Ashperton Primary Academy Trust
Financial Scheme of Delegation

Current until next review date of April 30th, 2027

Delegation

A Single Academy Trust's (SAT) Board of Trustees is accountable in law for all major decisions. However, this does not mean that the Board is required to carry out all the Trust's governance functions, and many can and should be delegated as per Ashperton Primary Academy Trust Scheme of Delegation which includes areas of responsibility including the Headteacher and Trust Committees. Any decision to delegate a function must be made by the full Trust Board and recorded in the minutes. Any such delegated authorities must be reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Trustees. Without any such delegation in place then individuals or committees have no power to act.

This Financial Scheme of Delegation is the main document setting out the principles which determine and define the financial responsibilities, including those delegated, within the Ashperton Primary Academy Trust. It is intended to be clear so that at all levels, those with responsibility are clear in respect of their roles and responsibilities in the key aspects of decision making leading to the financial effectiveness and probity of the Trust. It should be used and reviewed with direct reference to the overall Scheme of Delegation but sits as a separate detailed document in its own right.

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

Ashperton Primary Academy Trust has established a Committee known as the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to scrutinise financial matters pertinent to the Trust. As part of the remit of the Committee, it will encompass the responsibilities of a separate Audit Committee and is hereby authorised by the full Trust Board to do so.

The structure of the Committee will work to the following principles:

- The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee cannot be the Chair of the Full Trust Board
- The Headteacher who will act as the Accounting Officer, and the Chief Finance Officer will be appointed to the Committee automatically due to their positions
- No other member of the Finance. Audit and Risk Committee can be a member or employee of the Trust
- Except for the Headteacher andChief Finance Officer, all appointments to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee will be made and ratified by the full Trust Board
- There is an explicit right of attendance to Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings for any Trustee of the Board not appointed to the Committee
- Finance, Audit and Risk Committee minutes, where possible, must be circulated to all Trust Board members via Governor Hub, within 10 working days of any meeting concluding
- A minimum of six Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings shall be held each academic year.
- Extraordinary meetings of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee can be called ad-hoc if required

Authority

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee does not have any executive powers delegated to it and therefore acts in an advisory capacity. It is authorised by the Full Trust Board to investigate activity which falls within the scope of the Terms of Reference for the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, which may include seeking information from Trust employees who as a condition of employment are required to cooperate fully in any such enquiries made on behalf of the Trust Board.

Furthermore, where the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee deems it necessary to enlist external professional advice it is authorised to do so, including the additional use of the Trust Accountants or Auditors.

Duties

The specific remit and duties of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for Ashperton Primary Academy Trust are:

- On behalf of the Trust board, review the Annual Budget for the Trust, making appropriate recommendations to the full Trust Board
- Review the internal and external financial statements of the Trust to ensure they reflect best practice
- Discuss with the external auditor the nature and scope of each forthcoming audit and ensure that the external auditor receives full cooperation from Trust employees in discharging their duties
- Consider all relevant reports from the Chief Finance Officer or the appointed external auditor, including reports on the trust's accounts, achievement of value for money and response to and progress against any improvement targets reported in management letters
- Review the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control system established to ensure that the aims and objectives and the key performance targets of the Trust are achieved economically, effectively and with due regard for the wider environment and community
- Review any report offered by the Chief Finance Officer relating to the operation of Trust buildings and grounds
- Review new and existing policies relating to the employment and conditions of staff employed by the Trust, making appropriate recommendations to the Trust Board
- Review the recommendations made by any committee of the Trust Board in respect of salaries and discretionary awards
- Establish procedures and mechanisms to monitor Trust employees are remunerated in line with contracts of employment and agreed Trust Pay and Conditions Policies
- Audit and report on the adequacy of insurance cover which supports the activities of the Trust as an employer, public liability, and other such insurance requirements as necessary

Audit Duties

The specific remit and duties of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee with respect to audit are:

- Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's systems of internal control (including review of the Statement of Internal Control) and arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes and securing value for money through economies and efficiencies
- Advise the Trust Board and Members on the appointment, re-appointment, dismissal and fee payment of the Trust Auditor and internal audit service
- Advise the Trust Board on the scope and objectives of the work of the internal audit service
- Enable and monitor effective communication between the internal audit service and the financial statements auditor
- Advise the Trust Board on audit strategy and annual internal audit plans for the internal audit service
- Advise the Trust Board on internal audit assignment reports and annual reports and on any control, issues indicated in management letters of the financial statement's auditor, including responses to these issues
- Monitor to agreed timescales the implementation of agreed recommendations in respect of internal audit assignment reports, internal audit annual reports and/or the financial statements auditor management letters
- Advise the Trust Board on relevant reports from the National Audit Office, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (DfE) and other relevant funding bodies, including available internal responses to such reports
- In collaboration with the Trust Board and Headteacher, establish and set appropriate annual financial performance measures and indicators and monitor the effectiveness of the internal audit service and financial statements auditor through these measures and indicators, and, where appropriate so to do and in conjunction with the Trust Members, examine competition for price and quality in respect of the audit service
- Monitor the Trust Risk Management Register and advise the Trust Board on adequacy and effectiveness
- The Trust external auditors will produce an annual report for the Trust Board and Accounting Officer, including the effectiveness of the Trust's risk management, control and governance processes and any significant matters arising from the work of the internal audit service and the financial statements
- Monitor and advise the Trust Board on any alleged fraud and irregularity in the Trusts financial and control systems, ensuring that all allegations of fraud and irregularity are appropriately and if required independently investigated
- Receive notification of, and if necessary, give approval for all additional services undertaken by the internal audit service and the financial statements auditor required to perform their remits
- After consideration, recommend the annual financial statements to the Trust Board for approval
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Trust's whistleblowing procedures and in so doing, meet annually with internal and external auditors and the Trust Chief Finance Officer independent of each other

Accounting Officer

The Funding Agreement requires the Trust to identify a nominated Accounting Officer. For Ashperton Primary Academy Trust the Accounting Officer is the Headteacher,

The Trust Accounting Officer is Mrs. Caroline Bullock.

Areas of financial responsibility and administration are delegated by the Trust Board to the Accounting Officer. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring regularity and propriety
- Ensuring prudence and economical administration
- Avoiding waste and extravagance
- Ensuring the efficient and effective use of all resources of the Trust
- The effective day-to-day organisation of staffing and management within the Trust

The Accounting Officer may, without the express permission of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee or the Trust Board, appoint others to assist in discharging such duties, for example the Chief Finance Officer.

Headteacher

Having been approved by the Trust Board, the Headteacher has overall responsibility delegated to them. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Authorising contracts and Service Level Agreements to a maximum of £25,000 in conjunction with the Chief Finance Officer and taking contracts more than set parameters for approval by the Trust Board
- Following set procedures, sign cheques/BACS in conjunction with any other authorised signatory and in so doing, ensuring systems of control are adhered to. For cheques/BACS in excess of £25,000 approval must be obtained in advance from a non-executive member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

Chief Finance Officer

The responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer include, but are not limited to:

- The day-to-day management of financial issues including the establishment and operation of appropriate accounting systems and procedures
- Management of the financial position of the Trust at a strategic and operational level in line with pre-determined levels of control as set out in this document or the Trust Scheme of Delegation
- Maintenance of effective and robust systems of internal control
- Ensuring annual accounts are presented and supported appropriately by the underlying books and records of each academy within the Trust
- The preparation and distribution of monthly management accounts as directed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- The authorisation of contracts not exceeding £10,000 in the absence of the Executive Officer
- Ensuring required forms and returns are sent to the DfE, ESFA and/or other regulatory bodies in line with set timetables and signing off such returns as necessary

<u>Delivering Assurance</u>

The Trust Board will monitor and check the operation of the financial controls that have been established and are operated by officers of the Trust. Trustees must always ensure financial probity.

Ongoing independent oversight of the Trust's financial affairs will include:

- That the Trust is appropriately and correctly discharging its financial responsibilities in line with all accepted protocols and those conditions set out in the Funding Agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook
- Trust resources are managed efficiently, economically, and effectively
- Sound systems of internal financial controls are maintained and followed
- There is full financial consideration in consideration of recommendations or decisions made by or on behalf of the Trust

<u>Delegation to other Trust Committees</u>

The Trust Board recognises that at times, delegation of duties to committees other than the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee may be required. The Trust Scheme of Delegation and Financial Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed at least annually to consider any changes to such delegation.

<u>Financial Levels of Authority</u>

All procurement activities must be conducted under the principles of EU procurement law until such time that requirements to do so are no longer binding.

Financial levels of authority may vary within the Trust. Some financial transactions can only be fully approved by the Trust Board.

Trust Level

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Comments
[redacted]		[redacted]	
Approval of Statutory Accounts	-	Trust Board	Statutory Accounts must be signed by the Chair of the Trust Board and the Headteacher (Accounting Officer) (AO) in accordance with DfE and Companies House requirements.
Approval of annual budget	-	Trust Board	Trust Board must approve the annual budget. Budget prepared by the Headteacher (AO) and Chief Finance Officer.
Submission of DfE/ESFA financial returns	-	Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer	Returns to include Annual Return, Budget Forecast return out turn and any grant monitoring forms e.g., CIF funds.
Approval of financial policies	-	Trust Board	Trust Board approve financial policies implemented within the Trust.
Submission of VAT reclaims	Unlimited	Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer	Timely VAT returns to be made for the Trust under the direction of the Chief Finance Officer.
Ordering of goods and services	Over £25,000	Trust Board	Trust Board approval required for orders more than £25,000. EU procurement processes for orders more than £140,000 must be followed until no longer required under law.
Disposal of assets	Over £5,000	Trust Board	Trust Board required to approve the disposal of any Trust assets more than £5,000.

Academy Level

Delegated Duty	Value	Delegated Authority	Comments
[redacted]		[redacted]	
Ordering goods and services	Up to	Budget Holder	Under £500.00 proof of best value to be noted and retained.

	£500.00		
	Between £501.00 - £1,000.00	Chief Finance Officer	Again, best value to be noted & retained
	Between £1,001 – £10,000.00	Chief Finance Officer	Between £1,000 and £3,000.00 a minimum of 2 quotes have to be obtained. Between £3,000.00 - £10,000.00 Lowest quote to be accepted unless authorized by Headteacher or Chief Finance Officer & best value noted
	Between £10,001 and £25,000	Headteacher	3 documented quotes to be received. Authority to use any appropriate quote not necessarily the lowest granted but best value must be demonstrated.
	Over £25,000	Trust Board	Orders must be put out to tender.
	Over £140,000	Trust Board	May need to comply with EU compliant tendering process until transition period has lapsed.
Authorising salary outruns	Unlimited	Chief Finance Officer	
Signatures/authorisation for cheques and/or BACS payments	Up to £2,000	Any 2 signatories	Both signatories to do so in the presence of the Chief Finance Officer as a witness.
	Unlimited (subject to authorisation and approval limits)	Headteacher plus any 1 signatory	For payments more than £10,000 the Headteacher must be 1 of the 2 required signatories.
Budget cost center virements	Up to £25,000	Headteacher/ Chief Finance Officer	Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to be informed where over £2,500.
	Over £25,000	Finance, Audit and Risk Committee	Trust Board to be informed of any such virements.
Disposal of assets	Up to £5,000	Headteacher or Chief Finance Officer	Inform Finance Audit and Risk Committee for disposal of assets above £500
	Over £5,000	Trust Board	Ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook when reporting asset disposal to the DfE.
Approval of annual budget academy level	Over £25,000	Trust Board	Trust Board to approve annual budget, produced by the Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer and scrutinized by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee prior to recommendation to the Trust Board.

<u>Appointment of Trust Employees</u>

Role	Appointment Panel
Headteacher /Chief Finance Officer	Trust Board.
Deputy or Assistant Head	Headteacher and staff selected by Headteacher, with a minimum of 1 full Trustee. Appointment to be ratified by Trust Board.
SENDCO, any post at TLR 1 or 2	Headteacher and staff selected by Headteacher at least 1 member of the Trust Board.
All other teaching roles	Headteacher and staff selected by Headteacher at least 1 member of the Trust Board
All other roles	Headteacher and staff selected by Headteacher -Trust Board member not required unless requested by HT.

If unavailable, the Headteacher may delegate responsibility for the appointment of teaching roles to the Deputy Headteacher. For Associate Staff this can be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.

No interviews should be conducted, and no appointment can be made unless the panel meets the minimum requirement specified for Trustees.

All appointments must follow employment law with recorded shortlisting activities and retention of records. All equality laws and conventions must be observed. A minimum of 1 panel member must have current Safer Recruiting credentials from an accepted body. The Headteacher must maintain current Safer Recruitment training.

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<u>Appraisal and Performance Management</u>

Role	Delegated Authority
Headteacher or Chief Finance Officer	Headteacher Appraisal and Review Committee, which must include the current Chair of Trustees. Recommendations to be made to the Trust Board.
Deputy or Assistant Head	Headteacher- Recommendations to be made to the Trust Board.
SENDCO, Any post at TLR 1 or 2	Headteacher - Recommendations to be reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and authorised by the Trust Board.

All other teaching roles	Headteacher- Recommendations to be reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and authorised by the Trust Board.
All Associate Staff	Chief Finance Officer. Recommendations to be made to the Headteacher and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

The Headteacher will produce recommendations for appraisal and any recommended pay awards of teaching staff in line with the Trust Pay Policy. Teaching staff will receive reviews and the issuing of new targets prior to October half-term at the latest each year. The Trust Board will be required to scrutinise, accept, and approve these recommendations which may include remote acceptance if no Trust Board meeting is able to be called at the time. Any decisions accepted and ratified should formally be recorded in the next set of Trust Board minutes.

The Headteacher will make recommendations for appraisal and any recommended pay awards of teaching staff in line with the Trust Pay Policy to the Trust Board at a point in the annual cycle where all reviews have been conducted.

In the case of the Headteacher, the Headteacher Appraisal and Review Committee will meet no later than the end of Autumn Term to consider Performance Management. With regards specifically to the Headteacher, the committee will consider evidence and recommendations made by the appointed School Improvement Partner.

<u>Other Personnel Functions impacting Trust Finances</u>

Delegated Duty	Delegated Authority
Creation of Leadership posts	Headteacher, Chief Finance Officer and at least 1 full Trustee
Creation of all other posts	Headteacher - Must be reported to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.
Changes to pay and conditions of employment	Trust Board with advice from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer.
Redundancy decisions	Trust Board with advice from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer.
Authorisation of redundancy payments	Trust Board with advice from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, Headteacher and Chief Finance Officer.