



The Co-operative Academies Trust Governance Arrangements

Approved by Trust Board: 19 October 2023

Effective From: 20 October 2023

Be yourself,
always

Do what
matters most

Show you
care

Succeed
together

Contents:

1. Introduction	4
2. Governance Within the Co-op MAT	7
3. The Role and Remit of the Co-op Academies Trust's Members	7
4. The Role and Remit of the Co-op Academies Trust Board	8
5. The Role and Remit of Academy Governing Councils (AGCs)	8
6. Delegation of Powers: General Provisions	10
7. Delegation of Powers: Finance	10
8. Delegation of Powers: Premises	10
9. Delegation of Powers: Staffing	11
10. Delegation of Powers: Curriculum and Standards	11
11. Delegation of Powers: Extended Schools and Business Activities	12
12. Delegation of Powers: Safeguarding and Pupil Well-Being	12
13. Engagement with stakeholders and the wider community	12
14. Operational Matters	12
15. Review	13
16. Reservation of Powers	13
Appendix A: Matters Reserved to the Board	14
Appendix B - The Co-operative Academies Trust Financial Regulations Manual	16
Appendix C - Code of Conduct for Members, Trustees, Trust Committee Members and Governors	33
Appendix D: Operating Principles for the Co-op MAT Trust Board	35
1. Trust Board Membership	35
2. Appointment of Trustees	35
3. Recruitment Checks	35
4. Term of Office	35
5. Resignation	35
6. Removal and Suspension of Trustees	36
7. Qualification as a Trustee	36
8. Appointment / Election of Chair and Vice Chair and Committee Chairs	36
8.1 Appointment of Chair	36
8.2 Election of Vice Chair	37
8.3 Appointment of Committee Chairs	37
9. Removal of the Chair / Vice Chair	37
10. Conflict of Interest	38
11. Committees	38
12. Meeting Papers	38
13. Trust Board Meetings	39
13.1 Trust Board Decisions	39
Appendix E: Operating Principles for the Co-op MAT Academy Governing Councils (AGCs)	41
1. AGC membership	41

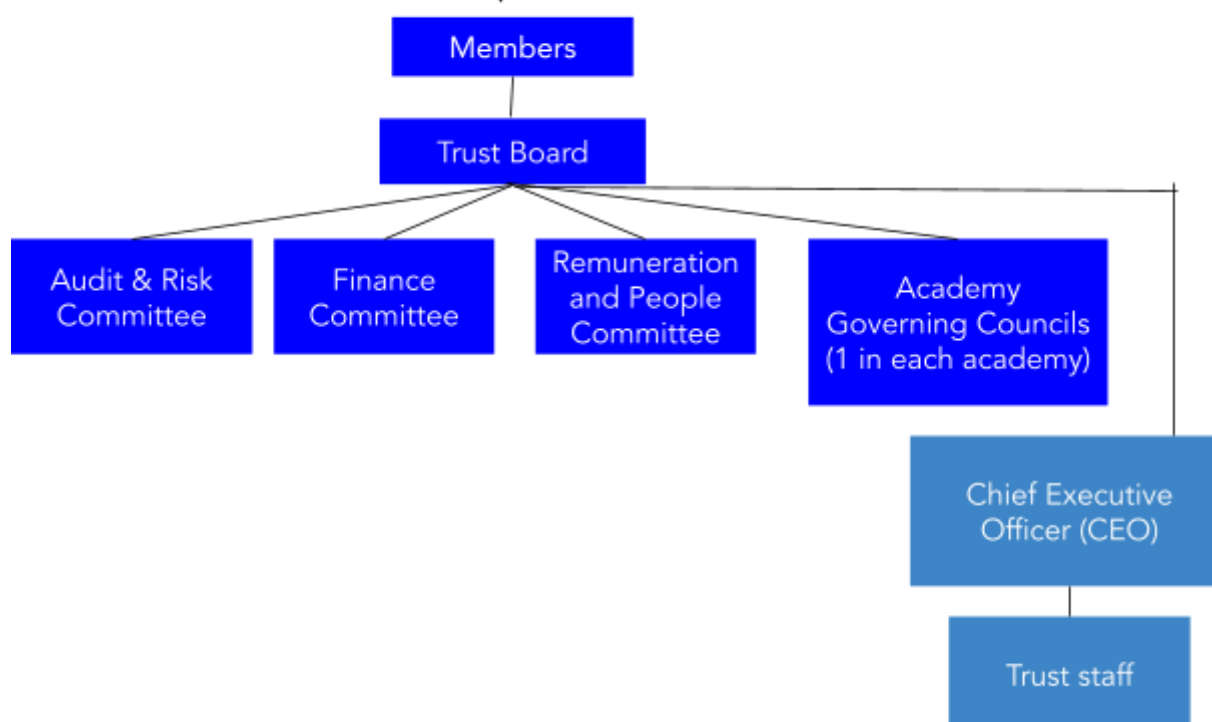
1.1 Staff governors	41
1.2 Parent governors	41
1.3 Sponsor Governors	42
1.4 Community Governors	42
2. Recruitment Checks	42
3. Term of Office	43
4. Resignation	43
5. Removal and Suspension of Governors	43
6. Qualification as a governor	44
7. Appointment / Election of Chair and Vice Chair	44
8. Removal of the Chair / Vice Chair	45
9. Conflict of Interest	45
10. Meeting Minutes	45
11. Committees	46
12. AGC Meetings	46
12.1 AGC Decisions	47
12.2 Meeting Documents	47
12.3 Meeting Attendance	47
Appendix F: Scheme of Delegation Summary Matrix	49
Table 1 - Summary of Financial Delegations	56

Co-op Academies Trust Governance Arrangements

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Co-op Academies Trust was set up by the Co-op Group, following its initial sponsorship of two schools in 2010. By October 2023 it had grown to 31 schools and a sixth form college, with plans for further expansion. All references to 'academies' in this document include Connell Co-op College. The Trust exists to add social value. Our 2022-25 strategic plan states that "We are an education charity that exists to run and improve schools, raising the aspirations of the communities we serve. We're giving children a better future and helping our communities thrive by giving pupils the best educational opportunities and the support they need ... We have 17,000 students, 2,500 staff and 300 governors and trustees across thirty schools, all sharing the same moral purpose - believing in making a difference for our brilliant pupils and their communities. We're preparing our students for their future and modern day challenges, whilst providing a successful and enjoyable education. We also want to work closely with our communities, supporting and helping them collaborate with each other. We believe our schools are pivotal organisations within their communities and understand their civic role and responsibilities."
- 1.2 The governance structure of the Trust is shown in the diagram below. It reflects the legal structure of the Trust as both a company limited by guarantee (ie without shareholders), and an exempt charity (ie accountable to the Secretary of State for Education, rather than to the Charities Commission).

Governance Structure of the Co-op Academies Trust



- 1.3 As the Trust's sponsor, the Co-op Group is a Member of the Trust, as a corporate entity, and appoints the other four individual Members of the Trust (who are Co-op employees), and also the Chair of the Trust Board. The Members have a particular role to oversee and ensure the good governance of the Trust, but it is the Trust Board which is the legally responsible body for the effective running of the whole organisation, and the oversight of its finances. The individuals who serve on the Trust Board are both directors of the company and trustees of the charity. In the Co-op Academies Trust we refer to these individuals as 'trustees', so that we don't confuse them with the directors employed within the trust.
- 1.4 The Trust Board delegates responsibilities to committees and also to an academy governing council (AGC) within each academy. The terms of reference for each of the Trust Board's committees are published, along with other key governance information, on the Trust's website at go.coopacademies.co.uk/governance.
- 1.5 The Trust is committed to embedding the Co-op's values, and the Ways of Being Co-op, into all of its working practices and the way that its academies operate. These are:
- Self-help – we support learners, parents, carers and staff to help themselves
 - Self-responsibility – we encourage learners, parents, carers and staff to take responsibility for, and answer to their actions
 - Democracy – we give our learners, parents, carers and staff a say in the way we run our schools

- Equality – we believe that the voice of each individual should be heard
- Equity – we run our schools in a way that is fair and unbiased
- Solidarity – we share interests and common purposes with our learners, parents, carers and staff, and with other schools in the communities we serve

1.6 The following ethical values are expected to be demonstrated in everything the Trust does:

- Openness – we believe in being open with colleagues in our schools and beyond, children and their families, sharing information and ideas to raise standards and life chances
- Honesty – we act in a professional and respectful manner in our dealings with everyone
- Social responsibility – we maximise our impact on the people in our communities while minimising our footprint on the world
- Caring for Others – we treat everyone as we wish to be treated ourselves, understanding that children only have one childhood

1.7 And all colleagues are encouraged to live the Ways of Being Co-op:

- Succeed together – Co-operating is what makes us different; we're better and stronger when we work together.
- Be yourself, always – We bring our best self to the Trust/academy, so that we each contribute and respect others for doing the same. Of course, being yourself isn't about excusing poor behaviours that contradict our other Ways of Being Co-op.
- Do what matters most – What matters most is ensuring that our students achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Show you care – We care about our Trust, our colleagues, our students, their parents, our Co-op and communities, now and for the future.

1.8 The Trust is a single financial and legal entity, delivering education on multiple sites through its different academies and its college, and the Trust Board has the legal responsibility of ensuring the effective running of the entire organisation. However, one of the key principles applied by the Trust is to ensure that local decisions are made locally, where this is in the best interest of our academies, their pupils, and their communities.

1.9 Some systems are centralised to support the academies and the whole Trust to run effectively and efficiently, but our academies know their communities best, and many decisions have been delegated by the Trust Board to the AGCs. This document lays out the principles under which the Trust Board and AGCs operate, and the scheme of delegation under which decision-making takes place.

2. Governance Within the Co-op MAT

2.1 The Department for Education's (DfE) Governance Handbook identifies three core functions of education governance:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders [Headteachers and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and central team colleagues] to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

2.2 In the Co-op MAT these roles are shared between the Trust Board, the officers of the Trust's central team and the AGCs, but the ultimate responsibility for ensuring all of these roles are undertaken effectively within the Trust sits with the Trust Board.

2.3 Because multi-academy trusts are companies, many of the governance arrangements are determined by the Companies Act 2006. The Trust is also required to comply with its funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, and the articles of association, which are an annexe of that agreement. The Trust's articles of association (or "articles") are available to download from the Trust's website at: go.coopacademies.co.uk/governance.

2.4 This document and its appendices (which together form the Trust's "Scheme of Delegation") explain the ways in which the Trust Board fulfils its responsibilities for the leadership and management of the Trust, and the respective roles and responsibilities of the trustees, the CEO and the AGCs in ensuring the success of the Trust's academies. It expands on some of the relevant parts of the articles and also explains the Co-op Academies Trust's arrangements in those areas where the Trust has discretion, including which areas of work have been delegated to trust officers and to AGCs, and the detailed financial arrangements and delegations within the Trust.

3. The Role and Remit of the Co-op Academies Trust's Members

3.1 The National Governance Association (NGA) says that the Members of a Trust are "the guardians of the governance of the trust.". In a company limited by guarantee, in other words a not-for-profit company like an academy trust, Members take the place of shareholders. Their responsibilities are limited but very important. Details of the Trust's Members are published on the website at go.coopacademies.co.uk/governance.

3.2 The Members fulfil their responsibilities by appointing the Trustees - and can also remove the Trustees if this ever proved necessary. The Members meet twice a year, and can make decisions between meetings by way of written resolutions. The details of how Members' meetings and decision-making processes are conducted is determined by the Companies Act 2006 and by the Trust's articles.

3.3 The Trust has five Members, one of whom formally represents the Co-op Group; the others are appointed by the Group and are all Co-op employees.

4. The Role and Remit of the Co-op Academies Trust Board

4.1 With the over-arching aim of providing the best possible education to all pupils at Co-op Academies and maximising their life chances, the Trust Board will:

- Provide strategic direction for the Trust, through the creation and monitoring of a strategic plan;
- Ensure financial viability and the best use of the Trust's funds to ensure it delivers its purpose;
- Ensure the Trust complies with the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and all relevant legislation;
- Hold to account the Trust's CEO and Senior Leadership Team (SLT);
- Ensure co-operative values are embedded in the Co-op academy programme.

4.2 In performing its functions, the Trust Board will have regard to:

- The need to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children and young people;
- The requirements and expectations of the Co-op Group;
- Co-operative values;
- The need to operate with corporate social responsibility in the discharge of its statutory functions; and
- Stakeholder feedback.

4.3 Trustees must comply at all times with the Code of Conduct (Appendix C). The Trust Board will operate according to the processes specified in the Trust's articles and in Appendix D.

4.4 A more detailed list of the Trust Board's responsibilities is included as Appendix A.

5. The Role and Remit of Academy Governing Councils (AGCs)

5.1 In multi-academy trusts, legal responsibilities are held centrally. This means that the Trust Board is the legal "governing body" for every Co-op academy. Co-op Academies Trust has chosen to set up AGCs, which are committees of the Trust

Board, in each of its academies, because it believes that it is often better for decisions to be made locally.

- 5.2 The AGC doesn't have statutory responsibilities in the way that the governing body in a standalone local authority maintained school has, but it has responsibilities delegated to it by the Trust Board, as laid out in this scheme of delegation.
- 5.3 Members of the AGCs will be referred to as 'governors'. Governors must comply at all times with the Code of Conduct (Appendix C). The operating processes for the AGCs are laid out in Appendix E.
- 5.4 The AGCs will take responsibility for monitoring and ensuring a high quality student experience, which meets the needs of the local community. This will include:
- Ensuring the Co-op values and Ways of Being are embedded in the academy
 - Supporting academy development planning and oversee and monitor the academy development plan/quality improvement plan
 - Approving and monitoring the academy's budget and three year business plan
 - Being consulted and informed regarding the academy's curriculum provision and academic standards
 - Reviewing and approving capital projects, subject to Trust Board approval
 - Setting the academy's staffing structure, in line with approved budgets, and oversee/approve staff appointments other than that of the Headteacher
 - Setting academy level policy in relation to safeguarding children and young people in line with Trust and statutory requirements and monitoring its effectiveness
 - Overseeing and monitoring staff and student wellbeing
 - Monitoring and promoting positive student behaviour and attendance
 - Overseeing stakeholder engagement and ensuring stakeholder voices are heard in Trust decision-making
 - Overseeing community engagement and ensuring that the academy supports the Co-op's community strategy
 - Monitoring the academy's provision for vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people, for example pupils with SEND, pupils qualifying for the pupil premium
 - Setting the academies' admissions policy
 - Monitoring academy risk register and business continuity plan
 - Having responsibility for the maintenance of the academy's buildings and premises
 - Supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Trust's and academy's health and safety policies

- Ensuring Trust-wide policies are adopted and followed in the academies

These delegated powers are set out in more detail in Appendix F below.

6. Delegation of Powers: General Provisions

- 6.1 The Trust Board delegates the powers and responsibilities outlined in Appendix F to the Trust's central team, via the CEO, and to the academies' AGCs and headteachers. It is the Trust Board's role to set the strategy and policy and procedures of the academies, to ensure financial stability and effective school improvement, and to consider and respond to strategic issues. The academy is responsible for implementing the strategy, policy and procedures determined by the Board.
- 6.2 Specifically, this includes the academies being allowed to:
- expend Trust funds in line with this scheme of delegation
 - enter into contracts on behalf of the Trust (subject to approval by the CEO).
- 6.3 The AGC must consider any advice given by the Headteacher and follow advice, instruction and/or direction given by the Trust Board.
- 6.4 Any bank account in which any money of the Trust is deposited must be opened by the Trust, and operated by the academy in the name of the Trust. Signatories for bank accounts will be established on mandates signed by trustees.
- 6.5 The AGC will report to the Board on its exercise of its delegated functions on a regular basis.

7. Delegation of Powers: Finance

- 7.1 The detailed arrangements for financial delegation are outlined in Appendix B.

8. Delegation of Powers: Premises

- 8.1 The maintenance of the academies' buildings and facilities is the responsibility of the AGCs, who must always consider the safety of the users of the buildings and the facilities, and the legal responsibilities of the Trust Board as owners of such buildings and facilities.
- 8.2 The AGC will work with the central team to develop an estate management strategy that will identify the suitability of building and facilities in light of long term curriculum needs and the need for and availability of capital investment to meet the AGC's responsibility to ensure the buildings and facilities are maintained to a good standard.
- 8.3 The responsibility for any disposals or acquisitions of land to be used by the academies will sit with the Trust Board. Insuring the land and buildings used by

the academies will be the responsibility of the Trust Board who will recover the cost from the budget delegated to the AGC.

9. Delegation of Powers: Staffing

- 9.1 Following consultation with the AGC, the CEO will be responsible for appointing the Headteacher. The AGC will delegate such powers and functions as it considers to be required by the Headteacher for the internal organisation, management and control of the academy (including the implementation of all policies approved by the Trust Board and the AGC and for the direction of the teaching and curriculum at the academy).
- 9.2 The AGC will be responsible for the appointment and management of all other staff to be employed at the academy provided that it complies with relevant Trust policies and manages any claims and disputes with staff members. In usual circumstances this responsibility will be delegated to the Headteacher.
- 9.3 The AGC will be responsible for ensuring that effective performance management takes place in relation to all academy staff, other than the Headteacher, whose performance management will be the responsibility of the CEO, and will put in place procedures for the proper professional and personal development of staff.

10. Delegation of Powers: Curriculum and Standards

- 10.1 The Trust Board will be responsible for the setting and review of the principles of the curriculum. This will always be in line with the Trust Board's responsibility to set a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 10.2 The CEO, via the Regional Director and Executive Headteachers, in consultation with the AGC, will be responsible for the setting and implementation of the curriculum with the Headteacher in line with the principles set by the Board.
- 10.3 The CEO, via the Regional Director and Executive Headteachers, shall be responsible for the standards achieved by the academy's pupils, in consultation with the AGC, following any guidelines set by the Trust Board or CEO.
- 10.4 The AGC will be responsible for the setting and annual review of the academy's admissions policy and arrangements.
- 10.5 The AGC will review and consult on the admissions arrangements in line with statutory timescales and in accordance with applicable local authority arrangements, subject to prior agreement with the Trust Board of the admissions policy and criteria to be consulted on. These arrangements and any new

admissions policy and criteria must be agreed with the Board before being adopted for the academy.

10.6 Any decision to expand or reduce the capacity of the academy shall be that of the Trust Board which will have regard to the views of the AGC.

11. Delegation of Powers: Extended Schools and Business Activities

11.1 All activities which would be described as part of the academy's "extended schools agenda", or any activities designed to generate business income, are the responsibility of the AGC, but must be undertaken in line with Trust policy.

12 Delegation of Powers: Safeguarding and Pupil Well-Being

12.1 The AGC will be responsible for ensuring effective mechanisms are in place to safeguard pupils and to appropriately handle child protection concerns. This will include appointing a safeguarding link governor, and a properly trained designated safeguarding lead member of staff.

12.2 The AGC will be responsible for promoting the physical and mental well-being of pupils.

13 Engagement with stakeholders and the wider community

13.1 The AGC will be responsible for ensuring stakeholder voices are heard and taken into account. This will include communicating key issues to the Trust Board so that they can be taken into account in trust-wide decision making.

14. Operational Matters

14.1 The AGC will conduct itself according to the operating principles in Appendix D, and will comply with the obligations set out in Appendix E.

14.2 The AGC will adopt and will comply with all policies of the Trust Board.

14.3 Trustees and all members of the AGCs have a duty to act independently and not as agents of those who may have appointed/elected them and will act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the Trust and the academy/college, and shall be open about decisions and be prepared to justify those decisions, other than in relation to specific issues which the Trust Board or the AGC has decided are confidential.

14.4 The AGC will review its policies and practices on a regular basis, giving consideration to recommendations made by the Trust Board from time to time, in order to ensure that the governance of the academy is best able to adapt to the changing political and legal environment.

- 14.5 The AGC shall provide such data and information regarding the business of the academy and the pupils attending the academy as the Trust Board requests.
- 14.6 The AGC must promptly implement any advice or recommendations made by the Trust Board in the event that intervention is either threatened or is carried out by the Secretary of State, and the Trust Board reserves the right to review or remove any power or responsibility conferred on the AGC under this Scheme of Delegation in such circumstances.
- 14.7 The Trust Board may deploy staff to work in other areas of the Trust than their current employment on tasks and activities which are commensurate with their skills and experience. This is intended to provide career and professional development opportunities for staff.

15. Review

- 15.1 This scheme of delegation will be effective from the date it was agreed by the Trust Board and will usually be reviewed on an annual basis, with a comprehensive review at least every three years.
- 15.2 The Trust Board will have discretion to review this scheme of delegation at any time and to alter any provisions of it.
- 15.3 In considering any material changes to this scheme of delegation or any framework on which it is based, the Trust Board will have regard to and take into account any views of the AGCs.

16. Reservation of Powers

- 16.1 Matters reserved for the Trust Board Board under this scheme of delegation are specified in Appendix A.
- 16.2 The Trust Board also reserves the right to exercise directly functions and powers delegated to the AGCs under this scheme of delegation, in the event of one of the following circumstances occurring:
- the academy/college is judged to be “Inadequate” following an Ofsted inspection;
 - the academy/college is advised that it “Requires Improvement” following an Ofsted inspection; or
 - at the discretion of the Trust Board, the academy/college is deemed not to be acting in accordance with this scheme of delegation or is otherwise not acting in accordance with the ethos of the Trust.

Appendix A: Matters Reserved to the Board

Strategy and Management

- Establishing the vision and ethos of the Trust and ensuring its co-operative values and principles are embedded in all of the Trust's activities
- Setting the strategic priorities for the Trust
- Providing strategic direction to the Trust and its academies through the creation of a strategic plan
- Appointment of the CEO and Trust senior leadership team (SLT)
- Holding the CEO and Trust SLT to account for delivering the strategic plan
- Overseeing the strategic growth of the Trust and approving free school applications and schools/academies/trusts joining the Trust
- Performance managing the CEO and determining the performance management policy for the Trust

Governance

- Preparation and approval of this Scheme of Delegation, in consultation with the academies, and ensuring it is regularly reviewed
- Ensuring the Trust remains compliant with all regulatory requirements including the Trust Funding Agreements and the latest Academies Financial Handbook (including the obligation not to use Trust funds for the purchase of alcohol)
- Undertaking a regular review of its own performance and that of its committees and link trustees
- Establishing and appointing to board committees and link trustee roles
- Appointing the AGC chairs
- Setting up register of trustees' interests and ensuring these are published on the website and updated annually
- Setting the risk appetite and overseeing the management of risk across the Trust

Finance and Capital

- Ensuring financial viability and the best use of the Trust's funds to ensure it delivers its purpose
- Strategic and financial planning for the Trust and the academies
- Approval of three year and financial budgets for the Trust
- Approval of each academy's annual funding in consultation with the AGCs
- Cost allocation between the Trust and the academies
- Compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook
- Compliance with the financial and accounting requirements of the Trust
- Setting procedures for financial controls
- Approval on submission by the AGC of all proposed capital projects (for prior approval) before any costs incurred in relation to any project

- Approval of any changes to planned admissions numbers (PANs)
- Central procurement of insurance including buildings, land and trustees' and governors' insurance

Policies

- Setting the policy for pay and conditions using a robust evidence based approach;
- Establishing model policies on key issues - (where appropriate in consultation with AGCs and headteachers) ;
- Approving procurement policies for the Trust
- Appointment and dismissal procedures
- Determination and review of disciplinary and capability procedures
- Determination of Early Retirement policy
- Determination of Trust pupil discipline principles statement
- Approval of academies' admissions policy in consultation with the AGC
- Establishing health and safety policy

Curriculum

- Approval of Trust Curriculum Statement
- Setting targets for Trust outcomes and holding the CEO and Trust SLT to account for these

Human Resources

- Determination of Early Retirement requests (where there is a cost to the organisation)
- Approval of pension discretions within the local government pension scheme (LGPS)
- Approval of any change in staff numbers beyond those budgeted for in the approved budget of the Academy
- Determination of terms and conditions of all staff

Communication

- communicating with the Department for Education and Education and Skills Funding Agency on key issues
- communicating and consulting with the Academies, including the AGCs on key issues;
- Devising Trust branding and branding guidance in agreement with the sponsor

The Co-operative Academies Trust

Financial Regulations Manual

September 2023

Contents

General

1. Introduction
2. Responsibilities
3. Areas of Specified Delegated Responsibility and Approvals
4. General Delegated Financial Authority
5. Absence of Delegated Individual
6. General Accounting Policies
7. Financial Operations and Procedures Manual

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out for The Co-op Academies Trust (“the Trust”) the Financial Regulations (“the Regs”), including the Scheme of Financial Delegation (“the Scheme”). Reference to the Trust includes its member organisations for the purpose of the authorities and procedures contained herein, except where otherwise stated.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Policy manual is to ensure that the Trust maintains and develops systems of financial control which conform to the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. It is essential that these systems operate properly to meet the requirements of our funding agreement with the Department of Education (DfE).
- 1.3. The Financial Regulations are subject to review annually, or more frequently if there is any change in management or organisational structure that would impact its effective operation.
- 1.4. Trust must comply with the principles of financial control outlined in the Academies guidance published by the DfE. This manual expands on that and provides detailed information on the Trust’s accounting procedures.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1. The Trust has defined the responsibilities of each person involved in the administration of the Trust finances to avoid duplication or omission of functions and to provide a framework of accountability for Governors and staff.
- 2.2. The Regs also contain the Financial Policies that the Board has adopted and provides the framework for how the Regs (including the Scheme) will be exercised.
- 2.3. The Regs provide an overview of the parameters that Board have set out to assist staff, Board and Governors members to ensure that:
 - A financial framework exists within which staff, Board, Governors and committee members may properly act and are fully accountable for their actions;
 - The Scheme of Financial Delegation details the financial limits on commitments and payments that should be applied within the Regs and describes the associated permissions and responsibilities related to disbursing the Trust’s financial business and specifies the limits and ranges of delegation given with the Trust;
 - It complies with the rules and objectives of the Trust together with any other statutory requirements, is lawful, reasonable and represents value for money; and

- The assets and other financial interests of the Trust are properly protected.
- 2.4. The Regs define the delegated financial authority levels for the Trust Board, Governors, Committee Members, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), leadership team and staff by detailing the policy by which staff can commit and authorise expenditure within an approved budgeted framework.
- 2.5. Board, Committees, Academy Governing Councils (AGC) and staff are required to conform to the rules set out in these Financial Regulations. Any breach of these rules, whether inadvertent or otherwise, must be brought to the attention of the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) who will investigate the circumstances with the personnel concerned. The CFO will, in consultation with the CEO, decide whether the circumstances are such that they should be reported to the Trust Board. It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure their staff are made aware of the contents of these Financial Regulations, which form part of the overall regulatory framework and ensure that any local policies and procedures are consistent within this document.
- 2.6. All delegated limits should be considered to be exclusive of VAT.
- 2.7. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may from time to time make a direction in respect of a delegated officer that the authority of the person(s) specified in that direction to act as delegated officer for the purposes of the Scheme shall be:
- a) suspended;
 - b) reduced;
 - c) subject to conditions; and / or
 - d) exercisable by another person (being an employee(s) of the Trust of the same or greater seniority).
- 2.8. The Trust has defined the responsibilities of each person involved in the administration of the Trust's finances to avoid duplication or omission of functions and to provide a framework of accountability for governors and staff. The financial reporting structure is illustrated below.

The Trust Board

- 2.9. The Trust Board delegates the operational running, scrutiny and oversight of the Academies to the Academy Governing Council (AGCs) but will monitor the performance and compliance of all Academies within the Trust. The main financial responsibilities include:
- Provide strategic direction for the Trust, through the creation and monitoring of a strategic plan;
 - Ensure financial viability and the best use of the Trust's funds to ensure it delivers its purpose;

- Ensure the Trust complies with the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and all relevant legislation;
- Preparation and approval of this Scheme of Delegation, in consultation with the academies, and ensuring it is regularly reviewed;
- Ensuring financial viability and the best use of the Trust's funds to ensure it delivers its purpose;
- Strategic and financial planning for the Trust and the academies;
- Approval of three year and financial budgets for the Trust;
- Approval of each academy's annual funding in consultation with the AGCs;
- Cost allocation between the Trust and the academies;
- Ensuring the Trust remains compliant with all regulatory requirements including the Trust Funding Agreements and the latest Academy trust handbook (including the obligation not to use Trust funds for the purchase of alcohol);
- Ensuring compliance with the financial and accounting requirements of the Trust;
- Setting procedures for financial controls;
- Approval on submission by the AGC of all proposed capital projects (for prior approval) before any costs incurred in relation to any project;
- Approval of any changes to planned admissions numbers (PANs); and
- Central procurement of insurance including buildings, land and trustees' and governors' insurance.

The Chair of the Trust Board must receive the Trust's management accounts each month.

The Academy Governing Council (AGC)

2.10. The AGC has overall responsibility for the administration of the individual Academies' finances. The main responsibilities of the AGC are prescribed in the Funding Agreement between the academy and the DfE and in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. The main financial responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that grants from the ESFA are used only for the purposes intended;
- Supporting academy development planning and oversee and monitor the academy development plan / quality improvement plan;
- Approving and monitoring the academy's budget and three year business plan
- Being consulted and informed regarding the academy's curriculum provision and academic standards;
- Reviewing and approving capital projects, subject to Trust Board approval;
- Setting the academy's staffing structure, in line with approved budgets, and overseeing / approving staff appointments other than that of the headteacher / principal
- Monitoring academy risk register and business continuity plan;
- Having responsibility for the maintenance of the academy's buildings

- and premises;
- Supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Trust's and academy's health and safety policies;
- Ensuring Trust-wide policies are adopted and followed in the academy;
- Approve the outflow of academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in [Appendix A](#) and table 1 (page 56) below; and
- Any increase (or decrease) in pupil numbers beyond the planned admission numbers, subject to the approval of the CEO / Board and where necessary the DfE / ESFA.

The Trust Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

2.11. ARC is an independent Committee of the Trust Board, which advises both the CEO, in their role as Accounting Officer, and the Trust Board. The ARC function is to support both the CEO and the Board in their responsibilities for issues of risk, internal control and governance. ARC will therefore monitor, evaluate, advise and report on:

- The comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Trust Board accounting needs;
- The reliability and integrity of these assurances;
- How well the Trust Board and its Accounting Officer role are supported in decision making and in discharging their accountability obligations (particularly in respect of financial reporting); and

Additionally, ARC will select the external and internal auditors and oversee, direct, monitor, evaluate and report on their work.

2.12. The main responsibilities include:

- Effectiveness of strategic processes for risk appetite, risk management, internal control, governance and information assurance including cyber security and data protection;
- Reviewing the Trust's top risks and ensuring adequate mitigations are in place;
- Accounting policies, including the process for review of the annual report and accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to the external auditor;
- Planned activities and results of internal and external audits;
- Adequacy of management's response to issues identified by audit activity, including external auditor's management letter;
- Assurances relating to the corporate governance requirements for the organisation;
- Where appropriate, proposals for tendering for either Internal or External Audit services or for purchase of non-audit services from contractors who provide audit services;

- Anti-fraud policies and whistleblowing processes;
- Review and approval of relevant Trust policies delegated by the Trust Board;
- Reviewing the annual report, recommending it to the Board for approval and ensuring it is published on the Trust website in line with ESFA requirements; and
- The committee will work with the auditor who will recommend an audit plan for the Trust Board to approve. Any audit plan will take full account of the risks to Trust's strategic priorities. The internal audit plan is approved by the Trust Board annually.

The Trust Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)

2.13. FRC is an independent Committee of the Trust Board, which advises both the CEO, in their role as Accounting Officer, and the Trust Board. The FRC function is to support both the CEO and the Board in their responsibilities with regard to compliance with the Trust's Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education, the Academy Trust Handbook and the Trust's Financial Regulations, and to ensure sound management of the Trust's finances and resources, including proper planning, monitoring, probity and value for money. The main responsibilities include:

- The annual estimates of income and expenditure and financial forecast for the Trust and its academies;
- Monitoring of revenue finances of the Trust and its academies and advising the Board on progress towards achieving its financial objectives;
- The management accounts of the Trust, cash flow forecasts and reserves, and to advise the Board on the year end accounts;
- The annual accounts, including presentation of the annual accounts and the auditor's report to the Board for approval
- To advise the Board on the financial implications of the Trust's strategic plan;
- To review, on an annual basis, the Trust's Financial Regulations, and recommend these for the Board's approval;
- Estate matters and the Trust's asset management strategy;
- The financial elements of the Trust's risk management strategy, including health and safety;
- The level of reserves and the Trust's reserves policy;
- Monitoring of Trust policies relating to finance, buildings and health and safety;
- Procurement activity requiring Board approval;
- Review and approval of relevant Trust policies delegated by the Trust Board;
- Any relevant legal and contractual documentation, operating within the Articles of Association, Schemes of Delegation, Funding Agreement and Financial Regulations;
- The development of systems and processes necessary to support the

- development of the Trust (eg IT, procurement); and
- Pupil numbers at the academies and any changes to the published admission numbers at academies.

Finance Committee - Academy Level (where applicable)

2.14. The Finance Committee (or similarly titled) is a committee of the AGC. The Finance Committee meets at least once a term but more frequent meetings can be arranged if necessary. The main responsibilities of the Finance Committee are detailed in written terms of reference which have been authorised by the AGC. The main responsibilities include:

- The review and recommendation of the annual business plan including the budget to the Trust Board; and
- The regular monitoring of actual expenditure and income against budget, including all additional school funds.

Accounting Officer / Director of the Trust / Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

2.15. The CEO is the Accounting Officer. The Academy Trust Handbook explicitly prohibits the Accounting Officer from holding the role of CFO (and vice versa). The full scope of responsibilities for the Accounting Officer is defined in the Academy trust handbook and includes a personal responsibility to Parliament, and to the ESFA's Accounting Officer, for the financial resources under the Trust's control. Accounting Officers must be able to assure Parliament, and the public, of high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly:

- **value for money** – this is about achieving the best possible educational outcomes through the economic, efficient and effective use of resources. A key objective is to achieve value for money not only for the trust but for taxpayers generally;
- **regularity** – dealing with all items of income and expenditure in accordance with legislation, the terms of the trust's funding agreement and this handbook, and compliance with the trust's internal procedures – this includes spending public money for the purposes intended by Parliament; and
- **propriety** – the requirement that expenditure and receipts should be dealt with in accordance with Parliament's intentions and the principles of parliamentary control – this covers standards of conduct, behaviour and corporate governance.

Regional Director (RD)

2.16. The RD of the Trust works within the frame of responsibilities delegated by the CEO. The RD works in close collaboration with the CEO and the Trust's SLT. The main financial responsibilities of the RD are:

- approving new staff appointments (at a Hub or Academy level) above the authorised establishment, except for any senior staff posts which the Board / CEO have agreed and should be approved by them;

- approve the outflow of academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Table 1 (page 56) below;
- approving changes to staffing structures as part of the budget setting process;
- ensuring regional academies sets the budget for the financial year;
- ensuring regional academies sets three year budget plan; and
- reporting regional academy financial performance (through the Regional Finance Directors) to the CEO and CFO.

Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

2.17. The Trust CFO works in close collaboration with the CEO and the Academy Finance Lead (AFL). The Trust CFO also has direct access to the Governors via the ARC and FRC. The main financial responsibilities of the CFO are:

- the management of the Trust's financial position at a strategic and operational level within the framework for financial control determined by the Board;
- setting and agreeing the Financial Regulations with the Board;
- setting, reviewing and updating the Trust's financial policies - for Board approval;
- the maintenance of effective systems of internal control;
- ensuring compliance with accounting policies and procedures, approved by the Board, in line with recommended best practice for companies and Charitable Trusts;
- ensuring that the consolidated annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the academy;
- the preparation of the consolidated management accounts for the Trust;
- the preparation of the Trust's consolidated budget / business plans over 1 and 3 years for Trust Board approval including the setting of key Trust-wide business plan assumptions and guidance;
- approve the outflow of Academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Table 1 (page 56) below;
- bad debt write-offs in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook;
- conduct of tenders for internal and external auditors for appointment by the ARC;
- approving procedures for financial controls across academies;
- ensuring VAT returns are submitted as required by HMRC requirements;
- lead role with the Trust's pensions providers; and
- ensuring forms and returns are sent to the ESFA in line with the timetable in the ESFA guidance.

Executive Headteacher (EHd)

2.18. The EHd of the Trust works within the frame of responsibilities delegated by the CEO. The EHd works in close collaboration with the RD and the relevant Trust Academy Leaders. The main financial responsibilities of the EHd are:

- approve the outflow of specified academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Table 1 (page 56) below;
- ensuring specified academies set budgets for the financial year;
- ensuring specified academies set three year budget plans; and
- reporting specified academy financial performance (through the Regional Finance Directors and RD) to the CEO and CFO.

The Academy Leader (Principal, Headteacher or Head of School)

2.19. Within the framework of the academy development plan as approved by the individual AGC the Academy Leader has overall executive responsibility for the academy's activities including financial activities. Much of the financial responsibility has been delegated to the AFL but the Academy Leader still retains responsibility for:

- approving new staff appointments within the authorised establishment, except for any senior staff posts which the AGC / RD have agreed should be approved by them;
- approve the outflow of Academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Appendix B;
- authorising BACS and any other form of payment in conjunction with the AFL or other authorised signatory;
- ensuring the academy sets the budget and reforecast for the financial year, which is in line with the Trust's reserves policy;
- ensuring the academy sets three year budget plan;
- review of academy monthly management accounts and cost centre reporting; and
- reporting financial performance to the AGC including all additional school funds.

Regional Finance Director (including Central Team equivalent) (RFD)

2.20. The RFD works in close collaboration with the CFO, AFL, and the frame of responsibilities delegated by the CEO. The main financial responsibilities of the RFD are:

- the maintenance of effective systems of internal control;
- ensuring compliance with accounting policies and procedures, approved by the Board, in line with recommended best practice for companies and Charitable Trusts;
- supporting the CFO in ensuring that the consolidated annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the academies and Trust;

- supporting the CFO in the preparation of regional and Trust-wide management accounts for the Trust;
- supporting the CFO in the preparation of regional budget / business plans over 1 and 3 years for Trust Board approval, including the setting of key Trust-wide business plan assumptions and guidance;
- approve the outflow of academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Table 1 (page 56) below;
- supporting the CFO in approving procedures for financial controls across academies and centrally; and
- ensuring forms and returns are sent to the ESFA in line with the timetable in the ESFA guidance.

The Academy Finance Lead (AFL)

2.21. The AFL (either the Academy Finance Manager, Business Manager, RFD or shared Finance Manager) works in close collaboration with the Academy Leader through whom they are responsible to the Governors. The AFL also has direct access to the Governors via the Finance Committee - Academy Level (or equivalent). The main responsibilities of the AFL are:

- the day to day management of financial issues including the local operation of the Trust's accounting system to meet the requirements of the Trust;
- the management of the academy financial position at a strategic and operational level within the framework for financial control determined by the AGC;
- the maintenance of effective systems of internal control;
- ensuring that the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the academy;
- the preparation of monthly management accounts and financial reports for the Academy Trust and Governors;
- preparation of quarterly VAT returns for submission to the Trust;
- approve the outflow of academy financial resources in line with the delegated financial authority limits highlighted in Table 1 (page 56) below);
- authorising BACS and any other form of payment in conjunction with the Academy Leader or other authorised signatory;
- ensuring relevant academy forms and returns are sent to the ESFA in line with the timetable in the ESFA guidance; and
- to support the Trust RFD / CFO.

Other Staff

2.22. Other members of staff, primarily finance officers and budget holders, will have some financial responsibilities. All staff are responsible for the security of academy property, for avoiding loss or damage, for ensuring economy and efficiency in the use of resources and for conformity with the requirements of the

academy's financial procedures.

Register of Interests (the Register)

- 2.23. It is important for anyone involved in spending public money to demonstrate that they do not benefit personally from the decisions they make. To avoid any misunderstanding that might arise, all members of the Board, Governors and staff with significant financial or spending powers are required to declare any financial interests they have in companies or individuals from which the academy may purchase goods or services. The Register is open to public inspection and will be requested by the auditors.
- 2.24. The Register should include all business interests such as directorships, shareholdings or other appointments of influence within a business or organisation which may have dealings with the Trust or individual academy/ies. The disclosures should also include business interests of relatives such as a parent, spouse or business partner where influence could be exerted over a Governor or a member of staff by that person. Disclosures are reviewed / updated on an annual basis via an annual declaration form.
- 2.25. The existence of the Register does not detract from the duties of the Board, Governors and staff to declare interests whenever they are relevant to matters being discussed by the Trust Board, AGC or a Committee. Where an interest has been declared, the Director, Governor or member of staff should not attend that part of any Committee or other meeting.

3. Areas of Specific Delegated Responsibilities

- 3.1. There are a number of financial responsibilities that are delegated, by Board, to specific members of staff – these are outside the authorities in sections 6-17 of these Regs. The delegated authority for the following transactions lies with nominated Trust Directors, Trust SLT, Academy Leaders, or functions detailed in 3.3 below.
- 3.2. Prior to the authorisation of the following transactions and in making all commitments and anticipating payments, the delegated officers must consult with the CEO or the CFO to ensure that sufficient funds are available and that cash flow impact is considered.
- 3.3. Sponsorship expenditure is generally prohibited as part of these Regs however, it is allowable where appropriate, approved by the relevant AGC and Board and incorporated into approved academy business plans.

Specific Delegated Responsibilities – Within overall Trust approved budget	
Description	Delegated Authority
Budgeted staff appointments and approval of salary changes (Excluding SLT).	For Central Trust : Trust SLT For Academies: Academy Leaders except for senior Academy SLT positions which should be approved by the AGC in conjunction with the RD.
Appointment and approval of salary for Academy Leaders.	CEO in conjunction with the RD.
Appointment and approval of salary for Trust SLT (Including terms and conditions).	People & Remuneration Committee.
Board Member expenses.	CEO or CFO.
Treasury management functions : purchase ledger payments, BACS / CHAPS transfers including inter Trust transfers – validation and release.	See Appendix A and as per approved bank mandate.
VAT settlement / reclaim validation and release.	CFO or delegated member of Finance Team.
Contracts, Service Level Agreements (SLAs), lease agreements, grant claims / documentation or other similar regulatory forms.	See Appendix A .
Insurance Policy Tenders and appointment.	Trust Board or delegated sub-committee.
Trust Policies.	Trust Board or delegated sub-committee.
Write-offs within the approved scheme of delegation.	CEO / CFO or nominated SLT Member.
HMRC / Pension payments (deductions made via payroll) – Validation and release	CFO or delegated member of Finance Team.
Investments / Bank deposits - Policy.	ARC.
In year review / update of revenue expenditure limits (including new posts or staffing changes).	Director of Trust in conjunction with the CFO.
Settlement and Restructuring Agreements.	See Section 8.11 and Appendix A / Table 1 (page 56) below;

4. General Delegated Financial Authority

- 4.1. These are different and separate from the formal signature(s) required on Trust or Academy banking documentation.
- 4.2. The Regs establish a final point of delegation relating to the commitment of expenditure and approval of payments. This should be complementary to the integrated financial system and the automated approval process for financial commitments. The Delegated Officer should be supported by a structure of management controls including adequate segregation of duties over the authorising, receiving and payment is required to ensure an adequate level of control.
- 4.3. Delegated Officers are those employed by the Trust either on a permanent, temporary and contract basis. The term does not include those individuals contracted under consultancy arrangements.
- 4.4. The Delegated Officer takes personal responsibility for confirming that the financial commitment is valid, checked, coded correctly and authorised as being a valid charge against the Trust and in accordance with its policies and procedures and within the scope of the approved budget.
- 4.5. Delegated Officers must assure themselves that an audit trail and adequate records support each transaction and that decisions are consistent with budget, law, regulations and Trust policies.
- 4.6. Delegated Officers are the main source of scrutiny to ensure the propriety and regularity of the expenditure. They would be asked to account for any errors or abuse that is discovered during or subsequent to the payment process.
- 4.7. In applying these Regs for general business and routine expenditure items that are processed through the Trust's purchase order system and integrated finance system, it has embedded controls that prohibit financial commitment unless an appropriate level of authorisation has been granted.
- 4.8. This control is achieved through the use of user identification and passwords, which cross-refer to the system's list of authorisations. The principal control mechanism is at the commitment stage, which contractually binds the Trust to make payments after receipt of goods or services. In addition, there should be appropriate checking before payments are made. The authorisation will be implemented through the segregation of duties, controlled by password and user ordering, goods receipt and payment process. The detailed controls in the integrated finance system are controlled by reference tables and named authorised staff and financial expenditure levels.

5. Absence of Delegated Individual

- 5.1. In the absence of a member of staff to whom financial authority has been delegated, that authority shall be exercised by a member of staff superior in the line of authority to the officer concerned, within the same operational academy / department, unless temporary alternative arrangements have been approved by the CEO or CFO.
- 5.2. If the CEO is absent or unavailable and has not delegated authority to another member of the Trust SLT, the Board Chairperson will delegate authority temporarily to another nominee.
- 5.3. In the absence of the Chair, where financial authority has been delegated to them that authority shall be exercised by the Chair of the ARC. This should be approved by the Board for any continuous absence longer than four weeks.

6. General Accounting Policies

General

- 6.1. To ensure consistency of approach and valid comparison of academies within the Trust, all financial and management accounts produced within the Trust must be prepared in accordance with Trust Accounting Policies.
- 6.2. Trust Accounting Policies are determined and set by the Trust Board. Any accounting treatment required, but not specified in the Trust's Accounting Policies, should be discussed with the CFO, or nominated staff member.
- 6.3. All policies are to comply with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The Trust is a public benefit entity under FRS 102 and has therefore applied the relevant public benefit requirements of FRS 102.
- 6.4. The AFL, or nominated staff member, is responsible for ensuring that all relevant accounting standards and accounting policies are adhered to.
- 6.5. All accounting procedures and records of the Trust shall be determined by the CFO, or nominated staff member. These should be sufficient to satisfy statutory and regulatory requirements, to ensure effective management and safeguard the interests of stakeholders.

- 6.6. The following principles shall be observed, where possible, in the allocation of duties involving financial activity to ensure that a proper segregation of duties exists:
- The duties of providing information about money due to or from the Trust and of calculating, checking and recording these sums, shall be separated as completely as possible from the duty of collecting or paying them; and
 - Officers charged with the duty of examining and checking the accounts of cash transactions shall not themselves be engaged in any of these transactions.
- 6.7. It is the responsibility of the Trust Board, through senior management, to maintain accounting records sufficient at all times to:
- Identify assets and liabilities (including monthly accruals);
 - Ensure properly due to amounts are paid out;
 - Recognise and collect all income that is due; and
 - Provide regular reports on the financial position to senior managers, directors, the Board and statutory or regulatory bodies.
- 6.8. The AFL, or nominated staff member, is responsible for the preparation and submission of statutory accounting information to the Trust CFO, or nominated staff member, in accordance with the requirements of the Trust's Financial Policies and Procedures.
- 6.9. The financial statements should give a true and fair view of both the results for the period prescribed, and the net assets. The financial statements must be prepared in compliance with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, and in accordance with the approved Trust accounting policies and in accordance with the Trust format and timetable.

Value for Money

- 6.10. The Trust's Accounting Officer will complete the necessary information required by the ESFA as outlined in the Academy Trust Handbook.

Write Off of Debts and Losses

- 6.11. The Trust will pursue all income due. Responsibility of debt collection rests with individual academies and will be coordinated the AFL. Debts that are greater than 3 months must be highlighted to the Academy Leader and payments chased. Debts over 6 months must be considered for potential write-off and debts over 12 months should be written-off once the Academy Lead is satisfied that all reasonable recovery action has been attempted. Any proposed write-offs are subject to AGC approval.

- 6.12. For any potential write-off over £1,000 (individually or cumulatively for the financial year) the Trust CFO must be informed in advance to ensure that the requirements and reporting / consent limits set by the ESFA as stipulated within the Academy Trust Handbook are met. The CFO will obtain approval from the ESFA for any potential write-offs that exceed the thresholds stipulated in the Academy Trust Handbook. Such write-offs should not be actioned, even if approved by the AGC, until written confirmation is provided by the CFO.
- 6.13. The consolidated total write-offs across the Trust will be monitored centrally throughout the year to ensure the ESFA thresholds are not exceeded at Trust level.

Changes to Staffing Structures

- 6.14. The CEO and RD must be consulted in connection with proposals to change established staffing structures outside of the annual budget-setting process. They will then determine the process to approve the proposal, reflecting its scale including its impact on pupil outcomes and budgets.
- 6.15. Changes considered as part of the business planning / budget-setting process will require the approval of the RD, AGC and Trust Board as part of that process.

Payroll

- 6.16. The main elements of the payroll system and processes are:
- staff appointments;
 - payroll administration; and
 - payments.

Staffing

- 6.17. The RD and AGC approve a personnel establishment for the academy as part of the budget-setting process.
- 6.18. All requests for recruitment should follow the appropriate process as communicated by Trust Human Resources, including the completion and approval of a recruitment authorisation form. See Table 1 (page 56) below.
- 6.19. Approval for roles that are not included in a Trust approved budget or reforecast should follow the process for unlink budgeted / forecasted expenditure. This would also include any unbudgeted retention costs.
- 6.20. When ascertaining whether staffing costs are included in budget / reforecast, consideration should be given to both role and cost.
- 6.21. The Academy Leader has authority to appoint staff within the authorised and

budgeted establishment, except for Vice Principals / Deputy Headteachers and Assistant Headteachers, whose appointments must follow consultation with the RD and Governors. The Academy Leader must maintain personnel files for all members of staff which include contracts of employment. All personnel changes must be notified, in writing, to the AFL immediately.

7. Financial Operations and Procedures Manual

7.1. The Trust has developed a Financial Operations Manual that provides and maintains systems of financial control which conforms to the requirements of propriety and good financial management. The operations and procedures can be found [here](#) and include:

1. Financial Systems
2. Business Planning (Including Budgeting and Reforecasting)
3. Management Accounting (Including Monitoring and Reporting)
4. Income Management
5. Payroll and Pension Administration
6. Revenue Expenditure (Including Approvals)
7. General Procurement and Accounts Payable Management
8. Staff Expenses
9. Management of Assets (Fixed Assets and Capital Investment)
10. Treasury Management (Including Cash Management)
11. Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning (ICFP)
12. Business Assurance and Risk Management
13. Corporation Tax and Value Added Tax (VAT)

Financial Operations and Procedures Manual can be found [here](#).

Appendix C - Code of Conduct for Members, Trustees, Trust Committee Members and Governors

Code of conduct

The Co-op Academies Trust asks its Members, Trustees, Trust Committee Members and Governors to reflect Co-op values in all their work, making sure that the Ways of Being Co-op underpin everything they do.

Members, Trustees, Trust Committee Members and Governors should always follow the seven Nolan principles of public life as these provide a framework for good and effective work in a public office. These are:

1. Selflessness

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

2. 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.

3. Objectivity

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

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. 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.

Specifically, Members, Trustees, Trust Committee Members and Governors of the Co-op Academies Trust must:

- Always work in the best interest of the Trust, its academies/college, its pupils, parents and staff;
- Familiarise themselves with safeguarding procedures and policies and always prioritise the safeguarding of children and young people, accepting that safeguarding is always everyone's business;
- Complete an application for a disclosure and barring check within three weeks of their appointment / election;
- Uphold the Co-op values and Ways of Being Co-op and be an ambassador for the Trust/academy in all aspects of public and personal life, including social media;
- Attend all relevant meetings other than in exceptional circumstances, and, when unable to attend, send apologies explaining these circumstances to the clerk or chair;
- Prepare for meetings by reading meeting paperwork and considering any questions that arise
- Engage in meetings by contributing appropriately and asking questions where relevant, always treating others with respect
- Take responsibility for their own development, undertaking relevant e-learning and face to face training as requested
- Follow trust policies in all interactions with the Trust/Academy/College staff
- Be diligent and transparent in declaring personal interests, and not use any information gained in the role for personal gain
- Keep the information received through meetings and their role confidential
- Uphold and promote the Co-op values and ways of being Co-op in their own conduct and in their decision-making
- Act as part of the Members/Trust Board/AGC team, understanding that decisions are made as a collective, with responsibility lying with the group as a whole, not with them as an individual

How we deal with concerns

If any concerns arise, the Trust will act with fairness, openness, and transparency, but breaches of this code of conduct could potentially lead to the removal of a Member, Trustee, Trust Committee Member or Governor.

Appendix D: Operating Principles for the Co-op MAT Trust Board

1. Trust Board Membership

The size of the Trust Board is determined by the articles of association as 3-15 trustees appointed by the Members. The Trustees are permitted by the articles to co-opt as many additional board members (under article 58) as they wish.

2. Appointment of Trustees

When Trustees are appointed by the Trust's Members, this will be by majority vote at a Members' meeting or by written resolution, usually following a recommendation from the Chair of the Trust Board.

Co-opted Trustees are appointed by the Trust Board on the basis of a majority vote at a quorate board meeting. Other Co-opted Trustees do not have voting rights in this context.

Trustees will be appointed or co-opted on the basis of the relevant skills, experience and capacity which they offer to the role; they will be asked to outline this in advance of their appointment, usually via an interview with the Chair of the Board.

3. Recruitment Checks

All trustees must sign the Trust's code of conduct and must complete an application for a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check within three weeks of their appointment or election. The DBS requirement does not apply to Trust employees who will already have a valid DBS check carried out by the Trust. DBS checks completed for roles outside the Trust are not valid.

4. Term of Office

The term of office for all trustees, other than the Chair, is four years. The Chair is a trustee ex-officio, by virtue of their office within the Co-op Group. As long as they remain eligible, a trustee can be re-appointed or re-elected at the end of their term of office for a maximum of one further term. This means that the maximum length of time an individual can serve as a trustee with the Co-op MAT is eight years.

Once a trustee has served for eight years and left the Trust Board they would be eligible for re-appointment once twelve months has elapsed.

5. Resignation

A trustee may resign their position at any time by writing to the Trust's Head of Governance and Community, the Company Secretary or the Trust Board Chair, as long as at least three trustees remain in post.

6. Removal and Suspension of Trustees

Any appointed trustee can be removed from the Trust Board by the Members at any time; any co-opted trustee can be removed by the Trust Board, in line with article 66.

This would usually be for one of the following reasons:

- They have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of the Trust;
- They have brought or are likely to bring the Trust or the office of Trustee into disrepute;
- They are in breach of the duty of confidentiality to the Trust, or to any member of the Trust's staff or a pupil at an academy;
- They are in breach of the Trust's code of conduct for trustees in some other way.

Before making a decision to remove a Trustee the Members or the Trust Board will consider anything the individual Trustee wants to say about the issue, and will consult the Trust's Head of Governance and Community.

A Trustee who is employed by the Trust, who is suspended from their paid role within the Trust will, without any further action being needed, also be suspended as a Trustee, for the same period of time.

7. Qualification as a Trustee

All Trustees must be at least eighteen years old and may not be a current pupil of any Co-op academy.

A Trustee will stop being a Trustee automatically if they become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing their own affairs.

A Trustee will be removed from the role if they are absent without permission from all the full meetings of the trust board as well as any committee they are a member of, held within a period of six months, and the Trust Board resolves that they are removed. To be granted permission for absence the Trustee must have submitted apologies to either the Chair or the Trust's Head of Governance in advance of the meeting, and the meeting minutes must reflect that the Trustee's apologies were accepted by the meeting.

An individual is disqualified from being a Trustee in the Co-op MAT if any of the disqualification criteria relating to bankruptcy, disqualification as a company director or charity trustee, prohibited or restricted employment or criminal convictions apply, as detailed in Articles 71-74.

8. Appointment / Election of Chair and Vice Chair and Committee Chairs

8.1 Appointment of Chair

The chair will be elected at the first meeting of each academic year; nominations for the role of chair will be invited from the Co-op Group in advance of this meeting. No

Trustee who works for the Trust will be able to be chair. The Chair has particular responsibility for providing effective leadership on matters such as:

- formulating the Board's strategy for discharging its duties;
- encouraging high standards of propriety;
- representing the views of the Board externally and internally; and
- providing for the induction, training, objectives and assessment of individual Board members
- advising the Co-op on the performance of the Trust, and of the CEO.

The chair will be automatically removed from the role, with no further action needed, if they stop being an employee of the Co-op Group.

Where the position of chair falls vacant the Trust Board must elect a new chair at its next meeting.

8.2 Election of Vice Chair

The vice chair will be elected at the first meeting of the academic year. No Trustee who works for the Trust will be able to be vice chair. All eligible trustees will be asked by the Head of Governance in advance of the relevant meeting whether they wish to nominate themselves for the role of vice chair. Where more than one person has put themselves forward for the role of vice chair there will be a secret ballot at the meeting.

The vice chair can resign from the role at any time by writing to the Chair or the Trust's Head of Governance. Where the position of chair becomes vacant the Vice Chair will act as Chair until the position is filled; where the position of vice chair falls vacant the Trust Board must elect a new vice chair at its next meeting. Self-nominations will be invited in advance of that meeting if time allows, otherwise self-nominations will be invited from all eligible trustees at the meeting.

If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting the vice chair will act as chair for the purposes of that meeting. If the vice chair is also absent the Trust Board will elect a chair for the purposes of that meeting, which may not be a trustee who is employed by the trust.

8.3 Appointment of Committee Chairs

Committee chairs will be appointed by the Board at the last meeting of the academic year, for the following year. The Trust Board Chair will bring nominations to the Board at this meeting, for its consideration.

9. Removal of the Chair / Vice Chair

The chair may be removed from the role by the Members but, before the chair is removed, the Members will consider representations from the chair, and consult with the Trust's Head of Governance and Community.

The vice chair may be removed by the Trust Board. Any decision to remove the vice chair must be a specified agenda item at a trust board meeting, and the vice chair must be given the opportunity to speak on their own behalf, before leaving the meeting while a vote is taken on the issue via secret ballot.

10. Conflict of Interest

A trustee will be considered to have a conflict of interest, and should withdraw from any related discussion and vote, in any situation where:

- there may be a conflict between the individual interests of the trustee and the interests of the Trust or any of its academies;
- a fair hearing is required and there is any reasonable doubt about a trustee's ability to act impartially;
- The trustee has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest.

Where there is any disagreement about whether a trustee should withdraw this will be determined by a vote of the other trustees present. If a trustee leaves the meeting in this context they no longer count towards the quorum.

11. Committees

The Trust Board may establish any committees it chooses, and is required to have an audit and risk and a finance committee. The terms of reference, proceedings and membership of each committee are published on the trust website and must be reviewed annually, and approved at the first Trust Board meeting of the academic year. The membership of a committee can include people who aren't trustees and these members will have voting rights at committee meetings; the majority of the members present at any committee meeting, must be trustees. People who serve on a committee but are not trustees are not entitled to attend Trust Board meetings.

12. Meeting Papers

At least seven clear days before each board and committee meeting all trustees will be provided with a copy of the agenda and all papers to be discussed at the meeting. Papers should only be tabled at meetings, or distributed less than seven clear days in advance of the meeting, in exceptional circumstances which are agreed as such by the Chair of the Board or the relevant Committee.

Minutes of the meeting will be drawn up by the clerk, in line with current trust guidance, and shared with the Chair, usually within seven days of the meeting, and then circulated to all trustees. In circumstances where the clerk, or an appropriate substitute, has not been able to attend the meeting, a trustee or other attendee may be nominated to act as minute-taker for that meeting. The minutes will be approved at the next meeting of

the Board, or, in the case of committee minutes at the next Committee meeting, and marked as signed on GovernorHub following the meeting.

The agenda for every meeting of the Board, including committee meetings, all reports and documents for each meeting and the agreed minutes of meetings will be made available, as soon as possible after each meeting, to be viewed by anyone who asks to see them. This does not apply to any paper or minutes that the Board, or the Committee, has decided is confidential; confidential matters include anything relating specifically to a pupil or potential pupil of any academy and their family, a member of staff or a potential member of staff of any academy or of the central team.

13. Trust Board Meetings

The Trust Board can choose to meet more frequently, but must meet at least three times each year, and the current DfE guidance advises the board to meet six times per year. Co-op Academy Trust has agreed that the Board will meet at least quarterly, and will usually hold an additional development/strategy meeting during the summer term.

Other than the development/strategy meeting, meetings will last up to three hours. Meetings will usually be held in Manchester at 1 Angel Square, or virtually via an electronic meeting platform.

Meetings will usually be convened by the Chair, but any three trustees can put a request to the Clerk to the Board to convene a meeting and the Clerk must do so. When the Chair considers the issue(s) to be discussed to be urgent they can call an additional meeting with less than the usual notice, but otherwise trustees must be given at least seven clear days' notice of a meeting.

The usual quorum for a Trust Board meeting, which is the number of trustees who need to be present for the meeting to be valid, is 3 trustees or one third of the trustees in post at that time (not including any vacancies, rounded up to the nearest whole number), whichever is greater. The quorum for removing a co-opted trustee is two thirds of the trustees in post at that time, not including any vacancies, rounded up to the nearest whole number.

The quorum for a committee meeting is three committee members, which can include non-trustee committee members as long as the majority of committee members present are trustees.

13.1 Trust Board Decisions

Every question to be decided at a Trust Board meeting, or one of its committees, will be decided by a simple majority of the trustees present; no votes can be cast by proxy. Other than in contested ballots for the role of vice chair, votes will usually be determined by a show of hands, unless a secret ballot is requested by the Chair or any

trustee present. If there is an equal division of votes the chair of the meeting will have a second and casting vote.

There may be pressing circumstances where decisions have to be taken outside Board meetings. Where decisions that would ordinarily be taken at Board meetings have to be made on an urgent basis, they may be taken by the Chair in consultation with the CEO of the Trust, and will then be reported at the next Board meeting, with an explanation of the urgency.

The decision will be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.

In between meetings the Board is also allowed to make a decision by way of a resolution in writing. This is a document signed by every trustee. In practice this may be a number of identical documents, and electronic signatures (or email confirmations) are acceptable. Decisions made in this way should be minuted at the next board meeting.

Appendix E: Operating Principles for the Co-op MAT Academy Governing Councils (AGCs)

1. AGC membership

Academies can choose the size of their AGC within the range set by the Trust which is, ordinarily, 8-12 members. The maximum of 12 was introduced on 1 September 2021 and some AGCs had more members at that point. Over time, as governors leave, the maximum membership will take effect for existing academies in that position.

Governors are appointed from the following groups, which are explained below:

- 2-4 sponsor governors;
- 2 parent governors, elected or appointed as outlined below;
- Up to 2 staff governors;
- The Headteacher;
- Up to 4 community governors.

The Trust Board has the right to appoint additional governors, over and above the usual number, at any point, if it has concerns about the AGC or needs to strengthen it for any reason.

The membership of the AGC will usually include 1 staff governor, but the AGC can choose to have a second staff governor where it feels this is justified. This justification should be minuted at a full AGC meeting. Where there is 1 staff governor this individual will be a member of teaching or support staff. Where there are 2 staff governors one should be a member of the teaching staff and the other a member of the support staff.

1.1 Staff governors

Staff governors are elected by the staff of the academy. All staff employed by the Trust to work at the Academy, other than members of the senior leadership team and the school business manager, are eligible to put themselves forward for the role(s), and any election where more than one person puts themselves forward will be decided by a secret ballot of all staff, administered by the academy. A staff governor stops being a governor if they leave the employment of the Trust or move to a role not based at that academy.

The Headteacher is an "ex-officio" member of the AGC. This means that they are automatically a governor because of the job that they have, and their appointment as a governor continues as long as they're employed as Headteacher in that academy.

1.2 Parent governors

Parent governors are elected by the parents and carers of pupils at the academy. Any parent or registered carer of a pupil is eligible to put themselves forward for the role,

and any election where more than one person puts themselves forward will be decided by a secret ballot of all parents and carers, administered by the academy.

Where the role of Parent Governor has been advertised at least once and nobody has put themselves forward for the role, the AGC is permitted to appoint someone as a parent governor. This person must be the parent of a school-aged child, but the child doesn't have to be a pupil at the academy. A decision to appoint a parent governor in this way should be agreed at an AGC meeting.

1.3 Sponsor Governors

Sponsor governors are governors appointed by the Co-op Group, via the chair of the Trust Board. These will usually be Co-op employees, and the chair of governors will usually be appointed by the chair of the Trust Board from this group. Sponsor governors will be nominated for appointment by the Co-operative Partnership Manager (Education) and the Trust's Head of Governance, and their appointment will be approved by the chair of the Trust Board, in consultation with the CEO.

1.4 Community Governors

Community governors are appointed by the AGC because of the skills, experience and/or community links that they bring. They are likely to be part of, or have links with, the geographical or student community served by the academy, but an individual from outside this community may be appointed where they are considered to bring valuable skills and experience not present elsewhere within the AGC.

This may include representatives from the local authority or other specific partnerships that the academy values. The name 'community governor' was changed from 'co-opted governor' on 1 September 2021. All co-opted governors were re-named community governors at that point and their existing term of office continued to apply.

A decision to appoint a community governor should be agreed and minuted by the AGC at a quorate AGC meeting, after ensuring the trust-agreed appointment process has been followed.

Community governors must supply two satisfactory references to the Trust Governance Team, and be interviewed by the regional Governance Manager, before their appointment can be approved by the AGC.

2. Recruitment Checks

All governors must sign the Trust's code of conduct (Appendix C) and must complete an application for a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check within three weeks of their appointment or election. The DBS requirement does not apply to staff governors who will already have a valid DBS check carried out by the academy. DBS checks completed

for roles outside the Trust cannot be re-used. Failure to complete the DBS application within this time period is likely to result in the Governor being removed from the AGC.

3. Term of Office

The term of office for all governors, other than the Headteacher, is four years. The Headteacher is automatically a governor for the whole time they are in that role. As long as they are still eligible, a governor can be re-appointed or re-elected at the end of their term of office for a maximum of one further term. This means that the maximum length of time someone can stay as a governor on the same Co-op Academy AGC is eight years.

The maximum of eight years was introduced in September 2021, and some AGCs had longer-serving governors at that point. Over time, as governors' terms of office come to an end, governors in that position will not be eligible for re-appointment or re-election at that academy.

If a governor is still willing to serve and is no longer eligible to be reappointed / elected in their original academy they will be encouraged to consider appointment to another Co-op academy.

Where a governor has been on the governing body of the predecessor school for longer than four years at the time of conversion into the Trust and is reappointed/re-elected to the new AGC, they will be eligible to be appointed/elected for a maximum of one further four year term.

4. Resignation

A governor may resign their position at any time by writing to the AGC Clerk/Governance Team or the AGC Chair.

5. Removal and Suspension of Governors

Any governor can be removed from the AGC at any time by the Chair of the Trust Board, for any of the following reasons:

- They have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of the Trust;
- They have brought or is likely to bring the Academy or the Trust or the office of governor into disrepute;
- They have in breach of the duty of confidentiality to the Trust, the Academy or to any member of staff or pupil at the Academy;
- They have in breach of the Trust's code of conduct for governors in some other way.

A governor can also be suspended for a period of up to six months where this is considered to be a reasonable course of action by the Chair of the Trust Board, for example where an investigation is pending into an issue that could potentially lead to

the governor's removal. While a governor is suspended they will not be allowed to attend governors' meetings, receive meeting papers or otherwise have access to AGC information.

Before making a decision to remove or suspend a governor, the Chair of the Trust Board will consider anything the individual governor wants to say about the issue, and will consult the chair of the AGC.

A staff governor who is suspended from their paid role in an academy will, without any further action being needed, will also be suspended as a governor, for the same period of time.

6. Qualification as a governor

All governors must be at least eighteen years old and may not be a current pupil of the academy.

A governor will stop being a governor automatically if they become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing their own affairs.

A governor will be considered to have resigned from the AGC if they are absent without permission from all the full meetings of the AGC held within a period of six months, starting from the date of the first meeting missed. To be granted permission for absence the governor must have submitted apologies to either the chair or the AGC Clerk/Governance Team in advance of the meeting, and the meeting minutes must reflect that the governor's apologies were accepted by the meeting.

An individual is disqualified from being a governor in a Co-op academy if any of the disqualification criteria relating to bankruptcy, disqualification as a company director or charity trustee, prohibited or restricted employment or criminal convictions apply, as detailed in Schedule 4 of the The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, or any regulations which replace these.

7. Appointment / Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The chair of the AGC will be appointed by the Trust Board every year, at the beginning of the autumn term. The vice chair will be elected by the AGC at the first meeting of the autumn term, for a term of office which will last until the first meeting of the following autumn term. No governor who works at the academy will be eligible to be chair or vice chair. All eligible governors will be asked by the AGC clerk in advance of the first meeting of the autumn term whether they wish to nominate themselves for the role of vice chair. Where more than one person has put themselves forward for the role of vice chair there will be a secret ballot at the meeting.

The chair or vice chair can resign from the role at any time by writing to the clerk to the AGC, or a member of the Trust's Governance Team, and will automatically stop being

chair/vice chair if they choose to leave the AGC or are removed for some reason. Where the position of chair becomes vacant the vice chair will act as chair until the position is filled by the Trust Board Chair; where the position of vice chair falls vacant the AGC must elect a new vice chair at its next meeting. Self-nominations will be invited in advance of that meeting if time allows, otherwise self-nominations will be invited from all eligible governors at the meeting.

If the chair is unable to attend a meeting the vice chair will act as chair for the purposes of that meeting. If the vice chair is also absent the AGC will elect a chair for the purposes of that meeting, which may not be a governor who works at the academy.

8. Removal of the Chair / Vice Chair

The chair may be removed from the role by the Chair of the Trust Board, but, before a chair is removed, the Chair of the Trust Board will consider representations from the chair and consult with the Trust's Head of Governance.

The vice chair may be removed by the AGC. Any decision to remove the vice chair must be a specified agenda item at an AGC meeting, and the vice chair must be given the opportunity to speak on their own behalf, before leaving the meeting while a vote is taken on the issue via secret ballot.

9. Conflict of Interest

A governor will be considered to have a conflict of interest, and should withdraw from any related discussion and vote, in any situation where:

- there may be a conflict between the individual interests of the governor and the interests of the academy/college;
- a fair hearing is required and there is any reasonable doubt about a governor's ability to act impartially;
- The governor has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest.

A staff governor should withdraw from any discussion where they have an interest that is greater than that of the generality of the staff.

Where there is any disagreement about whether a governor should withdraw this will be determined by a vote of the other governors present. No staff governor, other than the Headteacher, may be present during the discussion of another member of staff's performance management or pay.

10. Meeting Minutes

Minutes will be drawn up by the designated AGC Clerk in line with current Trust guidance. In circumstances where the clerk, or an appropriate substitute, has not been

able to attend the meeting a governor or other attendee may be nominated to act as minute-taker for that meeting.

The minutes will be approved at the next meeting. Following their approval the minutes will be marked as 'signed' on the GovernorHub system, or any system that replaces this. A copy of the non confidential minutes will be available for inspection within the academy on request.

11. Committees

All AGCs will have a pay committee which will meet (in person or virtually) at least once a year (during the autumn term) to scrutinise and approve the Headteacher's pay recommendations. Other than the Headteacher, no governor employed to work at the academy may be present during the discussion of any other member of staff's pay or performance management.

Other than the pay committee, AGCs will not usually have any committees but may establish working parties as required, which may include both governors and staff members. An exception to this will be if the AGC has chosen to retain its finance committee, or equivalent. In this case one finance committee meeting will take place each term, usually immediately prior to the second full AGC meeting of the term.

12. AGC Meetings

The AGC must meet at least six times each year, once each half term. Meetings will usually be convened by the chair, but any three governors can put a request to the AGC clerk to convene a meeting and the clerk must do so.

At least six days before the meeting all governors must be provided with a copy of the agenda and all papers to be discussed at the meeting. Papers should only be tabled at meetings, or distributed less than six days in advance of the meeting, in exceptional circumstances which are agreed as such by the Chair of the AGC.

When the Chair considers the issue(s) to be discussed to be urgent they can call a meeting with less than the usual six days' notice.

The quorum for an AGC meeting, which is the number of governors who need to be present for the meeting to be valid, will be 50% of the number of governors on the AGC at that time, not including any vacancies, rounded up to the nearest whole number.

The quorum for a committee meeting is three governors, at least two of whom do not work at the academy. The quorum for a pay committee meeting is three governors, none of whom may work at the academy.

12.1 AGC Decisions

Every question to be decided at an AGC meeting, or one of its committees, will be decided by a simple majority of the governors present; no votes can be cast by proxy. Other than in contested ballots for the role of Vice Chair, votes will usually be determined by a show of hands, unless a secret ballot is requested by the Chair or any governor present. If there is an equal division of votes the Chair of the Meeting will have a second and casting vote.

In between meetings the AGC can make a decision by way of a written resolution. This is a document signed by every governor. In practice this may be a number of identical documents, and electronic signatures (or email confirmations from the confirmed email addresses declared on GovernorHub for each governor) are acceptable.

In circumstances where there is a risk of a serious detriment to a pupil, a pupil's family, a member of staff or the academy as whole, and it is not reasonable to call a meeting or reach a decision by written resolution the Chair can make a decision on behalf of the AGC. Any decisions taken in this way must be reported and minuted at the next AGC meeting.

12.2 Meeting Documents

The agenda for every meeting of the AGC, all reports and documents for each meeting and the signed minutes of meetings will be made available, as soon as possible after each meeting, for inspection at the academy, by anyone who asks to see them. This does not apply to any paper or minute that the AGC has decided is confidential; confidential matters include anything relating specifically to a pupil or potential pupil and their family, a member of staff or a potential member of staff.

12.3 Meeting Attendance

The following are entitled to attend meetings of the AGC:

- All elected, appointed or ex-officio governors of the academy;
- Any trustee (with the agreement of the Trust Board);
- The CEO of the Trust or their representative;
- The Clerk to the AGC;
- Anyone else, with the permission of the AGC.

Governors can participate in meetings of the AGC, and committee meetings, by telephone or video conference, provided that they have arranged this in advance and it has been possible to make appropriate arrangements. A governor participating virtually will count towards the quorum for the meeting as if they were in attendance in person. If a secret ballot takes place, arrangements should be made for governors attending virtually to make their views known privately to the Clerk to the Meeting; if, after all

reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still go ahead as long as it is otherwise quorate.

The AGC can also agree for meetings to be conducted entirely via a virtual meeting platform.

Appendix F: Scheme of Delegation Summary Matrix

Scheme of Delegation

The following descriptions are used in this document to describe the roles of the various groups and individuals.

Accountable (and Approver) - A

Ultimately answerable for the task being delivered. Delegates the task to those responsible. There should be only one group/person accountable for each task/decision.

Responsible – R

Responsible for the delivery. Does the work to achieve the task. Can be shared between groups/individuals.

Consulted – C

Needs to be involved before the decision is made. Communication is two-way – these are important stakeholders or have relevant specialist knowledge in the subject.

Informed – I

Those to be kept up-to-date on progress. Communication is one-way, and may be updated only when the decision has been taken or the task completed.

References to the CEO include members of the central team to whom the CEO will delegate, for example the Chief Finance Officer, in relation to financial matters and the Regional Directors, in relation to educational matters.

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
1. Governance					
1.1	Setting Trust vision	A R			
1.2	Setting Trust culture and values	A R			
1.3	Setting Trust strategic plan	A	R	C	C
1.4	Undertaking regular skills audits of trustees	A			
1.5	Undertaking regular skills audits of governors			A	
1.6	Reporting on the effectiveness of AGCs		A R	C	C
1.7	Establishing and appointing board committees	A R			
1.8	Ensuring statutory policies are in place and published as needed	A	R	C	C
1.9	Comply with all Trust policies	A	R	R	R
1.10	Nominating Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and SEND	A R			

1.11	Ensure Trust website is maintained and compliant with statutory requirements and DfE/ESFA expectations and in line with Trust brand requirements	A	R		
1.12	Ensure academy websites are maintained and compliant with statutory requirements and DfE/ESFA expectations and in line with Trust brand requirements		C	A	R
1.13	Procure appropriate governor indemnity insurance	A	R		
1.14	Appoint (and remove) to the post of the Chair of AGC	A	R	I	C
1.15	Appoint (and remove) to the post of Vice-chair of the AGC			A R	I
1.16	Hold 6 AGC meetings a year		I	A R	C
1.17	Approve/ratify the appointment of (and remove) sponsor governors	A	R		I
1.18	Approve the appointment of community governors		C	A R	I
1.19	Establish the process for electing parent and staff governors		A R	I	I
1.20	Implement the process for electing parent and staff governors		C	I	A
1.21	Set up register of governors' business interests and ensure these are published on academy website		I	A	R
1.22	Set up register of Trustees' business interests and ensure these are published on Trust website	A	R		
1.23	Approve and set up governors' expenses scheme	A	R		
1.24	Approve and set up trustees' expenses scheme	A	R		
1.25	Consider whether or not to delegate functions to individuals or working groups of AGCs	A		R	
1.26	Provide a summary of actions and/ or decisions taken by AGCs for the Trust Board	I	R	A	
1.27	Determine the indicators that trigger the withdrawal of delegated responsibility	A	R	I	I
1.28	Review scheme of delegation annually	A	R	I	I
1.29	Maintain a register of Governor training			A	R

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
2. Finance					
2.1	Approve Trust three year business plan	A	R	I	I
2.2	Approve Trust budget plan for the financial year	A	R	I	I
2.3	Approve academy three year business plan (subject to board approval 2.1 & 2.2)		I	A	R
2.4	Approve Academy budget plan for the financial year (subject to Board approval 2.1 & 2.2)		I	A	R
2.5	Monitor monthly expenditure including all additional school funds		I	R	A
2.6	Report monthly expenditure including all additional school funds		A		R
2.7	Monitor quarterly expenditure including all additional school funds and debts	R	A	R	
2.8	Report and review quarterly expenditure including all non-general academy grant funding and any debt collection	R	A	I	
2.9	Approve revenue expenditure – budgeted	See Financial Operations and Procedures Manual and Summary of Authorisation Levels (below)			
2.10	Approve revenue expenditure – unbudgeted	See Financial Operations and Procedures Manual and Summary of Authorisation Levels (below)			
2.11	Approve capital expenditure – budgeted	See Financial Operations and Procedures Manual and Summary of Authorisation Levels (below)			
2.12	Approval of capital expenditure – unbudgeted	See Financial Operations and Procedures Manual and Summary of Authorisation Levels (below)			
2.13	Establish and publish Trust-wide charging and remissions policy	A	R	C	I
2.14	Establish and publish academy-level charging and remissions policy	I		A	R
2.15	Bad debt write-off in accordance with Academies Financial Handbook	A	R		I
2.16	Issuance of guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort	A	R	I	I
2.17	Appoint auditors	A	R	I	I

2.18	Approve financial policy, procedures and controls across Trust	A	R	C	C
2.19	Comply with the Academy Trust Handbook including cheques/ BACS Processed by the Academy to be signed in accordance with the scheme of delegation/ bank mandate	A		R	R
2.20	AGC and Headteacher required to obtain the prior approval of the SLT before entering into a contract with a value in excess of £25k within a year	See Section 17 of the Finance Regulations			

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
3. Human Resources					
3.1	Determine academy staffing structures in accordance with approved budgets		C	A	R
3.2	Approval of appointments falling outside of the academy approved budget	A	R	C	R
3.3	Central Trust senior leadership team (SLT) appointments in accordance with budget decisions / approvals	A	R		
3.4	Trust central and hub team appointments (exc. SLT) in accordance with budget decisions/approvals	I	A R		
3.5	Executive Headteacher/Headteacher appointments	A	R	C	
3.6	Head of school appointments	I	A R	C	
3.7	Vice principal/deputy headteacher appointments in accordance with budget decisions/approvals		C	A	R
3.8	All other academy-based appointments within approved budgets			A	R
3.9	Determine pay policy (including discretions)	A	R	I	I
3.10	Determine trust-wide terms and conditions of employment	A	R	I	I
3.11	Implement pay policy and terms and conditions of employment within academies			A	R
3.12	Determine performance management (PM) policy	A	R	I	I
3.13	Undertake PM of CEO	A R			
3.14	Undertake PM of Headteacher		A R	C	
3.15	Implement PM policy and undertake performance management of all other academy staff		I	A	R
3.16	Implement PM Policy and undertake performance management of central and hub staff	I	A R		

3.17	Determine disciplinary and capability policies	A	R	I	I
3.18	Implement disciplinary and capability procedures in respect of headteachers		A R	C	I
3.19	Implement disciplinary and capability procedures in respect of all other academy staff		C	A	R
3.20	Implement disciplinary and capability procedures in respect of central Trust SLT	A R (for CEO)	R		
3.21	Implement disciplinary and capability procedures in respect of all other central and hub staff		A R		
3.22	Lead Trust wide relations with trade unions, and agree trade union recognition and facility agreement (TURFA)	A	R	I	I
3.23	Lead Academy wide relations with trade unions, and implement TURFA		I	A	R
3.24	Approval of all exit payments exceeding contractual notice (e.g. settlement agreements, redundancy payments) in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook	See Financial Operations and Procedures Manual and Summary of Authorisation Levels (and summarised in Table 1 below)			
3.25	Approval of early retirement (where there is a cost to the organisation)	A	R	I	C
3.26	Approval of pension discretions within the local government pension scheme (LGPS) requirements	A	R	I	C
3.27	Ensure compliance with equalities legislation	A	R	C	C

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
4. Curriculum and Learning					
4.1	Prepare and agree Trust curriculum and qualification statement	A	R	C	C
4.2	Implement curriculum and qualification policy		A	C	R
4.3	Monitoring standards of teaching		A	C	R
4.4	Decide which subject options will be taught		A	C	R
4.5	Set targets for Trust outcomes	A	R	I	I
4.6	Deliver targets for academy outcomes	I	A	C	R
4.7	Plan and deliver academy improvement strategies		A	C	R

4.8	Determine Trust student/ pupil discipline principles statement	A	R		
4.9	Implement AGC discipline policy based on Trust principles statement			A	R
4.10	Statutory review of permanent and fixed term exclusions		C	A	R
4.11	Direct reinstatement of excluded students			A	R
4.12	Set admissions policy and ensure this is reviewed in line with statutory requirements	A	C	R	
4.13	Form student admission appeals panel and conduct admission appeals process			A	R
4.14	Any reduction or increase to the published admission number (PAN)	A		R	C
4.15	Arrange for collective worship			A	R
4.16	Set times of academy day and dates of academy terms and holidays		I	A	R
4.17	Ensure that academy meets 380 sessions in an academic year		I	A	R
4.18	Prepare and publish the academy prospectus			A	R
4.19	Ensure provision of free academy meals to those students meeting the criteria			A	R
4.20	Adopt and review home/academy agreements			A	R
4.21	Discharge duties in respect of students with special needs by appointing a "responsible officer"			A	R
4.22	Ensure compliance with SEND Code of Practice	I	C	A	R
4.23	Deliver support for looked after children	I	C	A	R
4.24	Approve non-routine educational visits involving adventurous activities and/or overnight stays, and/or foreign travel		A	R	C
4.25	Approve all other educational visits			I	A R

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
5. Buildings					
5.1	Ensure that health and safety regulations are followed including regular audits		I	A	R
5.2	Building insurance and personal liability	A	R	I	I
5.3	Maintain Academy buildings in accordance with approved Academy buildings strategy and approved revenue budget			A	R

5.4	Approval of unbudgeted capital projects in excess of £50k Note that costs associated with the tender preparations are acceptable as long as the project has been approved as part of the annual budget process.	See Section 17 of the Financial Regulations			
5.5	Establish a Trust Health and Safety Policy (including risk assessment)	A	R	I	I
5.6	Implement the Health and Safety Policy approved by the Trust Board and Undertake risk assessments in accordance with that Policy		I	A	R
5.7	Request an external audit of Health and Safety practice	A	R	I	
5.8	Produce Academy buildings strategy for approval		A	R	R

Activity		TB	CEO	AGC	HT
6. Other					
6.1	Agree and monitor academy strategy around community engagement			A	R
6.2	Agree and implement procedures for reporting to parents		I	A	R
6.3	Ensure stakeholder voices are heard in trust-wide decision making	A	R		
6.4	Ensure stakeholder voices are heard in local decision making			A	R
6.5	Set trust-wide policy in relation to safeguarding children and young people in line with statutory requirements and monitor its effectiveness	A	R		
6.6	Set academy level policy in relation to safeguarding children and young people in line with Trust and statutory requirements, including appointing a suitably trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and monitor the effectiveness of this	A	C	R	
6.7	Agree Trust branding in agreement with the sponsor	A	R	I	I
6.8	Comply with Trust branding			A	R
6.9	Establish a Risk Management Policy (including Risk Registers)	A	C	R	I
6.10	Maintain, monitor and report in respect of trust-wide risk registers in accordance with the Risk Management Policy	A	R		
6.11	Maintain, monitor and report in respect of academy risk registers in accordance with the Risk Management Policy			A	R

Table 1 - Summary of Financial Delegations

Co-operative Academies Trust	Business Planning / Re-Forecasts) - Revenue Expenditure Authorisation Levels							Capital Investment / Expenditure Authorisation Levels				Trust Procurement - Authorisation Levels			
	Business Plan Budget Approvals	Revised forecast (Re-forecast) approvals	Budget/Re-forecast Overspend Approvals	New Unbudgeted/re-forecast Cost Approvals	New Unbudgeted/re-forecast Staff Costs	Budget/Virement Approvals	Settlement Agreement/Restructuring Cost Approvals	B Plan/ Forecast (s) All Capital Schemes Approvals	Capital - Minor Works < £50,000 Approvals	Capital - Major Works > £50,000 Approvals	All Capital (Budgeted and Unbudgeted Overspends Approvals	Tender / Contract Award Approvals	All Purchase Orders/Invoice Approvals	Order/Invoice Overspend Approvals	Employee Expense Claim Approvals
Specified Budget Holder	Preparation	Preparation	-	-	-	-	-	Preparation	Upto £2,000	-	-	-	Upto £2,000	-	-
Academy Finance Lead/ RFD	Preparation	Preparation	-	-	-	-	-	Preparation	Upto £5,000	-	-	-	Upto £5,000	-	Upto £500
Academy Leader/ EHd	Preparation	Preparation	Upto £5,000	Upto £5,000	Upto £5,000	Upto £20,000	-	Preparation	Upto £30,000	-	Upto £5,000	Upto £30,000	Upto £30,000	Upto £5,000	Upto £1,000
Academy Governing Council (AGC)	Review/Recommend	Review/Recommend	Upto £10,000 With RD Approval	Upto £10,000 With RD Approval	Upto £10,000 With RD Approval	Upto £40,000 With RD & COO Approval	Upto £5,000 (Alone) Upto £10,000 With RD & CPO Approval	Review/Recommend	Upto £40,000	-	Upto £10,000 With RD Approval	Upto £40,000	Upto £40,000	Upto £10,000	Upto £2,000
Senior Leadership Team (Trust SLT)	Review/Recommend	Review/Recommend	Upto £50,000 With CEO Approval	Upto £50,000 With CEO Approval	Upto £80,000 With CEO/COO Approval	Above £40,000	Upto £25,000	Review/Recommend	Upto £50,000	Upto £50,000	Upto £50,000 With CEO Approval	Upto £50,000	Upto £50,000	Upto £15,000	-
Chief People Officer (CPO)															Upto £1,000
Regional Director (RD)															Upto £1,000
Chief Operating Officer (COO)															Upto £1,000
Trust Governance Manager (TGM)															Upto £1,000
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Review/Recommend	Review/Recommend	Over £50,000 With Board Approval	Over £50,000 With Board Approval	Over £80,000 With Board Approval	Above £40,000	Upto £50,000	Review/Recommend	-	Upto £100,000	Over £50,000 With Board Approval	Upto £100,000	Upto £100,000	Upto £30,000	Upto £2,000
Board	Approval	Approval	See Above	See Above	See Above	-	Above £50,000	Approval	-	Above £100,000	See Above	Above £100,000	Above £100,000	Above £30,000	Above £2,000
Trust Procurement Thresholds															
1 Verbal Quote									Upto £2,000	Upto £2,000		Upto £2,000	Upto £2,000		
2 Verbal Quotes									£2,001 and £5,000	£2,001 and £5,000		£2,001 and £5,000	£2,001 and £5,000		
3 Written Quotes									£5,001 and £30,000	£5,001 and £30,000		£5,001 and £30,000	£5,001 and £30,000		
Full Tender Requirement									Above £30,000	Above £30,000		Above £30,000	Above £30,000		
Notes															
This table is intended to supplement the finance regulations and should be read in conjunction with the relevant Finance Regulations version -							Link								
All approvals are cumulative - all delegates earlier in the chain must have approved before passing onto the next delegate (i.e. an order of £25,000 needs to be approved by Budget Holder>Academy Finance Lead>Academy Leader) and must be an employee of the Trust															