Four Hills Education Trust

Where Every Step is Shaped with **CARE**

SCHEME OF GOVERNANCE & DELEGATION

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Table of Contents

Our Schools .....

1. INTRODUCTION 3

2. MISSION, VALUES, TRUST AIM AND STRATEGIC GOALS 5

3. MEMBERS: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES 8

4. TRUSTEES: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES 11

5. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP: CEO AND EXECUTIVE GROUP .....

6. COMMITTEES 17

7. LOCAL GOVERNING BOARDS (LGBs) 21

8. SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS 27

9. DELEGATED POWERS – CORE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK 31

10. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT MATTERS 33

11. ADMISSIONS AND BEHAVIOUR 36

12. LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD CONSTITUTION AND OPERATIONS 38

13. TRUST-WIDE POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE 40

14. RISK, AUDIT, AND LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY 43

15. INTERVENTION, SUPPORT, AND INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARDS (IEBs) 46

16. RESERVED MATTERS OF THE TRUST BOARD 49

17. ANNUAL REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENTS 51

18. APPENDICES 53

Our Schools

• Albrighton Primary School & Nursery
• Meadows Primary School & Nursery
• Millbrook Primary School & Nursery
• William Reynolds Primary School & Nursery
• Woodlands Primary School & Nursery (Partnership working)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Document

This Scheme of Governance and Delegation defines the framework for decision-making, accountability, and responsibility across the Four Hills Education Trust (hereafter referred to as "the Trust"). It serves as a binding governance document for:

- Members of the Trust
- Board of Trustees
- Committees of the Trust Board
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Executive Leadership Team
- Local Governing Boards (LGBs)
- Headteachers
- Other senior leaders and operational leads

This scheme establishes who makes which decisions and how accountability is maintained across the Trust. It reflects our statutory duties, internal delegation, and best practice, and is aligned with all legal and regulatory frameworks.

1.2 Scope and Authority

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, operating under:

- The Companies Act 2006
- The Charities Act 2011
- The Education Act 2002 and 2011
- The Academy Trust Handbook (2025)
- DfE Governance Handbook and Competency Framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- Any amendments to the above or successor legislation

This Scheme is issued and approved by the Board of Trustees, which reserves the right to amend, suspend, or withdraw delegation at any time. Local Governing Boards,

committees, and executive officers act within powers delegated by the Board and cannot sub-delegate beyond what is specified in this document.

1.3 Legal Context and Precedence

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with:

- The Articles of Association of the Trust (2025)
- The Trust's Funding Agreements with the Department for Education
- The Trust's Terms of Reference for committees and LGBs
- All approved Trust-wide policies

In any case of conflict, the Articles of Association take precedence, followed by the Academy Trust Handbook, and then this Scheme of Delegation.

1.4 Review and Approval

This Scheme is reviewed annually, or earlier if:

- Legislation changes
- The Trust undergoes structural change (e.g. new schools join)
- A school is placed under 'at risk' status
- An LGB is dissolved or suspended
- The Trust Board approves a material change to governance

Review process includes:

- Recommendations by the CEO
- Consultation with LGB Chairs and Headteachers
- Consideration by the Audit & Risk Committee
- Formal approval by the full Board of Trustees

1.5 Principles of Delegation

This Scheme operates under the following principles:

- Subsidiarity: Decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level
- Accountability: Clarity in who is responsible for outcomes
- Transparency: Decisions should be evidence-based and well-documented
- Adaptability: Delegation is linked to risk, performance, and context
- Compliance: All decisions must be within the scope of law and policy
- Consistency: Shared systems, policies, and expectations across schools
- Improvement: Delegation supports improvement and innovation

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1.6 Values-Driven Governance

The Trust's values underpin our governance framework:

1. Critical Thinking

We nurture curiosity, independence, and intellectual confidence. Our learners and leaders are encouraged to think deeply, question assumptions, and explore creatively. Innovation and research are central to our development — we learn from evidence, adapt with purpose, and refine our practice to meet the needs of a changing world.

2. Aspiration

We believe in the potential of every child and adult. Aspiration fuels motivation, ambition, and hope. We set high expectations and support every learner to aim high, regardless of their starting point. Our governance and leadership are driven by a shared belief in excellence and equity.

3. Resilience

We rise to challenge. We teach and model perseverance, problem-solving, and reflection — recognising that setbacks are stepping stones to growth. Resilience is built through adversity, and we help our communities develop the strength to thrive.

4. Empathy

We lead with humanity. Relationships and emotional understanding are central to learning and leadership. We foster inclusive, caring environments where every individual feels seen, heard, and valued. Empathy drives our culture of kindness, respect, and collaboration.

These values are embedded in all decisions made at every level of the Trust.

1.7 Publication and Accessibility

This Scheme is a public document. It will be:

- Published on the Trust's website
- Shared with all Members, Trustees, Governors, and staff leaders
- Incorporated into induction for new leaders and governors
- Used as a reference in complaints, escalation, or intervention matters

1.8 Stakeholder Voice

The Trust will implement formal mechanisms for stakeholder engagement, including annual surveys for pupils, parents, and staff. Feedback will be reviewed by LGBs and Trustees and used to inform strategic planning and school improvement priorities.

2. MISSION, VALUES, TRUST AIM AND STRATEGIC GOALS

2.1 Mission Statement

At Four Hills Education Trust, our mission is:
"To create a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment where every learner thrives and every voice is valued. We exist to break down barriers to opportunity, nurture ambition, and empower young people and communities to flourish."

We believe education is a powerful vehicle for social justice and transformation. We are uncompromising in our pursuit of high standards and inclusion, ensuring every school, child, and adult is part of something aspirational, collaborative, and purpose-driven.

2.2 Our Trust Aim

"Together, we climb: reaching extraordinary heights."
This powerful statement encapsulates the Trust's collective ambition. It reflects our belief that success is achieved through unity, courage, and relentless aspiration. Everyone in the Four Hills family — from pupils and staff to governors and communities, climbs together.

Our aim symbolises:

- High aspiration and perseverance
- Mutual support and shared responsibility
- A relentless drive to ensure no child or school is left behind

It inspires every action taken under this Scheme of Delegation, serving as a reminder that **governance, leadership, and accountability exist to support the climb — not to limit it**.

2.3 Our Core Values: The CARE Approach

At Four Hills Education Trust, our strength lies in the values that guide how we work and learn together. These aren't just words — they're lived daily in our classrooms and communities, uniting our schools and shaping our hopes for every child.
We call this our CARE approach: Critical Thinking, Aspiration, Resilience, and Empathy. Four pillars that define our culture and our commitment.

We are curious, adaptive, and open to new ideas. We learn from evidence and experience, and we constantly refine our practices to improve outcomes in a changing world. Innovation and research are not just aspirations, they are embedded in our culture and governance. We actively seek out new thinking, pilot emerging approaches, and evaluate impact rigorously. This commitment ensures that our Trust evolves intelligently, remains responsive to the needs of our communities, and leads with integrity in a dynamic educational landscape.

Together, these values shape our identity and our promise, ensuring every child across the Trust is supported to grow as both a learner and a compassionate individual. They guide every decision we make, every policy we adopt, and every conversation we have, from the classroom to the boardroom.

These values are embedded in:

- Recruitment and development of staff, governors, and leaders
- The governance code of conduct
- School improvement planning and accountability reviews
- Our leadership behaviours and communication frameworks

2.4 Strategic Objectives (2025–2028)

Our Strategic Plan sets out five high-level goals that support the delivery of our mission and values.

1. Outstanding Education for All

- Every child receives a high-quality, inclusive education
- Narrow gaps in attainment through early intervention and curriculum access
- Deliver a knowledge-rich, values-driven curriculum across all schools

2. Transformational Leadership

- Empower leaders at every level
- Embed consistency and clarity in roles, responsibilities, and performance standards
- Build a diverse and expert governance community

3. Financial Resilience and Operational Excellence

- Strengthen financial oversight and efficiency
- Ensure sustainability through strategic resource planning
- Maximise value for money across central and school-level functions

4. Culture of Safety, Belonging and Wellbeing

- Lead the sector in safeguarding practice and compliance
- Promote staff and pupil wellbeing and mental health
- Develop inclusive environments where difference is celebrated

5. Partnership and Place

- Engage parents, carers, and stakeholders meaningfully
- Strengthen collaboration with local services and national networks
- Celebrate and contribute to the cultural and economic life of our communities

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2.5 Strategic Golden Threads

The following 'golden threads' run across every priority and governance layer:

- **Safeguarding First**
- **Collaboration, not Competition**
- **Evidence-Informed Practice**
- **Leadership that Listens**
- **Ambition Without Exception**

These threads underpin all expectations outlined in this Scheme — from finance and staffing to educational outcomes and community engagement.

2.6 Alignment to National Frameworks

This Scheme of Delegation supports the Trust's strategic alignment to:

- The **Academy Trust Handbook**
- The **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)**

- The **Governance Handbook and Competency Framework (DfE)**
- NGA and ISBL standards for effective governance and school business leadership

Trustees, executives, governors, and school leaders are expected to act in accordance with these frameworks, embedding them within their responsibilities and ensuring that Trust strategy supports national expectations for strong MAT governance and performance.

2.7 Succession Planning

The Trust Board will oversee succession planning for Trustees, LGB members, and executive leaders. This includes identifying future leaders, maintaining a skills matrix, and ensuring continuity of governance and leadership capacity.

3. MEMBERS: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Overview

Members are the custodians of the Four Hills Education Trust's governance. They are akin to the shareholders of a company limited by guarantee. While their role is distinct from the operational and strategic oversight performed by Trustees, Members have a vital function in upholding the Trust's charitable purpose, ensuring effective governance, and safeguarding the long-term vision of the organisation.

Members do not sit on the Board of Trustees and are not involved in day-to-day decision-making or operational oversight. Their powers are largely exercised at specific points in the Trust's lifecycle — such as incorporation, structural changes, or intervention, or where governance failure has occurred.

3.2 Statutory and Constitutional Status

Members derive their powers from:

- The **Companies Act 2006**
- The Trust's **Articles of Association (2025)**
- Charity and company law relating to exempt charities
- DfE expectations as defined in the **Academy Trust Handbook** and **Governance Handbook**

The Trust must have a minimum of **three Members**, but it is best practice to have at least **five**, with the majority being **independent of the Board of Trustees**.

3.3 Core Functions of Members

a. Appointment and Removal of Trustees

- Appoint Trustees to ensure a balanced and skilled Board
- Remove Trustees in accordance with the Articles where there is serious concern about governance failure or breach of duties
- Approve the appointment of new Members (other than those appointed by the Secretary of State)

b. Approval of Changes to Governance Structure

- Approve any amendments to the **Articles of Association**
- Approve the adoption of a new governance model or major structural changes (e.g. merger, change of legal status)

c. Accountability and Oversight

- Receive the **Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements** from the Trust Board
- Hold the Board of Trustees to account for the Trust's performance (via formal channels, not operational involvement)
- Request a review or audit of governance in the event of serious concern

d. Safeguarding the Trust's Purpose

- Ensure that the Trust operates within its charitable objectives
- Act if the Trustees fail to ensure compliance or integrity in the Trust's direction

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3.4 Meetings and Procedures

- Members meet formally **at least once per year** at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Additional meetings may be convened if required.
- The agenda includes:
    - Receipt of annual accounts
    - Appointment and retirement of Trustees
    - Review of governance effectiveness
- Decisions are recorded in minutes and stored in accordance with Trust policies.

3.5 Relationship with the Trust Board

- Members **appoint Trustees** who are then responsible for the day-to-day and strategic leadership of the Trust.
- Members are **not involved** in operational decisions, the setting of strategy, or committee membership.
- The CEO and Trustees **may attend Member meetings** to provide reports and answer questions, but do not vote.
- Members may raise concerns to the Board Chair or via the Governance Professional.

3.6 Skills, Independence, and Conduct

- Members are expected to act with integrity and in the best interest of the Trust and its pupils.
- The Trust will ensure Members have:
    - A clear understanding of their role
    - Access to training and governance updates
    - Support from the Governance Professional as needed

- Members sign a **Code of Conduct** on appointment and are subject to the same principles of public life (Nolan Principles) as Trustees and governors.

3.7 Member Engagement

While the role is non-operational, Members are encouraged to:

- Attend Trust-wide celebrations and milestone events
- Receive termly impact reports
- Be consulted during Trust-wide strategic reviews
- Take part in external governance reviews if required

3.8 Conflict of Interest and Eligibility

- A Member may not also be an **employee of the Trust** or serve as a Trustee (except where permitted under the Articles).
- Members must declare any business or personal interests that may conflict with the objectives of the Trust.
- The Governance Professional will maintain a **Register of Interests** for Members, reviewed annually.

3.9 Escalation and Intervention Rights

In the rare event of a **governance breakdown**, Members hold residual rights to:

- Remove Trustees
- Appoint interim Trustees
- Commission a governance review
- Notify the Department for Education of serious irregularity

These powers exist to **protect the integrity** of the Trust and its purpose and would only be used if the Trust Board had failed to address serious issues of compliance, performance, or legality.

3.10 Member Meeting Frequency and Strategic Engagement

While Members are not involved in day-to-day governance, they are encouraged to meet formally **at least three times per year**, in addition to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Suggested termly focus areas include:

- **Autumn Term**: Trust-wide outcomes and annual report review
- **Spring Term**: Review of strategic planning and medium-term goals
- **Summer Term**: Alignment of values, long-term vision, and governance impact

Members may request data, reports, or input from Trustees and the Executive as required to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

4. TRUSTEES: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Overview

The Board of Trustees is the **governing body** of the Four Hills Education Trust. It holds **collective responsibility** for the overall governance, financial integrity, legal compliance, and educational outcomes across all academies within the Trust. The Board ensures that the Trust's vision and values are implemented effectively and that all children, staff, and stakeholders benefit from a high-performing, strategically-led Trust.
Trustees are company directors and charity trustees, acting within the legal framework of:

- The **Companies Act 2006**
- The **Charities Act 2011**
- The Trust's **Articles of Association**
- The **Academy Trust Handbook (DFE)**
- The **Education Acts**
- UK **GDPR** and other statutory legislation

They are the **accountable body** for all academies in the Trust.

4.2 Collective and Individual Duties

While decisions are made collectively, each Trustee must:

- **Act in the best interests** of the Trust and all of its pupils
- **Comply with charity law** and act only within the Trust's charitable objects
- **Avoid conflicts of interest** and declare any that arise
- **Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence**
- **Respect confidentiality** and uphold governance integrity
- Be familiar with, and act within, the **Trust's Articles of Association** and this Scheme

Trustees operate in a **non-executive capacity** and do not involve themselves in operational matters, which are delegated to the CEO and leadership teams.

4.3 Strategic Functions

The Trust Board is responsible for the following three core functions (DfE Governance Handbook):

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction

- Define and approve the Trust's strategic priorities
- Embed the Trust's values in governance and leadership
- Ensure mission-aligned decision-making at all levels

2. Holding executive leaders to account

- Line manage and appraise the CEO

- Hold the Executive Team accountable for school performance
- Scrutinise the impact of leadership across the Trust

3. Overseeing financial performance

- Approve the budget and ensure financial sustainability
- Monitor value for money, reserves, and risk
- Ensure full compliance with ESFA, audit, and procurement regulations

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4.4 Specific Responsibilities

The Board must:

- Ensure the effective delivery of the **Trust's vision, values, and strategic plan**
- Approve the **Scheme of Delegation**, and all **statutory and key Trust policies**
- Ensure high standards of **safeguarding, SEND provision**, and **educational outcomes**
- Approve the **annual budget** and financial strategy
- Receive and approve the **annual accounts and external audit**
- Manage the **Trust Risk Register** and ensure effective risk mitigation
- Oversee Trust-wide compliance with the **Academy Trust Handbook**, DfE guidance, and law
- Appoint and remove:
    - The **CEO**
    - The **Accounting Officer**
    - **Headteachers**, following recommendation by the CEO
- Commission external reviews and audits of performance or governance
- Approve proposals for new schools joining or leaving the Trust
- Ensure there is a clear succession plan for leadership and governance

4.4.1 Trustee Training and Development

The Trust will maintain an annual governance training calendar. All Trustees and LGB members will complete induction and ongoing CPD aligned with statutory duties and emerging best practice.

4.5 Delegation and Accountability

While the Trust Board delegates many responsibilities to committees, the CEO, and Local Governing Boards, **legal accountability remains with the Board**. Delegation does not absolve the Board of responsibility.
Delegated powers are:

- Detailed in this **Scheme of Delegation**
- Approved and reviewed annually by the Board

- Subject to withdrawal or amendment if a school is underperforming or at risk

All delegated bodies must report back regularly to the Board.

4.5.1 Crisis and Reputation Management

The Trust will maintain a crisis management protocol, including media handling, reputational risk mitigation, and escalation procedures. This will be reviewed annually by the Audit & Risk Committee and incorporated into the Trust's risk register.

4.5.2 Environmental and Sustainability Oversight

The Trust will monitor environmental compliance and sustainability performance across all academies. Trustees will receive annual reports aligned with the DfE's Sustainability Strategy and Net Zero targets.

4.6 Board Composition and Recruitment

The Trust Board will:

- Comply with the Articles of Association regarding the number of Trustees
- Maintain a balanced and diverse membership, including individuals with expertise in:
    - Education
    - Finance and audit
    - Legal and compliance
    - Estates and health & safety
    - Community engagement

Trustees are recruited through a transparent, skills-based process and serve for a term of up to **four years**, renewable once. All Trustees are subject to:

- A full **DBS check**
- Conflict of interest declarations
- Governance induction and ongoing CPD
- A signed **Code of Conduct**

4.7 Board Culture and Conduct

The Board models the Trust's values in all its work. It is committed to:

- Ethical and child-centred decision-making
- Constructive challenge and mutual respect
- Transparency and open governance
- Upholding the **Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life**:
    - Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership

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4.8 Meetings and Decision-Making

The Board will:

- Meet at least **five times per year**, or more as needed
- Operate within a formal meeting cycle coordinated by the **Governance Professional**
- Receive agendas and papers in advance
- Record minutes and decisions in line with DfE expectations
- Maintain quoracy and voting procedures as per the Articles of Association

Special meetings may be called where necessary, including for urgent interventions or statutory approvals.

4.8.1 Digital Governance Tools

The Trust will use secure digital platforms to manage governance documentation, policy tracking, and performance dashboards. Access will be granted to Trustees, LGBs, and relevant staff to support transparency and remote collaboration.

4.9 Relationship with CEO and Executive Leadership

The Trust Board delegates the **day-to-day leadership** and operational management of the Trust to the **CEO**, who is also the **Accounting Officer** under the Academy Trust Handbook.
The CEO:

- Reports to the Chair of the Trust Board
- Attends all Board and Committee meetings (unless disqualified)
- Proposes strategies, budgets, staffing structures, and key appointments
- Leads performance and improvement across the Trust

The Board must provide the CEO with appropriate **support, challenge, and clarity** of expectations through formal appraisal, regular oversight, and clear delegation.

5. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP: CEO AND EXECUTIVE GROUP

5.1 Overview

The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** is the most senior executive of the Four Hills Education Trust and acts as both:

- The **Accounting Officer**, as defined by the **Academy Trust Handbook**
- The **lead adviser** to the Trust Board on strategy, performance, and operations

The CEO is responsible for the **day-to-day leadership and management** of the Trust and has delegated authority to lead, plan, monitor, and develop the Trust in accordance with the strategy and policies set by the Trust Board.
The CEO is **a Trustee** and is **accountable to the Board**, specifically the **Chair of Trustees**.

5.2 Statutory Status and Legal Accountability

In accordance with the **Academy Trust Handbook**, the CEO is legally designated as the **Accounting Officer**, with personal responsibility for:

- Regularity and propriety of public expenditure
- Value for money and financial efficiency
- Ensuring Trust compliance with ESFA and government guidance
- Certifying and signing off the Trust's Annual Accounts and Value for Money Statement
- Reporting any serious irregularities to the ESFA or Charity Commission

5.3 Responsibilities of the CEO

The CEO leads the **Trust-wide executive functions** and is delegated the following strategic responsibilities:

a. Strategic Leadership

- Develop and implement the Trust's **three-year strategic plan**
- Lead the development of Trust-wide objectives and performance measures
- Align executive and school improvement functions to the strategic vision
- Report regularly to the Board on Trust-wide progress

b. Educational Outcomes

- Monitor and drive school improvement across all academies
- Ensure consistent, evidence-informed practice across all schools
- Lead on Ofsted readiness, quality assurance, and standards evaluation
- Line manage and support Headteachers to improve pupil outcomes

c. Finance and Resources

- Prepare and submit Trust-wide and school-level budgets
- Oversee resource allocation, procurement, and financial planning
- Ensure compliance with financial controls and reporting obligations
- Work closely with the CFO to maintain financial health and reserves strategy

d. Safeguarding and Compliance

- Act as the senior responsible officer for safeguarding assurance across the Trust
- Ensure schools comply with **KCSIE**, statutory safeguarding audits, and safer recruitment
- Promote a culture of safety, risk awareness, and legal compliance

e. Leadership and People

- Appoint and line manage the Executive Team
- Lead on performance management and professional development of Headteachers and Trust-wide leaders
- Oversee Trust-wide workforce planning, HR policy implementation, and cultural development

- Promote wellbeing, inclusion, and staff development

f. Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

- Maintain effective relationships with the DfE, ESFA, Ofsted, and Local Authorities
- Act as the public spokesperson and representative of the Trust
- Build strategic partnerships and collaborations to enhance educational opportunity

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5.4 Delegated Authority

The CEO is delegated:

- All operational authority to manage the Trust within the **strategy, budget, and policies** approved by the Board
- Responsibility to implement the **Scheme of Delegation** and monitor compliance
- The right to take urgent action on behalf of the Board (with subsequent reporting), particularly in:
    - Safeguarding emergencies
    - Health and safety matters
    - Financial irregularities or ESFA notifications

5.5 Performance Management

The CEO is formally appraised annually by the **Chair of Trustees**, with input from two or more Trustees and, where appropriate, external education professionals.
Objectives are linked to:

- Strategic delivery and impact
- Educational and financial performance metrics
- Organisational development, compliance, and culture
- Leadership behaviours aligned with Trust values

Progress is reviewed termly by the Board, and outcomes are linked to performance-related remuneration (if applicable and approved).

5.6 The Executive Leadership Group

The CEO is supported by an **Executive Leadership Group**, who report directly to the CEO and may include:

- **Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**
- **Director of Education** (if appointed)
- **Director of People and Culture / HR** (if appointed)
- **Director of Inclusion / SEND** (if appointed)
- **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** (if appointed)

Each member of the Executive Team:

- Has delegated functional authority within their remit
- Is responsible for delivering Trust-wide strategy and improvement

- Reports regularly to committees of the Board, as appropriate
- Provides support, challenge, and capacity-building to Headteachers and LGBs

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5.7 Executive Governance and Communication

The CEO and Executive Team:

- Attend all relevant **Board** and **Committee meetings**
- Contribute to the annual review of this Scheme of Delegation
- Report regularly to Trustees through written and verbal updates
- Ensure information is triangulated from data, external review, and stakeholder feedback

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5.8 Relationship with Headteachers and LGBs

The CEO:

- Is the **line manager** of all Headteachers
- Leads Headteacher recruitment and performance review
- Ensures that Headteachers are well supported, held accountable, and developed as system leaders
- Chairs the **Headteacher Strategy Group** and engages with **LGB Chairs** via the **Governance Forum**

5.9 Executive Reporting and Internal Assurance

The Executive Team will provide termly **performance, compliance, and intervention reports** to relevant Trust Board Committees, including:

- Trust-wide school improvement actions
- Safeguarding and SEND compliance activity
- Financial performance and risk updates

This reporting supports triangulated assurance and ensures the Trust Board receives regular, evidence-informed updates on operational delivery and statutory compliance.

6. COMMITTEES

6.1 FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

6.1.1 Purpose

To provide detailed scrutiny and strategic guidance on the Trust's **financial planning**, **resourcing**, **capital investment**, and **operational infrastructure**.

6.1.2 Core Functions

- Recommend the **Trust budget** and **individual school budgets** to the Board
- Monitor **income and expenditure** against forecasts

- Ensure compliance with the **Academy Trust Handbook**
- Monitor **value for money**, procurement, and contract compliance
- Review proposals for **capital expenditure**, building projects, and ICT strategy
- Support the CFO in overseeing financial planning and delivery
- Approve **financial policies** (e.g. procurement, expenses, reserves, anti-fraud)

6.1.3 Membership

- Minimum of **three Trustees**, one of whom is the Chair
- CEO and CFO attend all meetings
- May co-opt members with specific finance, estates, or procurement expertise
- The Chair of Trustees is an ex officio member

6.1.4 Delegated Authority

Function	Delegation
Recommend Trust budget to Board	R
Monitor school-level budgets	A
Approve contracts over £25,000	A
Review reserves strategy	A
Approve finance-related policies	A
Monitor operational cost-efficiency	A

6.1.5 Estates Strategy and Capital Planning

Each school will contribute to the development of a **rolling five-year Estates Management Plan**, coordinated by the Director of Estates and overseen by the Finance & Resources Committee. This plan will:

- Identify capital investment needs based on curriculum and growth
- Ensure statutory compliance through regular condition and safety audits (minimum every two years)
- Align site-level planning with strategic Trust priorities

All capital works or planning applications must receive prior approval from the Director of Estates and comply with the Trust Procurement Policy.

6.2 QUALITY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE

6.2.1 Purpose

To monitor and evaluate the quality of education across all Trust schools, including outcomes, inclusion, curriculum quality, and the effectiveness of leadership.

6.2.2 Core Functions

- Review Trust-wide and school-level **attainment and progress data**
- Monitor **Ofsted preparation**, outcomes, and post-inspection plans
- Oversee the implementation of the **curriculum strategy**
- Review the impact of the **Trust School Improvement Framework**
- Monitor inclusion, SEND, Pupil Premium, and attendance data
- Ensure Headteacher performance review is linked to educational outcomes
- Scrutinise impact of Trust CPD and professional learning strategy

6.2.3 Membership

- Minimum of three Trustees, one of whom is the Chair
- The CEO and CFO are formal members of the Committee; the CEO is a voting member but may not act as Chair
- The committee must always have a majority of Trustees as members
- May co-opt members with specific finance, estates, or procurement expertise
- The Chair of Trustees is an ex officio member

6.2.4 Delegated Authority

Function	Delegation
Monitor school improvement effectiveness	A
Review school performance data	A
Recommend curriculum policy	R to Board
Monitor inclusion/SEND provision	A
Evaluate impact of CPD strategy	A

6.3 Education Advisory Forum

6.3.1 Delegated Authority

- The Committee shall comprise a minimum of three Trustees, appointed by the Board.
- The CEO and CFO may attend by invitation but are not members of the Committee.
- At least one member of the Committee must have recent and relevant financial or audit experience.
- The Committee will meet once per term, with additional meetings scheduled where necessary.
- A quorum shall be two Trustee members.

6.3.2 Membership

The Committee's principal responsibilities include:
- Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's internal control framework
- Reviewing and challenging the Trust-wide Risk Register and risk management strategy
- Overseeing the internal scrutiny programme, including reviewing reports and follow-up actions
- Advising the Board on the appointment and performance of internal and external

auditors
- Scrutinising the findings of the external annual audit and recommending responses
- Ensuring regulatory compliance, including Health & Safety, GDPR, and safeguarding oversight mechanisms
- Monitoring fraud prevention measures and ensuring whistleblowing procedures are effective

6.3.3 Core Functions

The Audit & Risk Committee is established to support the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its statutory duties relating to risk management, internal control, compliance, and financial probity across the Trust. It provides independent oversight of the Trust's systems and processes, ensuring that risk is managed effectively and that internal scrutiny is robust and objective.

6.4 Audit & Risk Committee

6.4.1 Purpose

To facilitate collaboration, shared learning, and advisory input across all schools in the Trust, Four Hills will establish an Education Advisory Forum (EAF).

6.4.2 Composition

The EAF will include:
- The Chair of each Local Governing Board (LGB)
- One Trustee (Chair or delegated member)
- The CEO and relevant Executive Team members (e.g., Director of Education)
- Representatives from the central education team as required

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6.4.3 Function
- Acts as an advisory body to the Quality of Education Committee and Board of Trustees
- Shares best practice and discusses emerging issues across schools
- Provides feedback on Trust-wide policies and strategies
- Facilitates upward communication from LGBs to Trustees

6.4.4 Meetings

The EAF will meet once per term and will be chaired by the Chair of the Trust Board or a delegated Trustee.
The term of office for all LGB members, except ex officio members, will be four years. Co-opted members may serve for one year, renewable by the Trust Board.
Governors may serve a maximum of two terms in the same category.
A minimum of one-third of LGB members should be independent (i.e., not staff or parents at the school).
Governors must complete mandatory induction and safeguarding training within their first term.
All governors are expected to participate in at least one Trust-wide CPD session per year.
LGBs must conduct an annual self-evaluation and submit a governance impact report to the Quality of Education Committee.

6.4.5 Reporting and Influence

Following each termly meeting, the EAF will produce a brief **written summary of key themes, risks, and recommendations** for submission to the Quality of Education Committee. This advisory feedback enables Trustees to maintain strategic oversight, respond to emerging issues, and adapt policy or resourcing in response to local insight.

6.5 Governance and Conduct

All Committees:

- Operate under agreed **Terms of Reference** reviewed annually
- Have **quoracy rules** and decision-making thresholds
- Are **minuted**, with decisions reported to the full Board
- May escalate risks, concerns, or recommendations to the Board
- Work alongside the **Governance Professional** to ensure regulatory compliance

7. LOCAL GOVERNING BOARDS (LGBs)

Constitution, Function and Delegated Authority

7.1 Overview

Local Governing Boards (LGBs) are **committees of the Trust Board**, established to provide **local oversight, support, and challenge** to individual academies within the Four Hills Education Trust. While they do not hold legal accountability — which rests with the Board of Trustees — they play a vital role in securing high standards of **education**, **safeguarding**, **inclusion**, and **community engagement** at school level.
Each LGB operates under:

- This Scheme of Delegation
- The Terms of Reference approved by the Trust Board
- The overarching Trust values and mission
- The policies and legal duties set by the Trust Board

7.2 Purpose and Role of the LGB

The LGB provides:

- **Monitoring**: Oversight of standards, safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion, and stakeholder engagement at the school
- **Challenge**: To the Headteacher and senior leaders on outcomes and improvement
- **Support**: As critical friends and ambassadors of the Trust
- **Communication**: A conduit for local stakeholder voice, feeding into strategic Trust decisions

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7.3 Core Responsibilities

LGBs have delegated responsibility for the following areas:
a. Educational Monitoring

- Review school-level **pupil progress and attainment** data
- Monitor the impact of interventions, curriculum delivery, SEND, and Pupil Premium

- Review Ofsted reports and improvement plans
- Support the Trust in maintaining high standards of education

b. Safeguarding and Inclusion

- Ensure compliance with **KCSIE** and the Trust's Safeguarding Policy
- Monitor safeguarding audits, training compliance, and pupil welfare
- Oversee the school's approach to **behaviour**, **attendance**, **mental health**, and **exclusions**
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision and equality of access

c. Community Engagement

- Engage with **parents, carers, and local partners**
- Monitor pupil and staff voice mechanisms
- Support the Trust's values and vision through local celebration and communication

d. Compliance and Policy Monitoring

- Monitor local implementation of Trust policies (e.g. behaviour, attendance, curriculum, health & safety)
- Review site-level health and safety issues
- Ensure adherence to statutory obligations at school level

e. Headteacher Support and Challenge

- Support the CEO in performance management of the Headteacher (via participation in review panels)
- Act as a sounding board for school leadership
- Raise concerns to the CEO if leadership capacity is in question

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7.4 Composition of LGBs

Each LGB will normally comprise:

Governor Type	Appointed By	Term of Office
1 Headteacher (ex officio)	Trust Board	N/A
2 Parent Governors	Elected by parents	4 years
1 Staff Governor	Elected by staff	4 years
Up to 3 Co-opted Governors	Appointed by Trust Board	4 years
1 Chair (annually appointed)	Appointed by Trustees	1 year (renewable)

The Chair must be a **non-staff**, **non-parent**, and **non-executive** member.
LGBs may **co-opt additional non-voting advisers** to support specific priorities (e.g. safeguarding, SEND).

7.5 Conduct, Induction and Training

All governors must:

- Undergo a full **DBS check** and safeguarding training
- Sign a **Code of Conduct** upon appointment
- Declare any conflicts of interest annually

- Commit to regular attendance, preparation, and contribution
- Engage in **Trust induction** and ongoing **CPD**
- Abide by the **Nolan Principles of Public Life**

7.6 Meetings and Reporting

- LGBs must meet at least **once per term (three times per year)**
- Minutes must be taken and shared with the Governance Professional
- All LGB minutes are reviewed by the Quality of Education Committee
- LGBs may hold additional sub-panels (e.g. for exclusions or complaints) as permitted under Trust policy
- Governors may participate in **Trust-wide governance forums** to share best practice

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7.7 Intervention, Suspension and Disbandment

The Trust Board reserves the right to:

- **Suspend or remove an individual governor** (including Chair) if conduct or capacity is in question
- **Suspend delegation** to an LGB where:
    - Safeguarding is compromised
    - Performance is in decline
    - Financial mismanagement is evident
    - Leadership stability is at risk
- **Disband an LGB** and establish an **Interim Executive Board (IEB)** where governance is no longer fit for purpose

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7.8 Delegated Authority of LGBs

Function	LGB Role	Reports To
Monitor pupil attainment and progress	A	CEO / QoE Committee
Monitor curriculum implementation	A	CEO / DoE
Review safeguarding policy implementation	A	Safeguarding Trustee
Monitor SEND and inclusion practice	A	Director of Inclusion
Oversee stakeholder engagement	A	CEO / Trustees
Contribute to Headteacher appraisal process	R	CEO / Trust Board
Receive and review Ofsted outcomes	A	Quality Ed Committee
Monitor behaviour, exclusions, and attendance	A	CEO / Trustees
Review local policy compliance	A	Governance Prof

Legend: A = Actively Monitor, R = Recommend

7.9 Disqualification and Suspension of Governors
7.9.1 Grounds for Disqualification:

- Failure to attend 3 consecutive full LGB meetings without valid reason
- Bankruptcy or financial disqualification under Company Law
- Criminal convictions not deemed spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Being deemed unfit under the Charities Act 2011 or disqualified from working with children

7.9.2 Suspension:

- Governors may be suspended for up to 6 months for acting contrary to Trust values or failing to complete required training
- A formal vote of the LGB or Trustees is required, with opportunity for the affected individual to respond prior to the decision

7.9.3 Resignation:

- Governors may resign by notifying the Chair of the LGB and Governance Professional
- Governors who cease employment at the school automatically vacate their position

7.10 Delegation Levels: Clarification of Governance Tiers

To ensure clarity of accountability and oversight, the Trust adopts a three-tier model of decision levels:

- **Decision Level 1 – Trust Board and Committees:** Responsible for strategic leadership, compliance, financial probity, and safeguarding across the Trust.
- **Decision Level 2 – Local Governing Boards (LGBs):** Responsible for local monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and the challenge and support of school leadership.
- **Decision Level 3 – Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Operational management and implementation of Trust policies at school level.

This framework reinforces the principles of subsidiarity and "eyes on, hands off" governance.

7.11 Composition of LGBs – Employment and Relationship Limits

To ensure effective challenge, independence, and accountability:

- The number of governors who are employees of the Trust (including Headteacher and Staff Governors) shall not exceed **one-third** of the LGB membership.
- The Trust encourages that **no more than 50%** of governors on any LGB have children currently enrolled at the Academy, to maintain objectivity.
- Co-opted governors must be approved by the Trust Board and may serve terms of **one year**, renewable upon review.

7.12 Appointment of Parent and Staff Governors – Electoral Procedures

Parent and staff governors shall be appointed via democratic process:

- Elections will be held by **secret ballot** with the opportunity to vote **in person or by post**.
- Where parent/carer positions are unfilled due to lack of candidates, the LGB may appoint a parent from another school within the Trust or from the local community, subject to Board approval.

- All governors must sign a declaration affirming their commitment to the **Trust's values and governance code of conduct**.

7.13 Eligibility, Suspension, and Disqualification

The following conditions apply to all governors of the Trust and LGBs:

- Governors must be aged 18 or over and not disqualified under company or charity law.
- Governors may be **suspended for up to six months** by resolution of the Trust Board or LGB for:
    - Failing to undertake mandatory training
    - Breaching the Trust's values or governance code
    - Bringing the Trust into disrepute
- A governor who **fails to attend three consecutive full LGB meetings without good cause** may be disqualified.

Disqualification will also apply in cases of:

- Bankruptcy, criminal convictions (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act), or disqualification from charitable trusteeship.
- Failure to submit a clear **enhanced DBS check** within the required period.

7.14 Variation and Withdrawal of Delegation

The Trust Board retains the right to vary or withdraw delegated powers to any LGB or individual governor where:

- The Academy is judged to be underperforming (e.g., Ofsted Category 3 or 4)
- Safeguarding concerns are present
- Financial mismanagement or leadership instability is identified

Where delegation is withdrawn, an **Interim Executive Board (IEB)** may be appointed, as detailed in Appendix D.

7.15 Financial Oversight and Procurement Thresholds

- LGBs may only approve spending **within the local annual budget** as agreed by the Trust.
- Any single procurement or contract above the threshold set in the Trust's Financial Policy (e.g., **£25,000**) must be referred to the **CFO or Finance & Resources Committee** for approval.
- The Trust's **CFO and Estates lead** must be consulted before committing to any capital projects or planning approvals.

7.16 Trustee Representation at Local Governing Boards

Where appropriate, the Trust Board may nominate one or more Trustees to join a Local Governing Board (LGB). Trustees so appointed:

- Count toward quorum

- May vote on matters under consideration
- Provide strategic linkage between the Trust Board and the LGB

This arrangement may be used during school improvement activity, leadership instability, or to enhance LGB capacity.

7.17 LGB Task Groups and Thematic Panels

LGBs may establish non-decision-making working groups (task-and-finish or thematic panels) to:

- Review policies and provision (e.g. SEND, safeguarding, attendance)
- Engage with community stakeholders on specific topics
- Support trust-wide strategy development through local insight

Task groups will report findings to the LGB and may feed into Trust forums or strategic planning.

7.18 LGB Strategic Contribution and Trust-Wide Input

Each LGB will submit an annual local priorities report to the Executive Team. This should include:

- Perceived risks, trends, or opportunities
- Resource, training, or capacity needs
- Emerging issues for pupils, staff, or communities

This enables informed trust-wide planning and reinforces subsidiarity.

7.19 Community Engagement Mandate

LGBs are expected to:

- Foster relationships with local organisations, faith groups, and service providers
- Ensure effective mechanisms are in place to gather pupil, parent, and staff voice
- Submit a brief termly engagement log to the Governance Professional

This supports a culture of transparency and inclusion at the local level.

7.20 Governor Code of Conduct and Annual Declaration

All governors must:

- Reaffirm their commitment to the Trust's governance code of conduct annually
- Declare any new or changed conflicts of interest promptly
- Participate in at least one Trust-wide CPD or development activity per academic year

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension or removal under section 7.13.

7.21 Alignment of LGB and Board Meetings

LGB meetings will be scheduled to precede termly Board and Committee meetings to ensure upward reporting. Minutes of each LGB will be:

- Shared with Trustees via the Governance Professional
- Reviewed by the Quality of Education Committee

Urgent items may be escalated to the CEO or Chair of Trustees via written summary.

8. SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Headteachers and School-Based Leadership

8.1 Overview

The Headteacher is the **lead professional and operational leader** of each academy within the Four Hills Education Trust. They are responsible for the **day-to-day leadership, management, and performance** of the school and are line managed directly by the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**.
The Headteacher leads a **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** that supports the delivery of strategic priorities, implementation of Trust policies, and effective management of curriculum, staffing, pupil outcomes, and safeguarding.

8.2 Role of the Headteacher

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Providing visionary leadership to ensure a culture of **excellence, inclusion, and continuous improvement**
- Leading the implementation of the Trust's **strategic objectives** at school level
- Managing staff, pupils, and resources in accordance with **Trust policies** and **legal requirements**
- Delivering **outstanding education, safeguarding, and wellbeing outcomes**
- Being the primary interface between the school and its **Local Governing Board (LGB)**, parents, and local community

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8.3 Key Areas of Responsibility

a. Educational Outcomes

- Lead teaching, learning, and curriculum delivery
- Monitor and improve standards of progress, attainment, and achievement
- Implement interventions and use data to close gaps
- Prepare for and respond to inspections, Trust reviews, and quality assurance

b. Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare

- Act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or oversee the DSL)
- Ensure full compliance with **KCSIE**, safer recruitment, and staff training
- Embed a culture of safeguarding across the school
- Monitor attendance, behaviour, exclusions, and mental health support

c. Staffing and HR

- Lead the recruitment, induction, and performance management of staff
- Foster a professional, values-driven staff culture

- Ensure all staff engage with CPD and Trust professional learning pathways
- Lead disciplinary and capability procedures in line with HR policies

d. Operational Management

- Oversee the school's day-to-day operations and site management
- Ensure compliance with health and safety, data protection, and safeguarding audits
- Manage budgets within limits approved by the CFO and Trust Board
- Ensure all statutory returns and requirements are met

e. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- Promote strong relationships with parents, carers, and families
- Engage with the LGB and act on their challenge and support
- Represent the school in its community and the wider Trust

8.4 Relationship with the Trust

- Headteachers are **line managed by the CEO**, with performance managed annually in collaboration with the Chair of the LGB
- They attend **Trust-wide leadership meetings** and contribute to strategy development
- They collaborate with fellow leaders across the Trust and participate in **peer review**, coaching, and shared CPD
- Headteachers are expected to **uphold and model Trust values and behaviours**

8.5 Responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT supports the Headteacher to deliver the school's objectives. Membership may include:

- Deputy Headteacher(s)
- Assistant Headteachers
- SENCO / Inclusion Lead
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (if not the Headteacher)
- School Business Manager (where applicable)

SLT members lead on:

- Key stage performance and pupil progress
- Behaviour and pastoral care
- Curriculum innovation and enrichment
- Staff development and teaching quality
- Operational logistics and day-to-day delivery

8.6 Delegated Authority of Headteachers and SLT

Function	Headteacher	SLT Members	Reports To
Deliver curriculum and improvement plans	A	A (shared)	CEO / LGB
Implement safeguarding policy and audit	A	DSL / SLT	CEO / Safeguarding Lead
Staff performance reviews and development	A	SLT / Line Managers	CEO / HR
Recruitment of school-based staff	A (within budget)	C / Support	CEO / HR
Behaviour, attendance, and exclusions	A	A	LGB / Quality Ed Comm.
Budget management (within limits)	A (monitored)	C / SBMs	CFO / CEO
Day-to-day operations and compliance	A	A	CEO
Local stakeholder communication	A	C	LGB / CEO

Legend:
A = Accountable
C = Contributes / Supports

8.7 Accountability and Performance Management

Each Headteacher is:

- Subject to a **formal performance review** process led by the CEO
- Assessed against targets related to:
    - Pupil progress and attainment
    - School improvement implementation
    - Safeguarding effectiveness
    - Staff development and culture
    - Financial management
    - Community and stakeholder engagement

Underperformance is addressed through support and coaching, with clear expectations and timescales. In serious cases, concerns may escalate to the **Trust Board**.

8.8 Support, Development and Expectations

All school leaders are entitled to:

- High-quality professional development
- Mentoring and peer collaboration
- Access to Trust-wide networks, strategy forums, and leadership programmes
- Clarity of expectations and fair, consistent accountability processes

They are expected to:

- **Model the Trust values**
- Work in partnership across the Trust
- Respond positively to challenge and feedback
- Champion equity and innovation within their schools

8.9 Safeguarding Escalation Protocols

If a safeguarding concern arises that cannot be resolved within the scope or capacity of the academy's Senior Leadership Team or Designated Safeguarding Lead, the matter must be escalated directly to the Director of Inclusion or CEO.
Where the concern relates to leadership, governance, or system failure, the Chair of Trustees and the Safeguarding Trustee must be notified within **48 hours**. All safeguarding escalations must be logged centrally and reported to the Audit & Risk Committee.

8.10 Acting Senior Leadership Posts

In circumstances where a senior leadership post is filled on an acting basis, such as Acting Headteacher, Acting Deputy Headteacher, or any other interim leadership role, the Trust maintains a clear governance and accountability framework to ensure continuity, compliance, and strategic oversight.

a. Authority and Decision-Making

During any acting appointment, the authority to make strategic decisions remains with the Central Team, led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The acting leader may carry out day-to-day operational duties, but they do not hold full delegated powers. All strategic, financial, staffing, and compliance decisions must be approved or directed by the CEO and/or Chief Financial Officer (CFO), in line with the Trust's governance protocols.

b. Recruitment and Staffing

All recruitment decisions during an acting leadership period, including appointments, restructures, and contract variations, must be authorised by the Central Team. Acting leaders may contribute to recruitment processes, but final decisions rest with the CEO and CFO. This ensures consistency with Trust-wide HR policies and protects the integrity of staffing structures during transitional periods.

c. Financial Oversight and Budget Management

Budgetary authority remains with the Central Team during acting leadership. The CFO retains oversight of all financial planning, expenditure, and reporting. Acting leaders may be consulted on operational needs, but they do not have authority to approve budget allocations, virements, or surplus spending. All financial decisions must be reported to the Board of Trustees via the CFO and CEO.

d. Governance and Reporting

The Trust Board and Central Team act as guardians of the school during any acting leadership period. This includes enhanced monitoring of school performance, safeguarding, and compliance. The acting leader is expected to report regularly to the CEO and participate in strategic review meetings, but they do not hold autonomous decision-making powers.

e. School Surplus and Financial Reserves

Any school surplus held during an acting leadership period remains under the control of the Central Team and the Board of Trustees. In accordance with the Trust's Finance Policy, where a school is in a transitional leadership phase due to acting appointments

(e.g. Acting Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher), any surplus that exceeds the agreed threshold will have a proportion retained centrally. This approach ensures prudent financial stewardship during periods of interim leadership and supports the Trust's wider development and resilience planning. The Trust's Finance Policy outlines the conditions under which surplus funds may be allocated or retained. Acting leaders may not authorise the use of surplus funds without explicit approval from the CFO and CEO.

f. Duration and Review

Acting appointments are temporary and subject to regular review. The Trust will assess the leadership capacity, school performance, and governance needs throughout the acting period. Where necessary, additional support, mentoring, or intervention may be provided. The Trust Board reserves the right to adjust delegation levels or appoint an Interim Executive Board (IEB) if leadership capacity is deemed insufficient.

g. Local Governing Board Engagement

To ensure effective governance during periods of acting leadership, the CEO will attend at least one Local Governing Board (LGB) meeting per term to support the acting senior leader and maintain strategic oversight. The acting senior leader is responsible for keeping the CEO informed of all relevant governance documentation and must schedule a pre-meeting with the CEO ahead of each LGB meeting. Additionally, the CFO will support the acting senior leader in Finance Committee meetings and provide guidance on financial matters during full governor meetings. This collaborative approach ensures that governance standards are upheld and that acting leaders are well-supported in their roles.

9. DELEGATED POWERS – CORE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Summary of Decision-Making Authority Across the Trust

9.1 Purpose of the Delegation Framework

This framework defines who is responsible, who must be consulted, and who is to be informed in relation to key decisions made across the Trust. It provides a structured, transparent, and adaptable model of governance that ensures decisions are made at the right level.

Core principles:

- Subsidiarity – Decisions taken at the most appropriate level
- Accountability – Clear designation of decision ownership
- Transparency – Decisions are recorded, auditable and shared
- Adaptability – Delegation can be revised based on risk or performance

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9.2 Decision-Making Key

Symbol	Meaning
A	Accountable – final authority to approve or enact
R	Recommend – proposes the action for approval
C	Consult – must be consulted before a decision is made

Symbol	Meaning
I	Inform – must be informed after the decision is made

9.3 Delegated Functions (Summary View)
These functions reflect the Delegation Matrix (Appendix A) and are grouped by key operational domains.

A. Strategic Leadership

Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Set and review Trust vision & strategy	A	R	C	I	I
Strategic MAT growth	A	R	R	I	I
Annual priorities and KPIs	I	A	R	I	I

B. Education & School Improvement

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Set Trust-wide curriculum principles	A	R	C	I
Approve individual School Improvement Plans (SIP)	C	A	R	R
Monitor attainment and Ofsted readiness	A	A	A	A
Evaluate SEND and Inclusion provision	A	A	R	A

C. Finance & Resources

Function	Trust Board	Finance Comm.	CEO	CFO	LGB	HT
Approve Trust-wide budget	A	R	R	R	I	I
Approve individual school budgets	A	A	R	R	R	I
Authorise virements within agreed limits	C	I	A	A	C	A
Approve contracts over £100,000	A	A	R	R	C	I
Approve contracts under £25,000	I	I	A	A	C	A
Approve finance and procurement policies	A	R	R	R	I	I

Note: CFO must be consulted on any financial matters above £25,000 or relating to capital projects.

D. Safeguarding and Welfare

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve Trust-wide safeguarding policy	A	R	C	I
Monitor safeguarding audits and compliance	A	A	A	A
Appoint Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)	I	R	I	A
Oversee inclusion, mental health, and wellbeing	A	A	R	A

E. Staffing and HR

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Appoint/Dismiss CEO	A	-	I	-
Appoint/Dismiss Headteacher	A	R	R	-
Appraise CEO performance	A	-	-	-
Appraise Headteachers	I	A	R	-
Appraise other staff	I	I	C	A

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve HR and Pay Policy	A	R	C	I
Staff grievance and disciplinary	A	A	R	A

Note: HR decisions must comply with Trust-wide frameworks and employment law. HR and CFO must both be consulted on contractual decisions with financial implications.

F. Governance and Compliance

Function	Members	Trust Board	CEO	LGB
Amend Articles of Association	A	R	I	I
Appoint/Remove Trustees	A	R	I	I
Appoint/Remove LGB Chairs	I	A	R	-
Appoint Parent/Staff Governors	I	I	I	A
Appoint Co-opted Governors	I	A	R	-
Amend Scheme of Delegation	I	A	R	C
Approve Terms of Reference (committees/LGBs)	I	A	R	C

9.4 Escalation, Risk, and Monitoring

The Trust Board may vary or withdraw delegation where:

- Safeguarding, financial, or educational risks are significant
- An academy is judged by Ofsted as Requiring Improvement or Inadequate
- There is sustained non-compliance or leadership instability

LGBs must report termly on:

- Safeguarding and inclusion
- Attendance and behaviour
- Finance and budget control
- Staffing and leadership risks

Serious issues must be escalated to the CEO and Governance Professional. Items deemed systemic may be added to the Trust-wide Risk Register or trigger a governance review, as outlined in Appendix C and E.

10. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Day-to-Day Trust and School-Level Operations

10.1 Overview

Operational management is delegated to the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**, the **Executive Leadership Team**, and **Headteachers**. They are responsible for the **safe, efficient, and lawful running** of all schools and Trust operations in accordance with:

- Trust policies
- The Academy Trust Handbook
- Health and safety legislation
- Safeguarding duties (KCSIE)

- Employment law and procurement law
- Statutory guidance from the DfE, ESFA, and Ofsted

While these matters are delegated, all operational activity remains subject to **Trust-wide systems, assurance checks**, and **reporting requirements** to the Trust Board and its committees.

10.2 Core Areas of Operational Oversight

a. Health and Safety
- Maintain a safe school environment in line with legislation
- Ensure risk assessments, site audits, and compliance logs are regularly updated
- Respond to HSE incidents and notify the Trust as appropriate
- Ensure safety training for all staff and contractors is up to date

b. Estates and Site Management
- Maintain building integrity, cleanliness, and security
- Liaise with the central team on capital works, surveys, and condition improvements
- Implement Trust-approved building development plans and site strategy
- Report defects, insurance incidents, and emergencies promptly

c. Information Technology (IT)
- Operate ICT systems that support secure teaching, learning, and administration
- Follow Trust guidance on cyber security and GDPR
- Maintain a functioning MIS and compliant data storage system
- Ensure staff and pupils adhere to digital safeguarding protocols

d. Catering, Cleaning and Contracts
- Deliver cost-effective, inclusive, and safe services in line with Trust values
- Monitor cleaning and catering standards using Trust criteria
- Use centrally agreed or approved procurement frameworks for service contracts

e. Data Protection and GDPR
- Appoint and support a designated Data Protection Lead in each school
- Report all data breaches through the Trust's incident process
- Ensure data protection training is completed by all relevant staff
- Maintain pupil and staff records in accordance with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR

f. Emergency and Business Continuity Planning
- Maintain up-to-date emergency plans for lockdown, fire, severe weather, etc.
- Ensure staff are aware of procedures and test them regularly
- Liaise with Trust central team on critical incidents and continuity strategies

g. Community Engagement Responsibilities:

- LGBs must actively foster relationships with local stakeholders, including parents, local businesses, and community leaders
- Schools should identify local partnerships to enhance curriculum enrichment and pupil experience
- An annual community impact report must be shared with the Board of Trustees

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10.3 Delegated Authority for Operational Management

Function	Trust Board	CEO	COO / CFO	LGB	HT
Approve Health & Safety Policy (Trust-wide)	A	R	R	C	I
Implement H&S policy at site level	I	I	A	C	A
Commission capital projects and works	A	A	A	C	I
Monitor condition surveys and H&S audits	I	A	A	R	A
Approve school-level emergency plans	I	I	R	C	A
Approve IT strategy and infrastructure	A	R	R	I	I
Oversee school-level data protection	I	A	A	A	A
Approve site-level catering/cleaning models	I	C	A	C	A

10.4 Monitoring and Assurance

- The **COO or CFO** provides termly assurance reports to the **Finance & Resources Committee** on estates, IT, health and safety, and GDPR.
- Site-level audits are conducted by the central team or external assessors.
- Schools submit site compliance returns termly (or as requested).

10.5 Emergency Response Protocols

In the event of a critical incident:

- The **Headteacher** assumes immediate responsibility for safeguarding pupils and staff
- The **CEO** is notified immediately and becomes incident lead
- The **Trust Board Chair** is notified in safeguarding emergencies or building damage exceeding £25k
- Communications with media, parents, or regulators are led by the **CEO or appointed Trust leader**

10.6 Facilities, Premises and Accessibility

All premises must:

- Comply with Equality Act 2010 accessibility standards
- Be maintained to promote learning and wellbeing
- Provide inclusive, secure, and respectful environments for all users
- Display Trust branding and statutory information visibly

11. ADMISSIONS AND BEHAVIOUR

Access, Discipline, Exclusions and Appeal Arrangements

11.1 Overview

Four Hills Education Trust operates academies within Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire local authority areas. In accordance with local arrangements, the **admissions authority remains with the respective Local Authorities** for all Trust academies. The Trust Board retains responsibility for ensuring that admissions practices are fair, inclusive, and compliant with statutory guidance, and that behaviour and exclusions policies are implemented consistently across all schools.

Operational responsibility is delegated to Headteachers and Local Governing Boards (LGBs), who monitor the effectiveness and equity of these frameworks at school level. All policies and practices under this section must adhere to:

- The School Admissions Code
- The School Admissions Appeals Code
- The Education Act 1996 and 2002
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) England Regulations 2012
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

11.2 Admissions

a. Admissions Authority and Oversight

- The admissions authority for all Trust academies remains with Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council, as applicable.
- The Trust Board works in partnership with both Local Authorities to ensure coordination of admissions rounds and compliance with statutory codes.
- The Trust monitors the impact of admissions arrangements on inclusion, equity, and pupil outcomes.

b. Implementation at School Level

- Headteachers ensure that local admissions procedures align with the published arrangements of the relevant Local Authority.
- LGBs monitor implementation and ensure fair, inclusive, and timely practices.
- All admissions decisions must be recorded and subject to audit by the Trust.

c. Admissions Appeals

- Appeals are administered by the relevant Local Authority in accordance with the Admissions Appeals Code.
- The Trust supports families through the appeals process and ensures that outcomes are implemented fairly and promptly.

11.3 Behaviour and Discipline

a. Trust-Wide Behaviour Framework

- The Trust sets a **Behaviour and Relationships Policy Framework**, aligned with statutory guidance from the DfE.
- Schools must operate within this framework, adapting it locally with LGB input.
- The policy must clearly define:
    - Rewards and sanctions

- Use of physical restraint (where applicable)
- Processes for managing serious incidents
- Escalation to exclusion or managed moves

b. Implementation by Schools

- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:
  - Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly
  - Pupils understand behavioural expectations and consequences
  - Exclusion decisions are made in line with DfE guidance and equality law
- Behaviour logs and serious incident records must be maintained and monitored.

11.4 Exclusions

a. Fixed-Term and Permanent Exclusions

- Headteachers have the authority to issue:
  - **Fixed-term suspensions** (up to 45 days in a school year)
  - **Permanent exclusions**, subject to reporting requirements
- All permanent exclusions must be:
  - **Discussed with the CEO and the Chair of the LGB must be notified within 24 hours**
  - Reviewed by a panel of governors (disciplinary committee)
  - Referred to the Trust Board if appealed

b. Review Panels and Appeals

- The LGB must convene a **Pupil Discipline Committee** to review all permanent exclusions.
- The committee must:
  - Hear the case within 15 school days
  - Consider evidence from the school, family, and pupil
  - Decide to uphold or reinstate the pupil
- The Trust will arrange an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)** if requested by the parent.
- The IRP decision is binding unless quashed by judicial review.

11.5 Equality, Inclusion and Safeguarding

All admissions and behaviour decisions must:

- Be **free from discrimination** based on protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)
- Consider the **additional needs** of pupils with SEND
- Include reference to external agencies where safeguarding or wellbeing concerns exist
- Be underpinned by the Trust's commitment to **inclusive education** and trauma-informed practice

11.6 Delegated Authority for Admissions and Behaviour

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve Trust-wide Admissions Policy	A	R	C	I
Implement admissions procedures	I	I	A	A
Approve Trust Behaviour Policy Framework	A	R	C	I
Monitor admissions arrangements and impact	A	R	A	A
Liaise with Local Authority on admissions coordination	A	A	I	I
Support families through admissions appeals	I	A	A	A
Monitor admissions arrangements and impact	A	R	A	A
Liaise with Local Authority on admissions coordination	A	A	I	I
Support families through admissions appeals	I	A	A	A

12. LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD CONSTITUTION AND OPERATIONS

12.1 Legal Status

Local Governing Boards (LGBs) are **committees of the Trust Board**, established under the Trust's **Articles of Association** and operating within this **Scheme of Delegation** and the **Terms of Reference** approved by Trustees.
They do **not hold independent legal status** but are delegated responsibilities in line with the Trust's commitment to local engagement and accountability.

12.2 Composition of the LGB

Each school or cluster of schools has a designated LGB composed of:

Category	Appointed / Elected By	Typical Number
Headteacher (ex officio)	Automatic by role	1
Parent Governors	Elected by parents	2
Staff Governor	Elected by staff	1
Co-opted Governors	Appointed by Trust Board	Up to 3
Chair of LGB	Appointed annually by Board	1

Additional associate members (non-voting) may be appointed for specific roles (e.g. safeguarding, SEND).
The Trust Board may vary composition in exceptional circumstances or merge LGBs in small school clusters.

Parent Governors: Elected by parents (including any individual with parental responsibility for a registered pupil at the school, such as a grandparent or other guardian with a legal guardianship order).

12.3 Appointment and Removal Procedures

- **Parent and Staff Governors** are elected through a transparent process overseen by the Governance Professional. Eligibility for Parent Governor includes any person with legal parental responsibility for a pupil on roll at the school, including grandparents or other relatives with a guardianship order or equivalent legal status.
- **Co-opted Governors** are appointed based on skills audits and community need.
- The **Chair of the LGB** is appointed annually by the Trust Board following consultation with the CEO and Governance Lead.
- The Trust may **remove any LGB member** for:
    - Breach of the Code of Conduct
    - Failure to attend 3 or more meetings in 12 months
    - Misconduct, conflict of interest, or loss of trust

12.4 Terms of Office

Governor Type	Term Length	Renewal
All governors	4 years	Renewable once (max 8 yrs)
Chair	1 year	Renewable annually
Associate Members	Up to 2 years	As set by LGB or Trust

Early resignation must be submitted in writing to the Governance Professional.

12.5 Conduct and Expectations

All governors must:

- Abide by the **LGB Code of Conduct**, reviewed and signed annually
- Uphold the **Trust's values** in behaviour and decisions
- Follow the **Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life**
- Disclose conflicts of interest or personal gain
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with GDPR
- Commit to the **Trust Governor Induction Programme** and ongoing CPD

12.6 Meetings and Governance Cycle

- **Minimum of three full LGB meetings per academic year**
- Additional working groups or panels (e.g. for complaints or exclusions) as needed
- **Quorum: One-third of current voting members (minimum of 3)**
- Meeting agendas set by the Chair in collaboration with the Headteacher and Governance Professional
- Minutes must be recorded and submitted to the Governance Professional within two weeks of approval

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12.7 Reporting and Escalation

LGBs:

- Submit termly **Governor Monitoring Reports** to the Quality of Education Committee
- Flag any serious risk, safeguarding concerns, or complaints to the CEO
- May be invited to attend committee or Board meetings to provide assurance
- Can request training or support via the Governance Lead

12.8 Monitoring and Review of LGB Effectiveness

The Trust undertakes an annual review of LGB effectiveness including:

- Attendance and engagement data
- Impact statements from Chairs
- Governor skills audits and training records
- Feedback from Headteachers and Trustees
- Ofsted or external review evidence (where relevant)

LGBs may receive additional support or intervention where:

- Governance is deemed ineffective
- Performance standards are not being met
- Safeguarding or compliance concerns are raised

12.9 Suspension or Dissolution

In exceptional circumstances, the Trust Board may:

- **Suspend an individual governor** for misconduct or breach of duty
- **Suspend the full LGB**, with delegation withdrawn
- **Dissolve the LGB** and replace it with an **Interim Governance Panel** or **IEB** if:
    - Governance is dysfunctional
    - Safeguarding is at risk
    - The school is judged to be failing or vulnerable

The Board will provide reasons and expected timelines for review.

13. TRUST-WIDE POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE

Policy Approval, Monitoring, and Statutory Oversight

13.1 Overview

The Trust is committed to maintaining a **comprehensive, consistent, and legally compliant policy framework**. Policies are a fundamental mechanism through which the Trust ensures:

- Legal and regulatory compliance
- Alignment with Trust values and strategic priorities
- Safeguarding and risk management
- Operational consistency across schools
- Clarity for staff, governors, pupils, and stakeholders

The Trust Board delegates the drafting, implementation, and monitoring of policies to the **CEO**, **Executive Team**, and **Local Governing Boards**, but retains accountability for the approval of all **statutory and Trust-wide policies**.

13.2 Types of Policies

Policies across the Trust fall into three broad categories:

a. Trust-Wide Statutory Policies

These are required by law and apply across all academies. Examples include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health & Safety
- Behaviour and Exclusions
- Data Protection (GDPR)
- SEND Information Report
- Equality and Diversity
- Charging and Remissions
- Curriculum and RSE
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Admissions

b. Operational Policies and Procedures

Defined and approved centrally but may be tailored locally:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Homework and marking
- Uniform
- Local site arrangements
- Emergency response and critical incident plans

c. School-Specific Policies

Developed at school level within approved frameworks. These reflect local context but must be aligned with the Trust's legal and ethical standards.

13.3 Policy Approval and Review Delegations

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve all statutory policies	A	R	C	I

Function	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Draft statutory policies	I	A	C	C
Approve operational Trust-wide policies	A	R	C	I
Monitor policy implementation	I	A	A	A
Approve school-specific policies (non-statutory)	I	C	A	A

Legend: A = Approve / Accountable, R = Recommend, C = Consult, I = Inform

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13.4 Policy Review Schedule

- All policies have an **assigned lead officer**, responsible for drafting and reviewing
- The **Governance Professional** maintains a **Policy Tracker**, listing:
    - Title
    - Statutory status
    - Approval level
    - Review frequency (1 or 3 years, unless otherwise required)
    - Date approved / review due
    - Record of version control
- The Trust Board receives a **termly summary** of upcoming policy reviews

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13.5 Publication and Accessibility

- The Trust ensures that all statutory policies are available on:
    - The Trust's central website
    - Each school's website
    - Internal governance portals or platforms
- Policies must be:
    - Clearly dated and labelled
    - Easy to access by parents, staff, and stakeholders
    - Available in alternative formats (e.g. translated, large print) upon request

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13.6 Compliance Monitoring

- Compliance with policies is monitored by the:
    - **Audit & Risk Committee** (e.g. data protection, whistleblowing, health & safety)
    - **Quality of Education Committee** (e.g. curriculum, SEND, safeguarding)
    - **Finance & Resources Committee** (e.g. charging, reserves, procurement)
- **LGBs** monitor compliance at school level and report exceptions or concerns to the Executive Team or Governance Lead
- The **CEO** is responsible for ensuring all schools follow Trust policy and will take remedial action where needed

13.7 Handling Non-Compliance

Where a school or leader fails to implement policy effectively:

- The issue is first addressed by the **CEO or delegated officer**
- If unresolved, it may be escalated to the **relevant committee** or **Trust Board**
- In serious cases (e.g. safeguarding breaches, legal risk), powers may be **temporarily suspended** and an improvement notice issued
- All breaches must be recorded and reviewed for future policy development

13.8 Complaints Management and Escalation

- All academies must adhere to the Trust's approved Complaints Policy. Complaints unresolved at **Stage 2** must be escalated to the Governance Professional for procedural review. Where a complaint relates to Trust-wide policy, governance, or systemic concern, the matter will be referred to the **Chair of Trustees**.
- LGBs may establish a complaints panel as required under Trust policy, but final oversight of trust-level complaints rests with the Board of Trustees.

14. RISK, AUDIT, AND LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Internal Control, Assurance, and Statutory Compliance Frameworks

14.1 Overview

The Four Hills Education Trust is committed to operating as a **legally compliant, financially responsible, and risk-aware organisation**. The Trust Board holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that there are robust systems in place for:

- **Internal control and assurance**
- **Risk identification, evaluation, and mitigation**
- **Financial and regulatory audit**
- **Legal compliance with statutory frameworks**

The Audit & Risk Committee leads on behalf of the Board to ensure that all aspects of Trust governance, finance, safeguarding, and operational risk are regularly scrutinised and reported.

14.2 Statutory Responsibilities

The Trust complies with the following frameworks:

Legislative/Regulatory Framework	Area of Responsibility
Academy Trust Handbook	Financial management, audit, and compliance
Charities Act 2011	Fiduciary duties, public benefit, reserves, trustee conduct
Companies Act 2006	Company governance, filings, and director duties
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)	Safeguarding compliance

Legislative/Regulatory Framework	Area of Responsibility
GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018	Information handling, data rights, breach management
Equality Act 2010	Anti-discrimination, accessibility, equity of provision
Education Acts 1996, 2002, 2011	Curriculum, governance, safeguarding, exclusions
Health & Safety at Work Act 1974	Safe working and learning environments

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14.3 Risk Management System

The Trust maintains a **comprehensive Risk Register**, reviewed termly by:

- The **Audit & Risk Committee**
- The **CEO and Executive Team**
- Relevant committees (e.g. Finance & Resources, Quality of Education)

Risks are categorised as:

- **Strategic** (e.g. MAT growth, leadership failure)
- **Financial** (e.g. insolvency, fraud, budget deviation)
- **Operational** (e.g. staffing gaps, IT failure)
- **Educational** (e.g. inspection risk, curriculum failure)
- **Safeguarding** (e.g. non-compliance with KCSIE, DSL failure)
- **Reputational** (e.g. complaints, media exposure)

Each risk is:

- **Scored** (likelihood × impact)
- **Assigned an owner** (Trustee, executive, or local leader)
- **Linked to mitigation controls** and contingency planning

14.4 Internal Scrutiny and Independent Audit

a. Internal Scrutiny Programme

- Required by the **Academy Trust Handbook**
- Commissioned and overseen by the **Audit & Risk Committee**
- Conducted by independent reviewers (internal auditors or external assurance professionals)
- Areas reviewed include:
    - Payroll and HR
    - Procurement and value for money
    - Budget setting and forecasting
    - Risk management
    - GDPR compliance
    - Safeguarding processes

- Governance
- Asset and cash management
- Financial oversight

Findings are reported to the Audit Committee with **action plans and follow-up reviews**.

b. External Audit

- Appointed by Members on recommendation of the Board
- Must be a registered statutory auditor
- Audits the annual accounts and value for money statement
- Attends the Audit Committee annually to present findings

14.5 Whistleblowing and Serious Incident Reporting

- The Trust maintains a clear **Whistleblowing Policy** (approved by the Board)
- All staff, governors, and volunteers are encouraged to report wrongdoing, including:
  - Safeguarding failure
  - Financial irregularity or fraud
  - Discrimination or abuse of power
- Concerns are raised confidentially via the **Whistleblowing Lead** or directly to the Chair of Trustees
- All serious concerns must be reported to the **ESFA**, **Charity Commission**, or **relevant regulator**

14.6 Delegated Authority: Risk and Audit Functions

Function	Trust Board	Audit Committee	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve Risk Management Strategy	A	R	C	I	I
Maintain and monitor Trust Risk Register	I	A	A	C	I
Commission internal scrutiny programme	I	A	R	I	I
Review and respond to audit findings	I	A	A	I	I
Ensure legal and regulatory compliance	A	A	A	C	A
Approve and review Whistleblowing Policy	A	R	I	I	I
Respond to serious incidents or ESFA notifications	A	A	A	I	I

14.7 Legal Services and Professional Advice

The Trust Board delegates to the CEO authority to:

- Engage legal counsel or governance specialists
- Commission HR, compliance, or audit investigations as needed
- Obtain advice regarding employment law, safeguarding, contracts, or risk

Major decisions involving potential legal action or settlements must be referred to the **Trust Board or relevant committee**, and legal spend must be in line with the **Finance Policy thresholds**.

15. INTERVENTION, SUPPORT, AND INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARDS (IEBs)

Escalation Protocols for Underperformance and Governance Failure

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15.1 Overview

While Four Hills Education Trust is committed to empowering schools and their Local Governing Boards (LGBs) with appropriate delegated authority, the Trust retains the right to **intervene**, **support**, or **restructure governance** where necessary to ensure:

- The safeguarding of pupils
- The quality of education
- Legal and regulatory compliance
- Financial health and probity
- The effectiveness of local governance

The Trust operates a **graduated response model** to challenge and support, escalating only when outcomes, leadership, or governance capacity are deemed insufficient or non-compliant.

15.2 Grounds for Intervention

Intervention may be triggered when:

- A school receives an **Ofsted judgement of RI or Inadequate**
- There is **declining pupil outcomes** or serious gaps in progress or attainment
- **Safeguarding concerns** are raised or compliance is breached
- The school or LGB **fails to comply with Trust policies or statutory duties**
- There is evidence of **governance dysfunction** or inaction
- **Financial irregularity, insolvency risk**, or failure to comply with the Academy Trust Handbook is identified
- The **Trust's values or vision are not being upheld**

15.3 Levels of Support and Escalation

The Trust's response is staged and proportionate:

Level	Type of Support or Intervention	Delegated Authority Impact
Level 1	Support visit and monitoring by CEO or Executive Team	No change to delegation
Level 2	School Improvement Support Plan (SISP) agreed with HT and LGB	Monitoring increases; reporting enhanced

Level	Type of Support or Intervention	Delegated Authority Impact
Level 3	Formal Trust Intervention Plan; governance review initiated	Partial suspension of delegated powers
Level 4	Removal or suspension of LGB; appointment of Interim Executive Board (IEB)	Delegation withdrawn; IEB governs directly
Level 5	Serious incident escalated to ESFA, DfE, or external body	Full Board-level intervention and oversight

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15.4 School Improvement Support Plans (SISPs)

Where a school is identified as underperforming but has capacity to improve, the Trust implements a **School Improvement Support Plan (SISP)**.
SISP will include:

- Diagnostic review by the Executive Team or external experts
- Time-bound improvement targets for leadership, teaching, and outcomes
- Enhanced data monitoring and reporting
- Weekly or fortnightly meetings between the CEO and Headteacher
- LGB review and support from additional governors or peer reviewers

The CEO monitors progress and may escalate intervention if insufficient progress is made.

15.5 Governance Reviews

If concerns arise about the functioning of the LGB, the CEO may request a **Governance Review**, carried out by:

- The Governance Lead
- An external governance expert (e.g. NGA or National Leader of Governance)
- Trustees (via the Governance & Compliance Subgroup, if one exists)

Findings may lead to:

- Additional training or support
- Restructuring of the LGB
- Appointment of new governors
- Temporary suspension or disbandment of the LGB

15.6 Suspension or Removal of an LGB

Where an LGB:

- Is non-compliant with this Scheme
- Fails to provide effective support and challenge
- Obstructs implementation of Trust policy or improvement plans
- Is implicated in safeguarding, conduct, or reputational breaches

...the Trust Board may suspend the LGB and withdraw delegation immediately.
A letter of formal notice will:

- Specify the reasons for action

- Set out the next steps and alternative governance arrangements
- Clarify the process and timeline for review and reinstatement (if applicable)

15.7 Establishing an Interim Executive Board (IEB)

The Trust may replace an LGB with an **Interim Executive Board (IEB)** if urgent and expert governance is required to:

- Rapidly address underperformance
- Provide specialist oversight during crisis
- Restore compliance, stability, and strategic focus

a. IEB Composition

Role	Description
Chair of IEB	Appointed by the Trust Board
Education Lead Trustee or Advisor	Brings improvement and QA expertise
Financial Specialist	Advises on budget, audit, or operational risk
Safeguarding Lead	Ensures KCSIE compliance and policy assurance
Additional Co-opted Members	Drawn from external networks or existing LGBs

IEBs may include **Trustees, executive leaders, or external specialists**, but will not include school staff or the Headteacher (except in an advisory capacity).

b. IEB Function

The IEB:

- Meets regularly (typically monthly)
- Exercises full governance powers for the school
- Reports to the Trust Board via the CEO
- Engages with stakeholders but operates in the best interest of school performance and recovery

The IEB is a **temporary structure**, typically lasting 12–18 months, with review points every 6 months.

15.8 Review, Reinstatement and Exit from Intervention

At any level of intervention:

- Progress is regularly reviewed by the CEO and/or Quality of Education Committee
- If sufficient improvement is secured, delegation may be **partially or fully reinstated**
- Where LGBs are re-established, new appointments and re-induction are required
- Schools exiting IEB arrangements receive coaching and re-integration support

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15.9 Delegated Authority: Intervention Actions

Action	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Approve formal intervention or IEB	A	R	I	I
Approve suspension or removal of LGB	A	R	I	I
Commission Governance Review	A	A	I	I

Action	Trust Board	CEO	LGB	HT
Develop and oversee School Support Plan	I	A	R	A
Report progress on recovery or intervention	I	A	C	A

16. RESERVED MATTERS OF THE TRUST BOARD

Decisions Retained by Trustees Under Law and Articles

16.1 Overview

While the Trust Board delegates a wide range of functions to its committees, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Local Governing Boards (LGBs), and executive leaders, certain decisions are **reserved solely to the Board** and must be taken collectively.
Reserved matters are defined by:

- The **Articles of Association**
- The **Academy Trust Handbook**
- The **Charities Act 2011** and **Companies Act 2006**
- Principles of effective governance, transparency, and fiduciary duty

They are subject to **quorate full board meetings**, formal documentation, and where necessary, consultation with Members or external regulators.

16.2 List of Reserved Matters

The following functions are **retained by the Board of Trustees**:

A. Governance and Legal Structure

Function
Approve or amend the Trust's **Articles of Association**
Approve structural changes (e.g. **mergers, acquisitions, or dissolutions**)
Appoint or remove Trustees (in accordance with the Articles)
Establish, amend or dissolve **Board committees**
Approve this **Scheme of Delegation** and any material changes to it
Approve any changes to the **governance model** or **LGB configuration**
Approve Trust-wide **Terms of Reference**
Engage or terminate **external auditors**

B. Strategic Direction

Function
Approve or amend the Trust's **vision, values, and mission**
Approve the Trust's **strategic plan** and key performance priorities
Approve the opening, closure, or rebrokerage of any academy
Approve any decision to sponsor a new free school or academy
Approve changes to **academy status**, DfE registration, or funding
Determine Trust-wide **educational priorities** and improvement strategy

C. Finance and Risk

Function
Approve the Trust's **consolidated budget** and financial strategy
Approve the **reserves policy**, investment strategy, and borrowing
Approve the **annual report and accounts** for filing with Companies House
Monitor and approve the **Trust Risk Register** and **risk strategy**
Approve significant **capital spend** or projects above delegated limits
Approve financial instruments, loans, or leases above £100,000
Receive and approve the findings of the **external audit**
Approve write-offs or losses above the ESFA delegation threshold

D. Executive Leadership and People

Function
Appoint or dismiss the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**
Approve the **CEO performance objectives** and appraisal outcome
Approve the appointment or dismissal of **Headteachers**
Approve the **Trust-wide Pay Policy** and **Leadership Pay Framework**
Approve **severance packages** over £50,000 or where ESFA approval is needed

E. Safeguarding and Compliance

Function
Approve the Trust's **Safeguarding Policy** and child protection framework
Ensure compliance with **statutory duties** (e.g. KCSIE, Equality Act)
Monitor whistleblowing, fraud, or serious incident reports
Submit **serious incident reports** to ESFA, Charity Commission, ICO, etc.
Approve the Trust's **Health and Safety Policy**

F. Delegation and Intervention

Function
Suspend or remove **delegated authority** from any LGB or individual
Appoint or dissolve an **Interim Executive Board (IEB)**
Approve and terminate **formal intervention arrangements**
Approve any **appeal panel outcomes** relating to exclusions or complaints

16.3 Quoracy and Voting

- Reserved matters may only be considered at **quorate full Board meetings** as per the Articles of Association.
- All decisions must be **formally minuted** and **recorded** in the official register.
- A **majority of voting Trustees** must be present and in favour for approval.
- Any **conflicted Trustees must withdraw** from related votes, and declarations of interest recorded.

16.4 Review of Reserved Matters

This list is reviewed **annually** by the Board in conjunction with:

- Changes to statutory guidance
- ESFA updates to the Academy Trust Handbook
- Internal or external governance reviews
- Changes to Trust size, risk profile, or structure

17. ANNUAL REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENTS

Maintaining an Effective, Dynamic Governance Framework

17.1 Overview

This Scheme of Delegation is a **living document**. It must evolve in response to internal performance, external accountability frameworks, and statutory obligations. The Trust Board holds the responsibility for ensuring that the Scheme remains:

- **Accurate** – reflecting the Trust's governance structure
- **Compliant** – aligned with the Academy Trust Handbook, company and charity law
- **Clear** – unambiguous in roles and expectations
- **Adaptive** – responsive to the needs and risks within the Trust

The Scheme underpins how authority, responsibility, and accountability are distributed across the Trust. Its accuracy is critical to safeguarding decision-making integrity at all levels.

17.2 Frequency of Review

The Scheme of Delegation is:

- **Reviewed annually**, in the summer term, prior to the new academic year
- **Reapproved each September** at the first full Trust Board meeting
- **Updated mid-year** where:
    - Schools join or leave the Trust
    - Performance concerns lead to intervention
    - Committee structures change
    - Statutory guidance is amended (e.g. Academy Trust Handbook, KCSIE)
    - There are significant legal or structural reforms

All updates must be:

- Logged with version control
- Re-issued to Members, Trustees, LGBs, Headteachers, and Executive Leaders
- Supported with a briefing and updated delegation matrices where needed

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17.3 Review Process and Roles

Stage	Responsibility
Drafting proposed updates	CEO and Governance Professional
Review and consultation with stakeholders	Executive Team, Committee Chairs, LGB Chairs
Review of legal and compliance alignment	Governance Professional and Audit Committee
Approval of final version	Full Trust Board
Circulation and induction on changes	Governance Lead and Executive Team

Where the review identifies risk, inconsistency, or gaps in practice, the Board may:

- Commission a full **governance review**
- Provide **training or restructuring support**
- Modify the delegation level for specific schools or roles

17.4 Communication and Implementation

Once approved, the updated Scheme will be:

- Published on the **Trust's website**
- Shared via Trust-wide communications to all staff and governors
- Discussed at **LGBs**, school leadership team meetings, and governance forums
- Integrated into:
    - Governor and Headteacher induction
    - CEO and executive appraisal
    - Internal compliance monitoring tools

17.5 Compliance Monitoring and Audit

The Governance Professional maintains a **Scheme Compliance Checklist**, reviewed termly with the CEO and Governance Lead. This includes:

- Annual sign-off by all LGBs and senior leaders
- Assurance that decisions are taken within delegated limits
- Reporting of any breaches or confusion around authority
- Confirmation of appropriate consultation, escalation, and documentation

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17.6 Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	[Insert date]	Trust Board (Full)	First issue of revised format
1.1	[Insert date]	Trust Board (Full)	
1.2	[Insert date]	Trust Board (Full)	

Each new version supersedes previous versions and becomes the official governance framework of the Trust.

18. APPENDICES

Detailed Reference Materials, Matrices, and Supporting Frameworks

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The following appendices form an integral part of this Scheme of Delegation. They provide extended tools, models, and guidance for interpreting and implementing the scheme accurately and consistently across the Trust.

Appendix A: Delegation Matrix (Full Visual Table)

The table included, named Appendix 1 ("**Matrix**"), more particularly describes the delegation of powers and responsibilities by the Trustees to the LGBs and Senior Leadership Teams referred to elsewhere in the Scheme of Governance and Delegation. The Matrix will be reviewed annually. The Academy and the LGB will also be kept continually under review by the Trustees. The Trustees will therefore be entitled to adjust the Matrix, as appropriate, between each annual review where such continual review reveals matters which merit adjustment to achieve the effective operation of the Academy.

The CEO and Trustees will use their shared knowledge of the Academies operated by the Trust to work proactively to ensure that the Scheme of Governance and Delegation is reactive to the needs of the Academy at any given stage.

Where any Academy is assessed at being "at risk" by the Quality of Education Committee of the Trust or directly by the CEO, the Matrix will be adjusted, with the consent of the Trust Board, to adapt to the circumstances of the specific Academy. This could, in a situation where the education and welfare of young people is seriously jeopardised and / or weak leadership is identified as a barrier to the Academy's improvement, involve the powers delegated under the Scheme of Governance and Delegation and the LGB being removed on a temporary basis.

In these circumstances, an Interim Executive Board ("IEB"), described in Appendix 5, will be formed by the Trustees to support the Academy.

The IEB will be constituted by the Trustees from key personnel drawn from the Trustee Board, the Executive and the LGBs of other Academies operated by the Trust (but may also include one or more members of the LGB). This action is prescribed under the

"Reservations of Powers" within Sections 11 and 16 above and further detailed in Appendix 3.

Delegation Key: A – Approves (some have 2 levels – detail below); C – Completes; R –

		Delegation Levels					
		MAT Level				Academy Level	
		M – Members; T - Trustees					
Area & Decision		**M**	**T**	**CEO**	**CFOO**	**LGB**	**HT**
Trust Strategic Development	Set strategic objectives of the Trust		A	C	R	I	I
	Delivery of Trust Strategy & Strategic Development Plan		A	C	C	I	R
	Financial strategy, including the management of Trust reserves & assets		A	A	C & R		I
	Provision of financial advice for strategy development		A	A	C & R		R
	Monitoring of progress against strategic targets	A1	A2	C	C	I	I
	Admission of Academies to MAT		A	C & R	C & R		R
	Provision of advice in relation to due diligence for the admission of Academies to MAT		A	C & R	C & R		
	Develop character, mission and ethos of Trust		A	C	R	I	I
	Develop character, mission and ethos of Academies		A1	I	I	A2	C & R

Recommends; I – Informs

Section 1 – Strategy:

Financial	Entering into DfE / ESFA funding arrangements		A	R	C	I	I
	Agree a funding model across the Trust in order to secure financial health		A	C	C	I	I
	Approval and submission of Trust annual report and accounts		A	C	C	I	I
	Appointment of external auditors	A1	A2	R	R		
	Formulating and setting the Trust's annual budgets		A	C	C	I	I
	Formulating and setting Academy annual budgets			R	R & A1	A2	C
	Management of individual Academy budgets, through production of monthly management accounts and forecasts, ensuring appropriate expenditure and delivery within budget and accountability for variances that arise				A	I	C
	Financial oversight: maintain appropriate financial controls to ensure regularity, probity and value for money in relation to management of public funds		A	C	C	I	I
	Setting Trust wide procurement policy in accordance with Funding Agreements and Academy Trust Handbook		A	C	C	I	I
	Entering into contracts / leases or other legal arrangements (as per SoD and Academy Trust Handbook)		A	R	C & R	I	C & R
	Agree commissioning levels for each Academy (where appropriate)		A1		C & R	A2	C & R
	Development of annual top-slice or amount per pupil plans		A	R	C & R	I	R

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Academy Strategic Development	Implementation of Academy Improvement Plan		I	A	I	R	C
	Reviewing progress against Academy Improvement Plan and reporting to Trust on progress (ongoing)		A1	R	R	A2	C

	Reviewing progress against Academy Improvement Plan and reporting to LGB on progress (ongoing)		R			A	C
	Highlighting risk to Trust Board by exception		I	C & R	C & R		
	Review overall effectiveness of Academy Improvement Plan		A1	R		A2	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Risk Management	Strategic oversight of risk: Strategic, Operational, Financial & Reputational		A	R	R	I	I
	Delivery of risk management: Strategic, Financial, Operational & Reputational		I	C	C	I	C
	Preparation and delivery of Trust Risk Register	I	A	C	C	I	R
	Preparation and delivery of Academy Risk Register			I	I	A	C

Section 2 – Risk Management:

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Governance	Appointment of Trustees	A	A CO-OPTED	R	R		
	Removal of Trustees	A	A CO-OPTED	R	R		
	Approval of Terms of Reference for Trust committees		A	R	C & R		
	Approval of Terms of Reference for formation of Trust Sub-Committees		A	C & R	C & R	I	I
	Approval of Terms of Reference for LGBs		A	C & R	C & R	I	I
	Recruitment procedures for co-opted governors for Academy LGBs		A	R	R	C	R
	Appoint Chair of Academy LGBs		A1	R		A2	R
	Remove & replace Chair of Academy LGBs in Academies providing cause for concern		C & A	R		I	I
	Removal of Local Academy LGB		C & A	R		I	I
	Suspension or removal of a Local Academy governor		A	R		C & R	I
	Approval / amendment of Scheme of Delegation		A	C	C	I	I
	Maintain register of interests for LGB			I	I	C & A	R

	Maintain register of interests for Trust Board		A & C	I	I		
	Appointment of Clerk for Trust Board		A & C	R	R		
	Appointment of Clerk for LGB			R	R	A & C	R
	Monitor training programme for Trustees and LGBs		A	C	C	C	I

Section 3 – Governance & Compliance:

	Area & Decision	M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Policies	Approval of MAT policies		A	R & C	R & C	I	I
	Approval of Academy policies			A1	A1	A2	C & R
	Monitoring the effectiveness and impact of policies		A1	R & C	R & C	A2	C & R

	Area & Decision	M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Other Areas	Set term dates and INSET dates (may differ between Academies)		I	I		A	C
	Length / organisation of Academy day			I		A	C
	Academy Fixed Term exclusions			I		A	C
	Academy Permanent exclusions			I		A	C
	Academy Exclusions appeals			I		A	C
	Admissions policies and criteria		A1			A2	C
	Admissions decisions					A	C
	Review the use of Exclusions and to decide whether to confirm all permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where the pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in total in a term or would lose the opportunity to sit a public examination			A		I	R
	Pupil issues (including attendance, punctuality and disciplinary matters for each Academy)			I	I	A	C
	School lunch – ensure provided to appropriate nutritional standards					A	C
	Provision of free school meals to those meeting criteria					A	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Other Areas	Ensuring staff and pupil records are maintained appropriately (school register etc.) and reports (such as census) are made accurately and in a timely manner and are compliant with statutory requirements.			I	I	A	C
	Ensuring the Trust website is maintained with accurate and up-to-date information and is fully compliant with statutory requirements.		A	C	C	I	I
	Ensuring each Academy website is maintained with accurate and up-to-date information and is fully compliant with statutory requirements.			R	R	A	C
	Provision of school uniform for pupils (design, distribution of second-hand free uniform etc.)					A	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
GDPR	Approval of Trust data protection and associated policies		A	C & R	C & R		
	Ensuring that Trust data protection practices reflect the Trust data protection policy		A	C & R	C & R	C	C
	Responsibility for ensuring Academy local practice reflects Trust policies		A	R	R	C	C
	Monitoring data protection systems and practice at local academy level to ensure they fulfil the requirements of the Trust Policy – reporting any concerns to the Trust Board		A	C		C	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Outcomes & Attendance	Setting Academy targets based upon previous performance		A	C		I	R
	Monitoring of progress against targets and ensuring that outcomes are in line with Local & National standards and monitoring specific groups (PPG, SEND, Gender)		A	C		I	R
	Analysing Trust educational performance and identifying areas of underachievement		A	C & R		I	I

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Quality of Teaching & Learning	Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the Academy and reporting to the LGB			R		A	C
	Reporting to Trustees on the quality of teaching and learning		A	C & R		I	C

Section 4 – Educational Performance:

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Curriculum	Curriculum planning, implementation and review			R		A	C
	Monitoring the impact of curriculum on standards (Academies performing to an acceptable standard)			C & R		A	C
	Ensuring the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum		A1	R		A2	C
	Ensuring the effectiveness of Pupil Premium		A1	R		A2	C
	Ensuring that the legal requirements for children with special needs are met and that they are given support for learning		A1	R		A2	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Assessment	Provide regular, reliable and validated assessments			R		A	C
	Provide overview of Trust educational performance		A	C & R		I	I
	Provide an assessment framework for all Academies		A	R		I	C & R
	Produce dashboard proformas for Academies (for Trust / LGBs)			I	I	A	C
	Complete MAT dashboard overview for Trustees		A	C & R	C & R		

Section 5 – Human Resources / People:

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Staff Planning	Central Team - Approval of annual CT budget		A	R	C		
	Approval of annual staffing budgets – Academy Level		A1	R	A2	I	R & C
	Job Description sign off Grade of posts (Trust central services staff)		A	C & R	C & R		
	Job Description sign off Grade of posts (Academy teaching & support staff)			R	A	I	C
	Approval / variation of basic employment terms and conditions at Trust level		A1	A2 & R	A2 & R &C		
	Approval / variation of basic employment terms and conditions at Academy level			A1	A1	A2	R & C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Recruitment	Appointing Headteacher / Principal at each Academy		A (PANEL)	A (PANEL)		A (PANEL)	I
	Appointing Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher			A (PANEL)		A (PANEL)	A (PANEL)
	Appointing Academy SLT (excluding Headteacher, Deputy & Assistant Headteacher)			A1	A1	A2	R & I
	Appointing Academy Staff (excluding SLT)				A1	A2	R & A2
	Appointing Academy Finance and Admin Staff				A (PANEL)	A	A (PANEL)
	Appointing of Trust Central Staff (in line with recruitment policy)		A (PANEL)	A (PANEL)	A (PANEL)	I	I
	Dismissing CEO, CFOO and other senior/Trust staff (in accordance with the Trust disciplinary and capability policies)		A	I	I	I	I
	Dismissing other central						

	Area & Decision	M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Pay Policies	Reviewing Trust discipline and grievance policy		A	R & C	R & C	I	I
	Establishing and maintaining Trust wide HR Policies (including recruitment, discipline, capability, grievance and absence policies) in accordance with all appropriate regulations		A	R & C	R & C	I	I
	Setting Appraisal Performance Management Policy together with pay reviews (in line with the Trust's pay policy and all statutory regulations)		A	R & C	R & C	I	R
	Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment and MAT behaviour policies (Staff Code of Conduct)		A	C	C	I	I
	Annual approval of pay policy		A	R	R	I	I
	Determination of pay ranges – Central Team		A	R & C	R & C		
	Determination of pay ranges – Academy HT		I	A1	R & A2	R	
	Determination of pay ranges – Academy SLT			A1	R & A2	I	C
	Annual pay progression and Appraisal process for CEO		A & C		R		
	Annual pay progression and Appraisal process for MAT Exec Team (CFOO)		A	R & C			
	Annual pay progression and Appraisal process for MAT Central Leadership team (Directors)			A	R & C		
	Annual pay progression and Appraisal process for Academy HT		A	R & C	R		
	Annual pay progression & Appraisal process - other Academy staff					A	R
	Trust staff (in accordance with the Trust disciplinary and capability policies)		I	A1	A2		
	Dismissing Headteachers (in accordance with the Trust disciplinary and capability policies)		A	R & C		C	
	Dismissing Academy staff (in accordance with the Trust disciplinary and capability policies)		I	I	I	A	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Policy	Approval of Trust safeguarding policy		A	C & R		I	I
	Responsibility for ensuring the Trust safeguarding policy is reflected in local practice			R		A	C
	Approval of individual Academy safeguarding policy			R		A	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Practice	Ensuring each Academy has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead with at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead			R		A	C
	Maintenance of single central record and register of interests at Academies			R	R	A	C
	Maintenance of Trust single central record and register of interests at the Trust		A	C	C		
	Ensuring Academy practices reflect local academy safeguarding policy			R		A	C
	Maintaining effective systems for the identification and reporting of safeguarding concerns			R		A	C
	Ensuring all Members / Trustees receive appropriate training in relation to safeguarding, including safer recruitment		A	R	R		
	Ensuring all staff and governors receive appropriate training in relation to safeguarding, including safer recruitment		A	C & R		A	C
	Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are completed in accordance with Trust policy			R	A1	A2	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Concerns	Reporting an overview of safeguarding behaviour and attendance at Academy level on a termly basis			I		I & A	C
	Reviewing safeguarding matters and holding senior leaders to account for safeguarding			C		I	I

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Health & Safety	Approval of Trust health and safety policy		A	C	C	R	R
	Ensuring the adequacy of health and safety practice throughout the Trust		A	C	C	R	R
	Health and Safety Accident reporting				I	A	C
	Health and Safety RIDDOR reporting		I	I	I	A	C
	Reviewing systems in place to ensure compliance with health and safety policy and minimising risk. Reporting of Medium – High levels of risk to Trust Board		A	C	C	R	R
	Responsibility for ensuring health and safety throughout the Trust		A	C	C	R	R
	Responsibility for ensuring that staff receive appropriate health and safety training			A	R		C
	Responsibility for ensuring statutory compliance checks are undertaken (asbestos, legionella, PE equipment etc.)			A	R	R	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Health & Safety (cont.)	Responsibility for ensuring risk assessments are completed (using external contractors where appropriate) and recommended actions are completed			A	R	R	C
	Ensuring that the level of risk for school visits is acceptable and obtaining approval from the LGB for any residential visits			I		A	C
	Approval of residential risks			I		A	C

Area & Decision		M	T	CEO	CFOO	LGB	HT
Business Continuity	Implementation of Critical incident management planning at Academy level		A	R	R	I	C
	Ensuring suitable critical incident plans are in place, monitoring compliance and reviewing the effectiveness of the policy at Academy level		A	R	R	I	C
	Developing Critical Incident Management Policy		A	R	R	I	C
	Checking adequate measures are in place to manage Critical Incident Management planning		A	R	R	I	C

Key to Matrix:
CEO – Chief Executive Officer
CFOO – Chief Finance & Operating Officer
HT – Headteacher / Principal of each Academy LGB – Local Governing Body

Approval Levels:
A2 - this is the initial level of approval, normally responsible for evaluating and approving the item. The decision made at this level is, however, subject to ratification by Level A1.
A1 - this is the level for approving the item or ratifying the approval granted by Level A2 and serves as the ultimate decision-making authority. This ensures thorough oversight and adherence to established standards at both approval levels.
A (Panel) – ultimate decision maker (veto)

Level Definitions (Summary) Trust Level - Level 1
Although a power and / or responsibility may be delegated, it is the Trust Board that holds ultimate accountability for the exercise of that power and / or responsibility. The Trust Board comprises of the Chair of Trustees, Trustees and CEO. Authority may be delegated to the LGB, or Senior Leadership Team levels of responsibility.
Local Governing Board (LGB) - Level 2
It is the responsibility of the LGB to ensure that the policies agreed by the Trust are correctly administered for their Academy. The LGBs are appointed to act as the “eyes and ears” of the Trustees with a sharp focus on the quality of education within both their individual and Trust wide Academies.
Headteacher / Principal Senior Leadership Team (SLT) – Level 3

Responsibility to make operational decisions, enforce policy and oversee processes at an individual Academy.

Appendix B: Functioning of the Local Governing Board (LGB)

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1. **Chair and Vice-Chair of the LGB**
2.

1.1 Each academic year, the LGB will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its members, subject to Trust Board approval. Employees of the Trust are not eligible.
1.2 Upon a school's conversion or new establishment, the Trust may appoint an interim Chair and Vice-Chair.
1.3 The Chair or Vice-Chair holds office until a successor is elected or resignation/termination occurs.
1.4 The Chair or Vice-Chair may resign in writing or cease to hold office if:

- They are no longer a governor;
- They are removed by the Trustees or LGB under these terms;
- The Vice-Chair becomes Chair.

1.5 If a vacancy arises, a replacement will be elected at the next LGB meeting.
1.6 In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will act as Chair.
1.7 Trustees may remove the Chair or Vice-Chair at any time; the LGB may also do so following a two-meeting confirmation process.
1.8 This removal process includes:

- First resolution at LGB meeting;
- Confirmation resolution at second meeting, no less than 14 days later.

1.9 The Chair or Vice-Chair must be allowed to respond to any removal resolution before confirmation.

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2. Conflicts of Interest

2.1 LGB governors must declare any potential or actual conflict of interest or personal financial interest.
2.2 A Personal Financial Interest includes employment or benefit from the Trust or a close association.
2.3 Where conflicts arise, governors must withdraw from related discussions.
2.4 Any conflict between this Scheme and the Articles shall defer to the Articles.
2.5 Disputes among governors or with the Headteacher will be referred to the Trustees.

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3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes must be formally recorded, approved, and signed by the Chair at the same or following meeting.
3.2 Copies of LGB minutes must be shared with the Trustees via the CEO or CFOO.

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4. Task Groups

4.1 The LGB may assign task-and-finish groups to develop plans or offer recommendations, but these groups hold no decision-making authority.

5. Delegation

5.1 Subject to Trust Board delegation, the LGB may delegate powers to the Headteacher or other executive leaders, with any such delegation subject to Trust conditions and revocable at any time.

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6. Meetings of the LGB

6.1 The LGB must meet at least five times annually, aligned with Trust Board cycles. Meetings are convened by the clerk, under direction of the Chair or Vice-Chair.
6.2 Any three LGB governors may requisition a meeting.
6.3 Governors must receive at least 7 days' notice and an agenda. Shorter notice may apply in urgent cases.
6.4 Lack of notice to a governor will not invalidate a meeting.
6.5 No resolution may overturn a previous resolution unless it is on the agenda.
6.6 Meetings will be terminated if:

- Governors resolve to do so;
- The quorum is lost (fewer than one-third or fewer than 3 governors).

6.7 Meetings terminated or adjourned due to lack of quorum must be reconvened within 7 days.
6.8 Adjournments must include date/time for reconvening.
6.9 Quorum is 3 or one-third (whichever is greater) of current governors.
6.10 The LGB may act despite vacancies, but without quorum, only to fill vacancies or call meetings.
6.11 Two-thirds plus a Trustee must be present to:

- Appoint a parent governor;
- Vote to remove a governor.

6.12 Decisions are made by majority vote. Each governor has one vote.
6.13 Trustees alone may remove the Chair, though the LGB may advise.
6.14 The Chair has a casting vote in case of a tie.
6.15 Proceedings are not invalidated by vacancies or appointment errors.
6.16 Written resolutions signed by all entitled governors are valid as if passed at a meeting.
6.17 Agendas, minutes, and supporting documents must be made available at the Academy and submitted to the Trust.
6.18 Confidential material may be excluded if it concerns named staff, pupils, or sensitive issues.
6.19 Governors may attend remotely via telephone or video, with 48 hours' notice and appropriate equipment. Lack of access will not invalidate the meeting.
6.20 The Headteacher is an ex-officio member of the LGB. The Clerk, Business Manager, and other school leaders may attend as observers without voting rights.

7. Notices

7.1 Notices may be given in person, by post, or electronically to a registered UK address.
7.2 Non-UK residents must provide a UK address to receive notices.
7.3 Attendance at a meeting implies receipt of notice.
7.4 Notices are deemed delivered 48 hours after posting or sending electronically.

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8. Indemnity

8.1 Subject to Companies Act 2006, governors of the LGB are indemnified by the Trust against liabilities incurred while acting in good faith in their official capacity.

Appendix C: Reservation of Powers by the Trust Board

The Trustees of Four Hills Education Trust reserve the right to deliver themselves any or all powers and functions otherwise delegated to Local Governing Boards (LGBs) under this Scheme of Delegation. This may occur in specific circumstances or at the discretion of the Board where it is deemed in the best interest of the Academy, the Trust, or its pupils.

RESERVATION OF POWERS

The Trustees reserve the right to deliver themselves any or all of the powers and functions, as delegated under this Scheme to the LGB and in particular, but not by way of limitation, in the following circumstances:

1. Academy in Special Measures

1.1 In the event that the Academy is placed in Special Measures, the Trustees may exercise any or all powers delegated to the LGB under this Scheme of Governance and Delegation which the Trustees, in their absolute discretion, deem necessary to operate the Academy.

1.2 The Trustees, in their absolute discretion, may allow the LGB to continue to operate the Academy on a day-to-day basis, subject to regular consultation with the Chair of Trustees and CEO.

2. Academy with "Serious Weaknesses"

2.1 In the event that the Academy is notified of "Serious Weaknesses" following an Ofsted inspection, the Trustees may:

- Withhold the right of the LGB to appoint staff;
- Require the LGB to refer all major financial decisions to the Trustees for approval;
- Require their prior approval of any and all decisions by the LGB to enter into contracts;
- Review any other major decision which it considers to be necessary to maximise the efficient running of the Academy.

2.2 The Trustees may allow the LGB to continue daily operations in conjunction with the Headteacher and staff, while keeping the CEO and Trustees regularly informed of all progress and important operational decisions.

3. Academy with “Inadequate” or “Requiring Improvement”

If the Academy is deemed “Inadequate” or “Requires Improvement” and lacks capacity to improve rapidly:

3.1 The Trustees may:

- Withhold the right of the LGB to appoint staff;
- Review any major decisions necessary to maximise the Academy’s effectiveness.

3.2 The LGB may retain operational oversight in collaboration with school leaders but must regularly report to the CEO and Trustees.

4. Trustees' Discretion

4.1 The Trustees may override any delegated authority in this Scheme where necessary for efficient Trust or Academy operations.
4.2 The Chair of Trustees and CEO may jointly exercise this right.

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5. CEO's Recommendation

5.1 Delegation may be suspended where the CEO presents evidence that failure to intervene would prejudice educational outcomes or Trust values.
Evidence may include:

- Malpractice or misconduct by the Headteacher or LGB;
- Sustained decline in educational outcomes;
- Safeguarding risks;
- Prolonged or repeated absence of the Headteacher.

5.2 If the Quality of Education Committee or CEO assesses the Academy as "at risk," the Trustees may revise the delegation matrix accordingly. In serious cases involving leadership failure or student safety concerns, delegation may be withdrawn and replaced with an Interim Executive Board (IEB).
The IEB will be composed of Trustees, Trust Executive, and other experienced governance professionals. This action is supported under Clause 16 of the Scheme of Governance and Delegation.

Appendix D: Governance Structure of the Trust

Members (5)

The Members are the custodians of the governance of the Trust. They:

- Provide independent oversight of the Trustees' performance
- Safeguard the charitable purpose of the Trust
- Appoint and remove Trustees
- Meet at least three times per year, including the Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Board of Trustees (11–13 Trustees)

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Strategic leadership and governance of the Trust
- Oversight of standards, financial probity, compliance, and safeguarding
- Appointing senior executives and determining delegated responsibilities

The Board is comprised of individuals with expertise in education, finance, HR, estates, legal, and strategic leadership. The CEO is an ex-officio Trustee.
The Board meets six times per year, including:

- Termly Board meetings
- Annual Strategic Planning Conference
- Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Education Advisory Board (EAB)

The EAB is an advisory forum that:

- Includes Chairs or Vice-Chairs of LGBs
- Is chaired by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Trust Board
- Offers a space for collaboration between Trust and local governance

The EAB has no formal decision-making powers but provides input into strategy, policy implementation, and best practice sharing. It meets once per term.

Executive Group

The Executive Group is not a governance body but plays a central operational role. It includes:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO)
- Headteachers/Principals of all FHET Academies

The group meets once per term and:

- Monitors operational implementation of Trust strategy

- Advises the CEO and Trustees on school performance and risk
- Coordinates leadership development, safeguarding, and compliance

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Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)
Each Academy within the Trust has an LGB responsible for:

- Monitoring the quality of education and pupil outcomes locally
- Providing support and challenge to Headteachers
- Ensuring community and parental voice is represented in governance

LGBs operate within the Scheme of Delegation, reporting to the Board through the Executive Team and contributing to the wider strategic aims of the Trust.

Appendix E: Interim Executive Boards (IEBs)

An Interim Executive Board (IEB) is a governance mechanism adopted by Four Hills Education Trust to provide high-quality, temporary leadership and oversight in circumstances where the Local Governing Board (LGB) has been withdrawn. This typically arises where educational standards and/or safeguarding and staff wellbeing are significantly at risk, often due to leadership concerns.

Purpose and Scope

1. The IEB functions as the LGB for the duration of its assignment and assumes the full responsibilities normally delegated to the LGB as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation.
2. The IEB's primary goals are:
    - Raising educational standards;
    - Securing the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff;
    - Establishing stable, effective governance.
3. The IEB operates in line with:
    - The current Ofsted Education Inspection Framework;
    - The Trust's own governance and performance standards;
    - The Academies Financial Handbook.

Membership and Appointment

4. The IEB is appointed by the Trustees on the recommendation of the CEO.
5. A minimum of two members are required. Members are selected based on skills needed to address the Academy's context—typically including:
    - Financial expertise;
    - Educational transformation experience;
    - HR and compliance awareness.
6. Former LGB governors are not usually reappointed to the IEB.
7. Members can be removed by the Trust if they are no longer acting in the Academy's or Trust's best interest.

Conduct and Accountability

8. The IEB acts ethically and is expected to uphold:
    - Nolan Principles of Public Life;
    - The Trust's core values and expectations.
9. Stakeholder voice must be reflected in IEB decisions to ensure the Academy serves its community, meets pupils' needs, and supports staff wellbeing.
10. Each IEB meeting will include attendance from a designated finance officer to ensure robust financial oversight.

11. A Chief of School Improvement and/or Executive Headteacher will usually sit on the IEB, supporting its work with professional insight.
12. The IEB will work with the Trust central team to review staffing, ensuring any appointments are affordable, appropriate, and aligned with Trust expectations.

Timeline and Transition

13. The IEB is designed to be temporary. Its ultimate goal is to:

- Secure rapid, sustained improvement;
- Re-establish local governance through a properly constituted and skilled LGB;
- Return to the standard Scheme of Delegation, allowing for local-level autonomy.

The IEB plays a critical role in safeguarding educational quality and governance standards within FHET, ensuring that academies in difficulty receive the oversight and support needed to thrive.

Appendix F: Glossary of Terms

Glossary of Key Terms

Academy Trust Handbook – Statutory guidance issued by the DFE outlining financial management expectations for academy trusts.
Accountable (A) – The individual or body with final responsibility and authority for a decision or outcome.
Articles of Association – A legal document that outlines the governance structure and operating rules of the Trust.
Board of Trustees – The group legally accountable for the strategic direction, compliance, and overall performance of the Trust.
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – The Trust's lead executive officer and Accounting Officer, responsible for the day-to-day leadership and strategic delivery across the Trust.
Chief Finance Officer (CFO) – The executive responsible for overseeing the Trust's financial planning, management, reporting, and compliance with ESFA requirements.
Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) – The Trust's senior executive responsible for financial strategy, reporting, estates, compliance, and risk management.
Consult (C) – A person or body whose views must be sought before a decision is made.
Delegate/Delegation – The formal act of transferring a power or function from the Trust Board to another body (e.g., a committee or LGB).
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – The named school leader with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
Education Advisory Board (EAB) – An advisory forum of LGB Chairs/Vice-Chairs that provides input to Trust strategy but holds no formal governance powers.
Education Inspection Framework (EIF) – Ofsted's framework for inspecting schools and trusts.
Executive Group – Operational leadership group composed of the CEO, CFOO, and Headteachers.
Governance Professional/Clerk – The individual responsible for governance administration, including meeting documentation and compliance.
Headteacher / Principal – The most senior leader in an individual academy, accountable for its day-to-day management.
Inform (I) – A role responsible for being kept updated on decisions or developments.
Interim Executive Board (IEB) – A temporary governing body appointed by the Trust to replace an LGB where intervention is required.
Local Governing Board (LGB) – A sub-committee of the Trust Board responsible for monitoring local academy performance and stakeholder engagement.
Members – The individuals who sit above the Board of Trustees in the governance hierarchy and have responsibility for appointing and holding Trustees to account.
Nolan Principles – Seven ethical standards expected of those in public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.
Ofsted – The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Regulates and inspects schools and trusts in England.
Recommend (R) – The role responsible for suggesting a course of action to the Accountable body.
Reserved Matters – Decisions that can only be taken by the Trust Board or Members, not delegated to others.
Risk Register – A Trust-wide document identifying and monitoring significant operational, financial, and compliance risks.

Scheme of Delegation (SOD) – The formal document that defines lines of accountability, decision-making authority, and delegation within the Trust.
Stakeholder Engagement – Activities that ensure pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community have a voice in academy governance.
Statutory Policy – A policy required by law for all academies to adopt and regularly review.
Trust Board – The group of Trustees legally responsible for the governance of the Multi-Academy Trust.
Trustees – Individuals appointed to sit on the Trust Board, holding collective responsibility for the Trust's success and compliance.

Appendix G: Policy Compliance Tracker (Excerpt)

Policy	Owner	Approver	Cycle	Last Review	Due
Safeguarding	Director of Inclusion	Trust Board	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026
Data Protection	Data Protection Officer	Audit Committee	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026
Finance and Procurement	CFO	Trust Board	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026
Behaviour and Relationships	CEO	Trust Board	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026
SEND and Inclusion	CEO	Trust Board	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026
Admissions	Governance Professional	Trust Board	Annual	Sept 25	Sept 2026

A full tracker is maintained by the Governance Professional and audited by the Audit & Risk Committee.

Appendix H: Legal Compliance Assurance Statement

As part of the annual review of governance documentation, a detailed audit has been conducted to ensure the Scheme of Governance and Delegation (SOG&D) for Four Hills Education Trust is fully compliant with all relevant statutory, regulatory, and sector guidance frameworks.

The Scheme has been assessed against:

- The Academy Trust Handbook (DFE, latest edition)
- The DfE Governance Handbook and Competency Framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- The Companies Act 2006
- The Charities Act 2011
- The Education Acts of 1996, 2002, and 2011
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework

Assurance Summary:

- All statutory responsibilities, including financial control, safeguarding, and curriculum compliance, are appropriately delegated and monitored.
- Reserved matters are clearly retained at Board level.
- LGBs, committees, and executive leaders are operating within a robust and transparent governance structure.
- Annual review, policy audit tracking, and intervention procedures are in place and legally compliant.
- Updates benchmarked against leading trust practice (People's Trust) confirm comprehensiveness and legal clarity.

Statement of Confidence:

The Scheme of Delegation for Four Hills Education Trust represents a legally sound, compliant, and sector-aligned governance framework, providing assurance to Members, Trustees, external auditors, and regulatory bodies.

It reflects the Trust's commitment to effective, ethical, and values-led governance.

Approved by:
Chair of Trustees
Chief Executive Officer
Governance Professional
Date: [Insert approval date]

FINAL NOTE

This Scheme of Governance and Delegation reflects the current governance model of **Four Hills Education Trust**, in line with statutory requirements, sector best practice, and our commitment to inclusive, values-driven leadership.

"Together, we climb: reaching extraordinary heights."

This phrase is not only our guiding aim, it is also our belief in collective responsibility, shared ambition, and relentless improvement.