relevant clause of the Articles.

The scheme of delegation (SoD) defines which functions have been delegated and to whom, to ensure members, trustees, committees (including local governing body’s), executive leadership and academy / school senior Head Teacher are clear about who has responsibility for making which decisions in the trust.

VISION AND AIMS STATEMENT

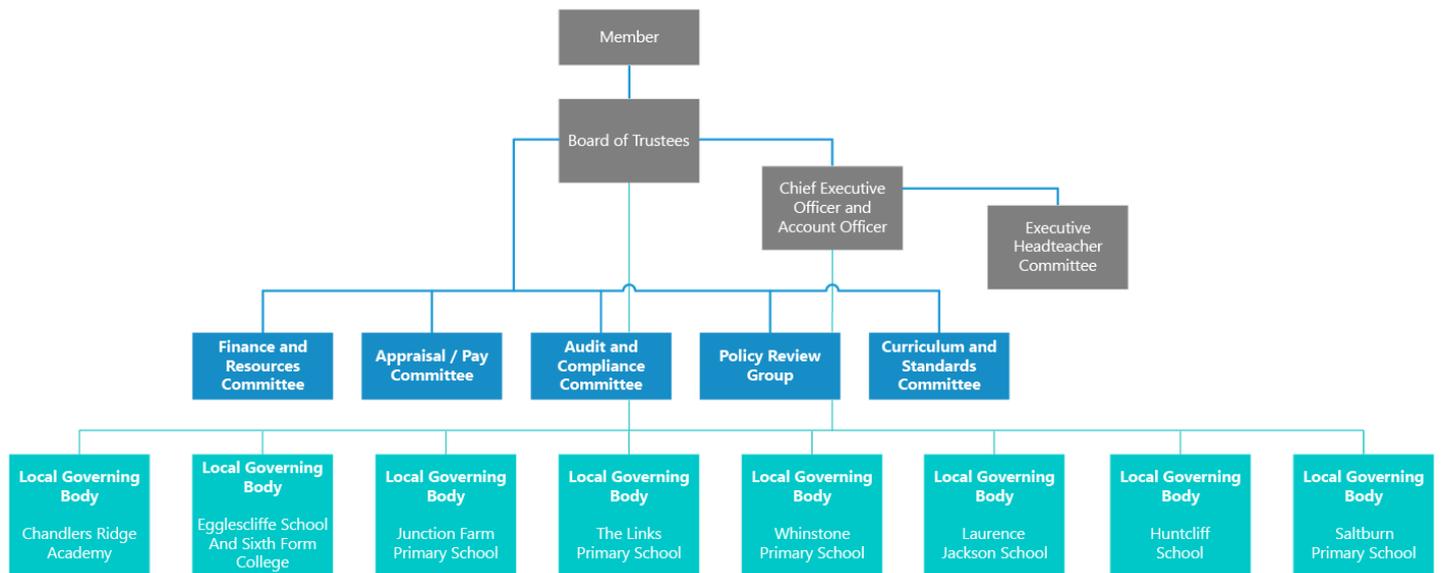
The Trust’s vision is as follows:

Our vision is to inspire the imaginations of our students and to support them to develop in ways which stand them in good stead for their future lives and responsibilities as individuals, employees and citizens.

Aims

- To value each member of the VISION ALT MAT community by trusting, supporting and treating each other with dignity and respect.
- The VISION Academy Learning Trusts ethos and values will ensure that children are safe, healthy, positively contribute to their whole community, and achieve economic and academic well-being in adult life.
- Achieve excellence for all students so that they make good progress, able to make informed choices, solve problems and form good decisions.
- To ensure that all students succeed and thrive in school by raising aspirations and tackling disadvantage.
- Learning is central and should be stretching, rewarding and engaging. All students will be given the opportunity to grow personally, academically and socially.
- Ensure positive relationships with our local community and employers to support the opportunities for preparing our students for life beyond the Trust.

VISION Academy Learning Trust – Accountability Structure



Governance structure and lines of accountability

The Trust board is the accountable body for the Trust.

The board of trustees of Vision Academy Learning Trust is required to approve a governance structure for the Trust that must be:

- Compliant with DfE requirements, company and charity law;
- Enable growth and future capacity
- Reviewed annually

The VALT governance structure complies with the:

- Academies Financial Handbook and the
- Articles of Association

Vision Academy Learning Trust members, trustees and governors must adhere to the ‘Nolan Principles’ of public life:

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example

The Trustees delegate responsibility for delivery of the vision and strategy to the VISION Academy Learning Trust chief executive officer (CEO). The MAT board will hold the CEO to account for the performance of the trust, including the performance of the schools within the trust. The board will delegate some of the detailed scrutiny, oversight and decision making.

In line with the scheme of delegation the Trust Board delegates some powers to the Local Governing Body/Committee. These include the performance, monitoring, standards, safeguarding etc. of each school and whether the school is working within the agreed policies and that standards are being met.

The LGB/C will use its detailed knowledge and engagement with stakeholders to ensure that their school is being well served by the executive leadership, and as a board committee has direct access to the board if there are concerns.

The CEO will report to the board on the performance of the trust including on the performance of the trust's schools, this may also be supplemented by monitoring reports from the LGBs.

The role of the members

The members of the trust have a different status to trustees. The articles of association describe how members are recruited and replaced, and how many of the trustees the members can appoint to the trust board. The members appoint trustees to ensure that the trust's charitable object is carried out and so must be able to remove trustees if they fail to fulfil this responsibility. Accordingly, the trust board submits an annual report on the performance of the trust to the members. Members are also responsible for approving any amendments made to the trust's articles of association. The articles state that members are not permitted to be employees of the academy trust.

The role of the trustees

The trustees are the charity trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the trust in accordance with the provisions set out in the memorandum and articles of association. The board of trustees is the accountable body for the performance of all schools within the trust and as such must:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Hold the executive to account for the educational performance and quality of education of the schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff
3. Oversee the financial performance of the trust and make sure its money is well spent utilising the integrated curriculum financial modelling

Because trustees are bound by both charity and company law, the terms 'trustees' and 'directors' are often used interchangeably. We use the term trustee as it avoids the possible confusion caused when executive leaders are called directors but are not company directors and trustees.

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all work of the Trust regardless of delegation outlined within this document; in line with the direct responsibility to the Members to ensure the Trust's charitable objects are met and to the Secretary of State for Education as the Principal regulator.

Therefore the Board of Trustees is ultimately entitled to:

- Overrule a decision of the Local Governing Body
- Remove delegated powers from the Local Governing Body
- In the most serious of situations, replace or suspend a Local Governing Body.
- Has the right to review and adapt its governance structure at any time
- The trust board will delegate to the chief executive responsibility for the day to day operations of the trust. The trustees determine whether to delegate any governance functions.

The role of committees

The trustees may establish committees either with delegated authority to make decisions or for the purpose of providing advice and support, informing the overall work of the trust board. However, these committees are not legally responsible or accountable for statutory functions – the trust board retains overall accountability and responsibility.

In line with The Academies Financial Handbook, the Board of Trustees have a finance committee to which the Board delegates financial scrutiny and oversight and a separate audit committee. Decisions made will be deemed decisions of the board.

The responsibilities for the school governing body are set out in the scheme of delegation. The trust board may appoint committee members and committee chairs.

The role of the local governing body (LGB)

The trust board will establish LGB's, ensure two parents are elected and will determine what will be delegated. As a committee of the board, delegation can be removed at any time.

Every Member of the Local Governing Body (with the exception of Headteacher / Head of School and the Chief Executive Officer) will perform one or more of the following roles:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Premises/Health & Safety link
- Safeguarding link
- CIOC and SEND link
- Parent and Community Engagement link
- Attendance and Behaviour link
- School Standards and School Improvement link
- Accountable Funds (e.g. PP, Sports Premium and Catch up) link
- Quality of Education - Curriculum link
- Department, Year group and / or phase links

Local Governing Body Proceedings:

The functions and proceedings of Local Governing Body are subject to regulations determined by the Board of Trustees from time to time. The membership, constitution and terms of reference of Local Governing bodies will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. The terms of reference and responsibilities of the Local Governing Body are set out within the Scheme of the Delegation.

The Trust Board will ensure that Processes for regular self-evaluation and review of individuals' contribution to the LGB as well of the LGB's overall operation and effectiveness are in place.

Meetings and Quorum

The Local Governing Body (LGB) will meet on a half termly basis. The quorum for a LGB is six. The Clerk to the Local Governing Body will be organised by the CEO. The Clerk will circulate agenda and papers at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The Chair and Vice-chair can call meetings at shorter notice to deal with urgent matters. In the event of a need to make genuinely urgent decisions between meetings, the Chair in consultation with the Headteacher/Head of School and/or where appropriate the Chief Executive Officer will take appropriate action on behalf of the Local Governing Body.

Decisions are made by majority of votes and the Chair has a casting vote.

A member of the Local Governing Body will cease to hold office if they are absent for a period of six months without permission on resolution of the Board of Trustees. This will also apply to trustees and attendance at Trust Board meetings.

Election of Chair

The Chair and vice-chair will be elected by the Local Governing Body on an annual basis at the first meeting in the autumn term. No board member employed at the School/Academy will act as Chair.

Working Groups

The Local Governing Body shall be entitled to establish working groups / Challenge meetings to inform the decision making process so that such working groups / Challenge meetings shall not have decision making powers nor have any duties, powers or responsibilities of the Local Governing Body delegated to them

Terms of Office

- Trustees will serve 5 years
- Local Governors will serve 3 years

The number of governors at each school / academy will be agreed by the Trust Board

The role of the chief executive officer (CEO)

The CEO has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the trust including the performance of the trust's schools / academies. The LGB chair performance manages the school / academy Head Teacher alongside the CEO who will support the process.

The CEO is the accounting officer so has overall responsibility for the operation of the academy trust's financial responsibilities and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability; avoiding waste and securing value for money. As Chief Accounting Officer, is responsible for the day to day Line management of the Chief Finance Officer. Ensuring that the Trust's property and assets are under the control of the trustees, and measures exist to prevent losses or misuse.

The CEO leads the executive Head Teacher's Board of the academy trust. The CEO will delegate executive management functions to the executive Head Teacher's Board and is accountable to the trust board for the performance of the executive Head Teacher's Board. Any decisions and actions will be reported to the board through the Strategic Improvement progress updates.

The role of the Head Teacher

The Academy / school Head Teacher is responsible for the day to day management of the school / academy and reports to the CEO and LGB on matters which have been delegated to the LGB.

The role of the Finance Director

The main responsibilities of the Finance Director are:

- The day to day management of financial issues including the establishment and operation of a suitable accounting system;
- The management of the Trust's financial position at a strategic and operational level within the framework for financial control determined by the Trust Board;
- The maintenance of effective systems of internal control
- Ensuring the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the trust;
- The preparation of management accounts;
- Ensuring forms and returns are sent to the DfE in line with the timetable

The role of the Finance and Resources Committee

- To ensure the appropriate and effective use of Trust funds and to ensure appropriate financial procedures and controls are in place.
- To approve and monitor central funding expenditure and proposals
- To approve the proposed budget of individual academies
- To oversee the capital programme and funding for the Trust
- To provide detailed scrutiny and oversight of the budget of academies where this function is not delegated to the individual LGB
- To approve and monitor key HR policies and statistics across the Trust
- To review any exception Health and Safety reporting as per H&S audit schedule
- To support the board of trustees in ensuring that a framework is established and maintained for optimising the employment of all the resources available to The Trust to enable it to meet its business and financial objectives.
- To ensure that the Trust's framework of financial planning, treasury management, systems and enable the proper management of the financial resources within the organisation
- To develop strategies for the employment of staff, communications, procurement, value for money and facilities management.
- To support the board of trustees in providing an added level of scrutiny in the monitoring of financial performance across the federation and the performance of other central and support services.
- To keep the board of trustees regularly informed of the committee's activities and key decisions.

The role of the Audit Committee

- The Audit and Compliance Committee has principal oversight responsibility for management's system of internal controls and the controls over external reporting, the internal and external audit processes, the regulatory compliance functions and conflicts of interest. The Committee provides an avenue of communication among the independent auditor, Risk and Compliance, and the Board
- To monitor and assess the internal controls of The Trust to ensure that the trust as a whole is operating at appropriate levels of risk and in compliance with the Code of Audit Practice.
- To take responsibility for external and internal audit matters, oversee the work programme and performance quality of the internal and external audit services.
- To support the board of trustees in ensuring that a framework is established and maintained for the identification and management of risk
- To support the board of trustees in providing an added level of scrutiny in the monitoring of internal and external audit matters, risk management, fraud prevention and detection, and internal controls and health and safety.
- To ensure GDPR compliance and monitor progress, actions and amendments
- To keep the board of trustees regularly informed of the committee's activities and key decisions.

The role of the curriculum and standards committee

- The Education and Standards Committee monitors the work of the academies in the Trust and supports the work of the Local Governing Bodies in holding their academies to account and encouraging improvement.

The Role of the Pay and Appraisal Committee

- To determine and agree with the Trust Board the framework for the remuneration of the Trust's CEO and such other members of the executive management of the Trust as it is designated to consider
- To determine the Trust wide pay policy and oversee the process of moderation across the Trust
- To prepare and submit recommendations to the Trustees for the terms of service and remuneration

(including pension arrangements) of the Senior Executives

- To monitor and evaluate the performance of the CEO
- To approve appropriate remuneration packages for executive appointments
- Having regard to the charitable status of the Trust and in recognition of the fact the Trust receives funding under a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, to ensure the remuneration or other sums paid to a Senior Executive do not exceed an amount that is reasonable in all the circumstances
- To review and approve the design of, and determine targets for, any performance related pay schemes operated by the Trust and approve the total annual payments made under such schemes.
- To ensure that any termination packages including contractual terms and pension benefit entitlements do not reward failure and are fair to the individual and the Trust and comply with the obligations set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.
- To review pay / appraisal for Trust employees through the annual appraisal cycle
- To agree the policy for authorising claims for expenses from the Senior Executives.

The role of the Policy Review Group

- To review and approve the Trust statutory and employment policies.

Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	Academy / School Head Teacher
Governance Framework						
People	Members and Trustees: Appoint/Remove and Role descriptions for members	✓				
	Role descriptions for trustees/chair/specific roles/committee members		✓	A		
	LGB/C Committee chairs: appoint and remove		✓	A	✓	
	LGB/C chairs and vice chairs : appoint and remove		✓	A	✓	
	Clerk to board: appoint and remove			✓		
	Appoint members of the LGB		✓	A	✓	
	Clerk to LGB: appoint and remove			✓		
	Chief executive officer: Appoint and dismiss		✓			
	Financial Director: Appoint and dismiss		✓			
	School / Academy Headteacher		✓	A	A	
Systems and structures	Articles of association: agree and review	✓	A	A		
	Governance structure (committees) for the trust: establish and review annually		✓	A		
	Terms of reference for trust committees (including audit if required, and scheme for school committees): agree annually		✓	A		
	Terms of reference for LGB/local committees: agree and review annually		✓	A		
	Skills audit: complete and recruit to fill gaps			A	✓	A
	Annual self-review of trust board and committee performance: complete annually		✓			
	Annual self review of LGB performance: complete annually		✓		✓	
	Annual schedule of business for trust board		✓	A		
	Annual schedule of business for LGB		✓	A	✓	A

Scheme of Delegation key: ✓ Action (BLACK indicates school / academies judged good or better – RED indicates schools judged RI / below OR if progress measures are negative) A Advice and Support

Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	Academy / School Head Teacher
Being Strategic						
Being strategic	Determine Trust's vision and strategy, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPI's) through a reporting schedule to the Board		✓	A		
	Determine trust policies reflecting Trust's ethos and values (<i>discussions with unions where appropriate</i>) including: admissions; charging and remissions; complaints; expenses; health and safety, premises management; data protection and FOI; staffing policies: capability, discipline, conduct and grievance; admissions; SEND; safeguarding and child protection; curriculum; behaviour		✓	A		
	Determine school / academy vision and strategy, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPI's) and reporting schedule to the LGB and Board		✓	A	✓	A
	Management of risk to the Trust: report the strategic updates		✓	A		
	Management of risk to academy: register, review and monitor			A	✓	A
	Central spend / school contributions		✓	A		
	Engagement with stakeholders	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	School / Academy Leadership team: Appoint and dismiss		A	A	✓	A
	Agree budget plan to support delivery of trust key priorities ensuring compliance with legal and statutory regulations and Academies financial handbook,		✓	A		
	Agree budget plan to support delivery of school key priorities ensuring compliance with legal and statutory regulations and Academies financial handbook,		✓	A	✓	A
	Trust's staffing structure and appointments		✓	A		
	School staffing structure and appointments			✓	A	A
	Trust strategic plan – Establish and monitor		✓	A		
	Approve Individual School Improvement priorities		✓	A	✓	A
Approve Trust School Improvement strategy		✓	A			

Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	Academy / School Head Teacher
Reporting						
Reporting	VISION ALT governance details on both trust and academies' websites		✓	A		
	Register and publish interests, business, pecuniary, loyalty for members, trustees and school governors		✓	A	✓	
	Annual report on performance of the trust: submit to members and publish		✓	A		
	Annual report & accounts (policies, signed statement on regularity, propriety and compliance, governance statement demonstrating value for money: submit		✓	A		
	LGB to submit an annual report to the trust and publish on website			A	✓	A
Holding to account						
Holding to account	Trustees to agree monitoring arrangements for each school focused on: KPI's, safeguarding, standards and achievement, teaching and learning, Ofsted action points and leadership		✓	A		
	Auditing and report School arrangements for compliance (eg safeguarding, H&S, employment)		✓	A		
	LGB's (or CEO) to agree monitoring arrangements that include: KPI's, safeguarding, standards and achievement, teaching and learning, Ofsted action points and leadership			✓	✓	A
	Report progress on key priorities in the School Improvement Plan to LGB/C				✓	A
	Report monitoring and Safeguarding arrangements with ½ termly updates to LGB/C				✓	A
	Report monitoring of pupil premium plans and impact to LGB/C				✓	A
	Report monitoring of SEND arrangements, plans, progress and impact to LGB/C				✓	A
	Report progress of all pupils to LGB/C				✓	A
	Report sponsored schools attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, pupil progress, T,L & A to board		✓	✓		A
	Undertake performance management of the Chief Executive Officer		✓			
	Undertake Performance management of academy Headteacher			✓	A	

Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	Academy / School Head Teacher
Ensuring financial probity						
Ensuring financial probity	Chief financial officer appointed to delivery of Trust accounting and auditing processes		✓	A		
	Establish and review Trust's and School's scheme of financial delegation		✓	A		
	Appoint the Trust's auditors and receive and respond to external auditors report		✓	A		
	Agree School / Academy Head Teacher pay award		✓	A		
	Approve CEO pay award		✓			
	Monitor and agree Staff appraisal procedure and pay progression		✓	A		A
	Ensure robust Benchmarking and trust wide value for money utilising ICFP		✓	A		
	Ensure robust Benchmarking and school / academy value for money utilising ICFP		✓	A	A	A
	Develop, review and approve trust wide procurement strategies and efficiency savings programme		✓	A		
Human Resources & Staffing						
Ensuring Clear and Robust HR policies and Procedures	Approve Terms and Conditions policy		✓	A		
	Approve disciplinary / capability / grievance / performance management and pay policies		✓	A		
	Implement, monitor, review and propose amendments to the HR policies			A	✓	A
	Suspend staff following HR policies. Headteacher for school staff, CEO for central team and Headteachers			✓		✓
	Implement HR hearings, appeal hearings and Dismiss staff. Hearings will be heard by CEO, Appeals by		✓	✓		✓
	Approve any leaving payments (redundancy, dismissal, early retirement) in accordance with academy policy			✓		

Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	Academy / School Head Teacher
Student Development						
Ensure policies support learning and well-being	Ensure the curriculum complies with the legal and Funding Agreement requirements			A	✓	A
	Ensure behaviour policies are applied consistently			✓	✓	A
	Determine and apply attendance and punctuality protocols and procedures			✓	✓	A
	To exclude a pupil (fixed term)			A		✓
	To exclude a pupil (permanently). Headteacher for the decision, LGB to approve the decision.			A	✓	A