



EQUA

Multi Academy Trust

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

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1 Introduction

1.1 Link to Accountability Framework and School Improvement Strategy

This Scheme of Delegation is based on the Vision and Values, Accountability Framework and School Improvement Strategy created by Equa Multi Academy Trust (“Equa”).

Equa is a Multi Academy Trust made up of Church of England and community mainstream schools including nursery, primary and secondary provision and hosting a satellite Sixth Form. The schools will work together in a formal partnership, to provide excellence in education for all children aged 2-19, in the rural villages and market towns, initially in Wiltshire.

EQUA’s ambition is to leave the world a better place than we found it. We do this through our children. By enabling our pupils to find their place in the world, and by arming them with the tools to help to make the world a better place. So, we give every child every chance of a great education, that way they have every chance of carving out their place in the world. And we blend education with sustainability, environmentalism, adaptability and multi-culturalism – so that the world can be a slightly better place for having EQUA pupils in it. By working together as a group, with our contextual experience of our location and its demographic, we will work to embed the good practice that already exists within our schools and is demonstrated by strong pupil outcomes for disadvantaged learners, across all schools in Equa, tackling challenges earlier. We aim to build upon the successes already evident and develop as a centre of excellence for tackling disadvantage, offering support and best practice to other MATs and schools in the area.

Equa strives to

- collaborate effectively to ensure the purpose and objectives of the trust are met;
- ensure that there is a rigorous focus on the key areas for improvement in order to achieve the highest standards of academic and personal achievement;
- ensure high quality CPD is developed which benefits all the schools within the trust;
- collectively develop the capability and capacity to support others beyond the first schools in our academy trust so that we can contribute to improving education and outcomes more widely for all children.

This Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed at least annually by the Trustees having regard

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to

- the Vision and Values, Accountability Framework, Equa's Articles of Association and Funding Agreements
- priorities recognised by Equa's school improvement strategy
- the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) entered into between Equa and the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education ("SDBE")
- consultation with the Local Governing Bodies.

1.2 Governance Structure

The Trust's governance structure consists of Members, Trustees, Central Committees and Local Governing Bodies.

- **Members** are custodians of the constitutions of the Trust. The decisions they make are limited, but fundamental to the character of the organisation. Between them, they appoint (most of) the Trustees, and are also able to remove and replace those Trustees. Their authority to make decisions come from the Articles of Association of the Trust, and they are the only people able to change those Articles. Members may not be paid for the role.
- **Trustees** are the directors of the Trust and the statutory governing Board for each of the schools in the Trust. They are responsible to the outside world for every single action taken or decision made by anyone on behalf of the Trust. Their authority to make decisions comes from the Articles of Association of the Trust, and they are not able to change those Articles. One of the things the Articles give them the authority to do is to delegate authority for decision making. Trustees may not be paid for the role.
- **Central Committees** are made up mostly of people who are also Trustees, but also include some local governors. They are the **Resources Committee**, the **School Improvement and Standards Committee**, the **Marketing and Communications Committee** and the **Remuneration Committee**. Their authority to make decisions

comes from this Scheme of Delegation.

(Members, Trustees and Central Committees must act in the best interest of the whole of the Trust and not represent any one school).

- **Local Governing Bodies** are established by the Trustees via the authority given in the Articles. Local Governors are appointed, and some of them elected, in order to carry out the function of a governing board for each school. They focus on their school, and their authority to make decisions comes from this Scheme of Delegation. With the exception of the Headteacher and any Staff Local Governors, Local Governors may not be paid for the role.
- **Local Governing Body Chairs Forum:** the Chairs of each LGB will meet regularly (and a Chair or the Vice Chair may attend in his or her place) to promote collaboration across the schools, share best practice and lessons learned and generally to discuss such issues as they deem appropriate regarding the business of their respective LGBs and the Trust. The LGB chairs forum may make recommendations to a Central Committee or to the Trustees. The LGB Chairs Forum derives its authority from any delegation made by the respective LGB to their Chair (or Vice Chair as the case may be) in respect of any agenda item.
- **Executive Team:** the Executive Team are those employees of the Trust whose role is to serve all of the schools, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and the company secretary/clerk. Their authority is derived from their contract of employment and job description, and in some cases through delegation directly from the Trustees or a Central Committee according to this Scheme of Delegation
- **Headteachers Forum:** the headteachers of the schools will meet regularly with the chief executive officer and others invited to attend and such meetings form part of the operational structure of the Trust. The authority of the headteachers forum is derived from the collective contracts of employment and job descriptions of those attending and not from this Scheme of Delegation

1.3 Recruitment of Volunteers for Governance Structure

The appointment of Members, Trustees, Local Governors and other Central Committee members will be made by a formal recruitment process and following a review and audit of the skills required for the relevant group. The skills, experience and characteristics preferred by the Trust are set out in Annex A below.

1.4 Approach to Delegation

In keeping with our Vision and Values and the MOU between Equa and SDBE, Equa is committed to the unique identity, individual character and ethos of each of our schools, and acknowledges that a single board of Trustees would not be able to provide the level of support and challenge to each of our schools which a Local Governing Body is able to bring.

In the same way that Equa is committed to enabling our staff to develop skills and experience to best support the development of our children, so we want Local Governors who are enabled to support their school in the same way.

The Trustees delegate authority through

- **Governance Structure** – authority is delegated by this Scheme to Central Committees and Local Governing Bodies,
- **Operational Structure** – every staff member uses his or her professional judgement to make day to day decisions according to his or her role.

and that delegation is always subject to members of the Governance and Operational structure acting in accordance with relevant policies, whether such policies apply to the Trust as a whole or to an individual school.

1.5 Intervention (withdrawal or restriction of delegation)

The Trustees remain responsible for every decision made by any staff member, and any element of the governance structure, regardless of whether that individual or group of individuals had the requisite authority to make the decision.

There may be times when a Local Governing Body is unable or unwilling to make decisions consistent with the aims, ethos, values and obligations of the Trust. In such circumstances, the Trustees, or a group of them, or persons identified by them, will work with the Equa Executive Team, and the Senior Leadership in the school, to provide effective governance during the period of withdrawal or restriction of delegation. There are some circumstances in which withdrawal or restriction of delegation would be appropriate which are set out in “Withdrawal or restriction of delegation to an **LGB**” in section 5.

Such intervention will be proportionate to the issues identified, and the period of withdrawal or restriction shall cease when the Trustees, acting reasonably, are satisfied that the Local Governing Body in question is able to resume full delegation.

2. Members

Members - The role is defined in section “1.2 Governance Structure” .

- The appointment and regulation of Members is set out in the Articles of Association of the Trust, and in the Academies Financial Handbook published from time to time by the Secretary of State for Education.

Equa shall have at least four Members (appointed in accordance with the Articles, Annex A and the MOU between Equa and SDBE) who shall:

- Appoint further or replacement members as appropriate
- Consider whether any amendment to the Articles of Association is necessary or desirable, ensuring that the executive obtain any required consents to any amendments proposed.
- Appoint external auditors to the Trust, and satisfy itself that the audited accounts represent an accurate portrayal of the Trust.
- Appoint and remove Trustees (other than those Trustees who are co-opted in accordance with Article 58), planning for succession and assessing the performance of the Trustees in each year.
- Ensure that the Company secretary/Clerk to the Trustees maintains a register of Members, and a register of Members’ Interests, available for inspection at the

Trust's registered office

Ensure that the Academy Trust is carried on in accordance with the objectives of the Trust as set out in the Vision and Values.

2.1 Recruitment and Appointment of New Members

Only the existing Members may recruit new Members and in doing so they shall have regard to:

- the skills mix coverage and needs of the Members
- the Trust's Equality and Diversity policy
- appropriate community understanding and connection with the communities served by the schools
- commitment to the objectives of the Trust
- Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (**SDBE**) is one of the Members, and is also entitled to ensure that 50% of the Members at any time have the required skills and experience to protect and develop the distinctive characteristic of the church schools in Equa, as well as fulfilling the criteria set out below. These "Foundation" members will be appointed after approval by SDBE according to their published criteria and appointment process.

No Trustee shall be appointed as a Member unless he or she immediately resigns as a Trustee. SDBE, as a corporate member, may appoint a person to represent it at meetings and may choose to appoint a Foundation Trustee as its representative (because this person is not actually a member in his or her own right, but merely representing SDBE as a member, this does not contradict the position that no Trustee shall be appointed as a Member).

The appointment of a new Member shall be made by ordinary resolution and a register of members' appointments and resignations shall be maintained at the registered office of the Trust by the Company Secretary.

2.2 Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

With the exception of co-options made under article 68, only the Members may recruit Trustees and in doing so they shall have due regard to:

- the skills mix coverage and needs of the trust board
- The Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy
- appropriate community understanding and connection with the communities served by the schools
- half of the Trustees must be Foundation, having been approved by SDBE in accordance with its own process published from time to time, as well as fulfilling the other skills required by the Trust.

In general, no Trustee will act as a Local Governor at an Equa school. However, in exceptional circumstances a Trustee may act as a Local Governor for an agreed period of time in order to provide the right level of support for a Local Governing Body. Such an arrangement would need to be formally approved by the Board.

2.3 Re-appointment of Members and Trustees

Where a former or serving Member or Trustee seeks re-appointment at or after the end of his or her term of office the Members shall consider that re-appointment as they would consider a new candidate, but having regard to that person's prior contribution to the Trust.

2.4 Removal of Members and Trustees

Only the Members may remove Members or Trustees appointed by them. They must do so for any of the reasons listed in the articles or for any reason referred to in the Academies Financial Handbook. They may also remove a Member or Trustee where, in the reasonable opinion of a majority of the Members (excluding the Member whose removal is being considered, if applicable) that Member or Trustee is unable or unwilling to contribute sufficiently to the governance of the Trust or no longer committed to the Objects of the Trust. In such circumstances the Members may, at their discretion, invite such Member or

Trustee to resign.

A Foundation Member or Trustee may only be removed by SDBE, and SDBE will remove a Foundation Member or Trustee for any of the reasons listed in the articles or for any reason referred to in the Academies Financial Handbook. SDBE may remove a Foundation Member or Trustees if, in its reasonable opinion, that Member or Trustee is unable or unwilling to contribute sufficiently to the governance of the Trust, is no longer committed to the Objects of the Trust, or no longer meets the specific Foundation requirements.

2.5 Meetings of Members

The members shall hold an Annual General Meeting to consider the accounts, appoint (or re-appoint as the case may be) the external auditors.

The members shall hold at least 2 further meetings per year or as deemed necessary to perform the duties listed above.

Succession Planning - monitoring of the performance of Members and Trustees, their remaining terms of office, and the recruitment of new and replacement Members and Trustees - shall be a standing item on the Agenda for all meetings.

The Members will consider the Strategic and School Improvement Plans, and the progress made by the Trust against targets included in those plans, at least annually, reporting any observations or recommendation to the Trustees and inviting responses as appropriate.

The Members will consider the extent to which the Trust is carried on in compliance with its Articles and Funding Agreements (and any other legislation, applicable law and guidance referred to therein), and with its own policies at least annually by reviewing the outcomes of internal and external audits, turnover of staff, complaints or grievance received.

The Members shall open at least one meeting per year to parents, carers and other stakeholders in the Trust, prior to which those stakeholders may submit questions to be answered by the Members and or the Trustees. The Members may determine whether the whole or part only of such meeting will be open.

3 Trustees

Trustees – the Role is defined in section “ 1.2 Governance Structure”.

3.1 Trustees are the only group of people with the authority to:

- Approve the audited annual accounts
- Enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education in relation to a new school
- Enter into a Deed of Variation in respect of a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education (which includes changing the name, capacity, age range or type of any school within the Trust), acting always in consultation with (or following recommendation by) the relevant Local Governing Body
- Approve and adopt the Strategic Plan
- Approve and adopt the Trust’s annual budget
- Approve and adopt the Trust School Improvement Plan

3.2 All Trustees are required to:

- follow the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (referred to as "the Nolan Principles");
- comply with:
 - the Articles of Association,
 - the terms of reference set herein,
 - The Funding Agreements and the Academies Financial Handbook
- ensure they understand their duties, rights and responsibilities, and that they are familiar with the function and role of a Charity Trustee, a company director and a school governor;
- not misuse information gained in the course of their Trusteeship for personal gain, nor seek to use the opportunity of service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses or other organisations;

- participate actively in the induction process and any relevant training.

3.3 Powers, functions and responsibilities of Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for the governance and supervision of the Academy Trust and its committees (including the Local Governing Bodies).

The Trustees have a number of duties and responsibilities relating to the governance of the Academy Trust and its finances.

In summary, the Trustees are responsible for:

- maintaining the vision, mission and values for the Trust, including the individual ethos of each school;
- operating the Trust in accordance with the Objects of the Trust as set out in the Articles of Association and safeguarding the assets of the Trust;
- appointing (and where necessary removing) the trust's executive team (in consultation with SDBE where the role will include the management of a headteacher in a Church school) and holding them to account for the effective performance of the trust
- approving the strategy and structure for the operation of the Trust;
- appointing the school Headteachers (in conjunction with the CEO, the LGBs and SDBE in the case of a Church school)
- delegating the running of the schools and the direction of the education, pastoral care, financial and other policies of the schools to the executive team;
- ensuring sound management and administration of the Trust by the executive team, and ensuring that the executive is equipped with the relevant skills and guidance;
- ensuring financial controls and the financial management of the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Academies Financial Handbook, which sets out in detail provisions for the financial management of the Trust;
- setting standards of conduct and values, monitoring performance and the achievement of objectives, and ensuring that plans for improvement are acted upon;
- risk management, that is identifying, quantifying and devising systems to minimise

the major risks affecting the Trust as described at 3.10 below; and

- ensuring the Trust and the schools are conducted in compliance with the general law.

3.4 Accountability of Trustees

The Trustees are chiefly accountable to:

- the beneficiaries of the Trust (pupils at the schools, their parents and the local community) for the quality of education and pastoral care at the schools, for matters of health and safety and for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the pupils;
- the DfE, the Education and Skills Funding Agency and specifically the Secretary of State for Education under the terms of the Funding Agreement;
- the Secretary of State for Education (in his or her role as principal regulator in respect of charity matters) for operating the Trust for the public benefit, for the prudent management of the Trust and its financial efficiency, and for compliance with legislation including charities legislation;
- the employees of the Trust for their working environment, and for compliance with the contract of employment and employment law requirements and matters of health and safety;
- in relation to the Church Schools, SDBE; and
- other regulatory authorities for compliance with regulated responsibilities to which the Trust and the schools are subject, including Ofsted, the Health and Safety Executive, the Information Commissioner, Local Authority and the Registrar of Companies House.

3.5 Conducting Trustees' business

The Trustees are required to:

- act together and in person and not delegate responsibility of the Trust to others;
- act strictly in accordance with the Articles of Association;

- act in the Trust's interests only and without regard to their own private interests;
- manage the Trust's affairs prudently;
- not take personal benefit from the Trust unless expressly authorised by the Articles and the Academies Financial Handbook and in some cases the Charity Commission; and
- take proper professional advice on matters on which they are not themselves competent.

The Trustees should also hold the Executive Team to account. They should offer support, constructive advice, be a sounding board for ideas, a second opinion on proposals and help where needed, but will also challenge, ask questions, seek information and improve proposals where appropriate and at all times act in the best interests of the Trust.

The Trustees shall have regard to the framework for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) issued by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).

The Trustees shall have regard to the Academy Trust Handbook, which shall be circulated to all Trustees and is also available on www.gov.uk.

Each of Equa's schools will have a nominated 'Link Trustee'. This role is one of communication and a means to enable Trustees to have a closer understanding of the schools in the trust. The Link Trustee role is not a member of the school's Local Governing Body, but they may attend LGB meetings by agreement with the Chair of the LGB.

3.6 Chair of Trustees

The Trustees shall appoint an individual from among their number to act as Chair.

A change of Chair will require a notification to be made to the DfE, including a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure form to be submitted via the DfE. A Trustee will not be eligible for appointment as Chair during the period when he or she is acting as representative of SDBE in its role as corporate Member

The main role of the Chair is to chair meetings of the Trustees. He or she also provides

leadership to the Trustees and acts as the main point of contact between the Trustees and the executive.

Apart from any special responsibilities or powers given to the Chair in the Articles of Association (e.g. the right to chair meetings of the Trust Board and to have a second or casting vote in any case of an equality of votes at a meeting of the Trust Board), the Chair has no special powers or rights over any other Trustee. If the Chair is to carry out certain specific functions (for example, the power to approve an overspend in a certain area of the budget or the CEO's appraisal) then this must be expressly delegated to him or her by the Trust Board.

3.7 Meetings of Trustees

There will be a minimum of six meetings of the Trustees each academic year. Meetings of the Trustees shall be convened and conducted as provided by the Articles.

In determining the agenda for Board meetings and committee meetings, the Trustees will have regard to the requirement on them to:

- ensure good financial management and effective internal controls;
- comply with the Funding Agreement and the current version of the Academies Financial Handbook (or successor documents);
- receive and consider information on financial performance at least three times a year; and
- take appropriate action to ensure ongoing viability against agreed budgets.

In consultation with the Chair, the Clerk to the Trustees shall prepare an annual plan for the meetings of the Trustees

3.8 Trusteeship and Delegation

Trusteeship (and directorship which necessarily follows) is a personal office of trust and responsibility and this responsibility cannot be transferred to another individual. However, in order to ensure the proper management of the schools, the Trustees are able to delegate

specific tasks to assist them in carrying out their duties and obligations.

It is for the Trust Board to determine what decisions it will take for itself, what will be delegated to committees, working groups or individual Trustees (e.g. the Chair) and what will be delegated to the executive. The Trustees must also consider when and from whom they should take professional advice.

In determining whether delegation is appropriate, the Trustees will have regard to the following principles:

- non-executive powers must be exercised by the Trustees personally and may not be delegated, for example approving the annual accounts;
- except when it is impracticable to do so, executive powers should be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer, who may authorise further delegation; and
- every act of delegation is only a delegation of powers and does not relieve the Trustees of responsibility.
- Delegation can be made to:
 - Central Committees
 - the LGBs;
 - any individual Trustee or a panel of Trustees or Local Governors;
 - the executive (who in turn may delegate to further individuals).

3.9 Stakeholder

Trustees are asked to have regard to the views of their various stakeholders and to put in place arrangements to receive feedback and to respond appropriately.

This will include the representation of parents and carers on local governing bodies, a Members' meeting open to stakeholders annually, and a forum in each school in which pupils discuss those issues which they have identified as important to them.

3.10 Risk management

The Charities Statements of Recommended Practice ("the SORP") set out requirements for reporting on the risks to a charity.

The Trustees' report therefore must include a description of the principal risks and uncertainties facing the Trust and any subsidiary undertakings, as identified by the Trustees. The report must also include a summary of the Trustees' plans and strategies for managing these risks. The Trustees must identify specific risks and describe ways to combat each one, rather than making general statements regarding risk management.

The Trustees are therefore responsible for:

- identifying the major risks that apply to the Trust, including:
 - operational risks (employment issues, health and safety, fraud, service quality and development etc.);
 - financial risks (accuracy of financial information, cash flow, reserves, over-reliance on funding sources etc.);
 - external risks (changes in government policy, economic factors, demographic changes, adverse publicity etc.); and
 - regulatory risks (compliance with legislation, changes in policies of the regulators etc.).
- making decisions (based where appropriate on advice from professional advisors) as to how to respond to those risks; and
- making appropriate statements regarding the management of risks in the annual report.

The Resources Committee supported by the Executive Team, shall prepare a risk register for approval by the Trustees, along with a procedure by which the risk register shall be subject to regular review. The risk register shall have named individuals assigned to manage each area.

3.11 The management of conflicts of interest

The Companies Act 2006 imposes a statutory duty on the Trustees to avoid situations in which they have or could have an interest, which conflicts (or could conflict) with the interests of the Trust. The duty is to:

- declare the nature and extent of any interest in any matter relating to the Trust; and
- avoid any conflict of interest between that interest and the interests of the Trust.

In addition, charity law and guidance issued by the Charity Commission confers obligations on the Trustees to manage any conflict between a Trustee's duty to the Trust and their own personal or business interests or for a Trustee to be influenced by conflicting duties to the Academy Trust and a third party.

3.12 Induction of Trustees

Each new Trustee will be properly inducted to ensure that he / she understands the nature and extent of his / her role and responsibilities. It is the duty of a new Trustee to ensure that he / she is familiar with the Objects of the Trust; its history and ethos and the nature and extent of its activities; and the content of the Trust's Articles of Association.

The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees, shall guide each new Trustee to the Trustee Induction Programme which is available in GovernorHub and includes links to all key documents, including:

- the Trust's Articles of Association
- this Scheme of Delegation
- the Vision and Values document referred to in the Introduction to this Scheme of Delegation
- the MOU between Equa and SDBE
- the Academy Trust Handbook

The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees shall ensure that any appointment of a new Trustee is notified to the ESFA (via Edubase) within 14 days of the appointment (as required under the Academies Financial Handbook), and shall ensure that the appointment is filed at

Companies House with the same time

3.13 Training and development of Trustees

Trustees shall also be kept up to date with developments in the legal and regulatory framework in which the Trust operates.

The Trustees shall ensure that the Trust Board as a whole has the skills and experience needed to perform its functions effectively and shall have in place a system for evaluating Trustees, with a view to identifying potential gaps in their skills and any requirements for training. Such evaluation shall be carried out annually and reported to the Members.

4. Local Governing Bodies: Constitution and Remit

4.1 Composition

Each Local Governing Body shall include:

- **the Headteacher of the School**
- **at least two elected parents**
- **other local governors appointed with reference to a skills audit** (who may include 1 other staff member in addition to the Headteacher, elected or appointed, so long as no more than 1/3rd of the total number of local governors are employees of Equa) and in the case of the Church schools complying with the Foundation ratios set out below:

Foundation Local Governors (Church Schools only)

- Foundation local governors are those who have been approved by the SDBE as having the requisite criteria to serve as Foundation Local Governors in accordance with SDBEs process for such approvals published from time to time
- in the case of a former Voluntary Aided school, a majority of local governors must be Foundation; and
- in the case of a former Voluntary Controlled school, 1/4 of local governors must be

Foundation

- In the case of former community schools there will be no foundation local governors

Each LGB shall have a Chair and a Vice-Chair neither of whom may be employed by Equa.

All local governors shall be appointed by the Trust Board following election or recommendation from the LGB (and where necessary approval by SDBE) as appropriate.

All Local Governors shall, unless stated otherwise at the time of appointment, be appointed for a term of four (4) years. Subject to remaining eligible to be a Local Governor and to advertising or re-election as appropriate any Local Governor may be reappointed or re-elected at the end of his or her term, to a maximum of two (2) terms. A Local Governor may be reappointed for a third term of office in exceptional circumstances, and would require approval by the Trust Board.

Every person wishing to become a Local Governor will be required to make disclosures for the purposes of a criminal records check by the Disclosure and Barring Service, and to sign a declaration of acceptance and of willingness to act as a Local Governor for the relevant school and to uphold its character and ethos.

4.2 Commitment of Local Governors

Local Governors are asked to:

- prepare for and make an active contribution at meetings of the LGB;
- champion the school, and the Trust in the local community, (including in the Church Parish community in the case of a Foundation Local Governor);
- familiarise themselves and comply with the School's policies and the Code of Conduct for Local Governors;
- visit the school both during school hours (with prior arrangement with the Headteacher) and for evening events to get to know the school and to be visible to the school community; and

- attend training sessions for Local Governors, where possible.
- Ensure attendance at meetings
- Act in the best interests of the school at all times, without promoting personal or self-interests

4.3 Stakeholder voices

LGBs are expected to have regard to the voices of their various stakeholders (especially pupils, parents and staff) and to put in place arrangements to receive feedback and to respond appropriately. This includes engaging stakeholders through defined governance arrangements (including elected parent governors on the LGBs) and more broadly.

All schools have active Pupil Councils with representatives from each year group. Each LGB is expected to give due regard to issues that are raised through the Pupil Council and the management actions taken in response to the issues.

4.4 Appointment and particular responsibilities of Local Governors

The LGB is responsible for identifying new local governors through appropriate routes – ie, recruitment or election, and for proposing Local Governor appointment recommendations to the Trust Board for appointment. Such nominations/recommendations would not be unreasonably refused.

4.4.1 LGB Chair

The Chair is appointed by nomination from the Local Governing Body submitted to the Trustees for approval. If no candidate is nominated by the Local Governing Body, or if the candidate nominated is considered not suitable by the Trustees (acting reasonably) then the Trustees may appoint a Chair.

Term of office for the Chair should be a minimum of one year, and no more than eight continuous years.

The LGB Chair and the Headteacher will plan the work of the LGB for the year.

The responsibilities of the LGB Chair include the following:

- to chair meetings of the LGB;
- to set the agenda for meetings with the Headteacher and LGB Vice-Chair;
- to report to the Trustees in writing following any LGB meeting, if requested;
- to give an oral summary of the LGB's deliberations, if requested, at meetings of the Trust Board; and
- to provide a link between all of the EQUA LGBs by attending and participating in the LGB Chairs Forum

4.4.2 LGB Vice-Chair

The LGB Vice-Chair is appointed by the Local Governing Body / Trust Board/combination/

Term of office for the LGB Vice Chair should be a minimum of one year, and no more than eight continuous years.

The responsibilities of the LGB Vice-Chair include the following:

- to deputise for the LGB Chair in his or her absence;
- to assist in setting the agenda for meetings of the LGB with the LGB Chair, if requested

In the absence of both the LGB Chair and the LGB Vice-Chair at a meeting, the LGB will elect a temporary LGB chair from among their number.

4.4.3 Staff Local Governors

The responsibilities of the Staff Local Governors are to help reflect the interests and opinions of teaching and non-teaching staff at the school to the LGB and to act in concert with the other Local Governors in the best interests of the school.

4.4.4 Elected Parent Local Governors

Parent Local Governors for each LGB shall be elected in accordance with the process set out below:

- When a vacancy arises, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the school seeking nominees for the vacancy. Nominees will be asked to provide a short statement about why they are interested in being a Local Governor and their

background and experience that makes them suitable for the role.

- In the event that the number of nominees equals or is less than the number of vacancies on the LGB, the LGB may choose to appoint of those nominated without holding an election.
- If there are more nominees than places available, the LGB will write to all parents of pupils at the School asking them to vote for their preferred candidate.

A Parent Local Governor should be a person not employed by Equa who is the parent or carer of a registered pupil at the school, or where this is not reasonably practical, the parent or carer of a child registered at another Equa school or where this is not reasonably practical the parent or carer of a child of compulsory school age.

The responsibilities of the Parent Local Governor are to help reflect the interests and opinions of the Parent Body of the school to the LGB and to act in concert with the other Local Governors in the best interests of the school.

If a parent Local Governor takes paid employment at Equa then he or she must step down as Parent Local Governor.

4.5 Other responsibilities

Each LGB shall appoint from among its members individuals with specific responsibilities which shall include:

- a Local Governor with responsibility for special educational needs and inclusion;
- a Local Governor with responsibility for safeguarding;
- a Local Governor with responsibility for disadvantage (including statutory grants such as pupil premium, sports premium and catch-up funding); and
- a Local Governor with responsibility for health and safety;

4.6 Clerk to the Local Governing Body

The Clerk to the LGB is an employee of, or person contracted to provide services to, the Trust and shall be appointed according to the Trust's usual recruitment processes provided that he or she will not be eligible for appointment as a Staff Local Governor. In the absence of the Clerk, the LGB shall elect a replacement for the meeting (who may be a Local Governor).

The responsibilities / functions of the Clerk to the LGB are as follows:

- convene meetings of the LGB including sending notices and papers of meetings;
- attend meetings of the LGB and ensure minutes are produced;
- maintain a register of members of the LGB including their terms of office and report any vacancies to the LGB, ensuring this information is on the School's website and ensuring that the school's governor details in Edubase are up-to-date;
- maintain a register of any relevant personal or business interests of LGB members, and ensuring a summary is published on the school website and shared with the Clerk to the Trust Board;
- maintain a register of Local Governors' attendance at meetings and report on non-attendance to the LGB;
- report to the LGB as required on the discharge of the Clerk's functions; and
- perform such other functions as shall be determined by the LGB from time to time and consistent with the terms upon which the Clerk is appointed.
- Provide effective administrative support to the governing board (and its committees, the clerks contract includes such support)

4.7 Ceasing to be a Local Governor

A Local Governor's term of office will be terminated if:

- any event or circumstance occurs which would disqualify him or her from the office of Trustee under the Articles were he or she to hold such office;
- he or she has, without the consent of the LGB, failed to attend LGB meetings for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first such meeting he or she failed to attend and the Chair and the Vice Chair agree that the term of office should be terminated;
- he or she resigns from office
- he or she is removed from office by the Trust Board.

4.8 Convening meetings of the Local Governing Body

At least three full LGB meetings will be held in each academic year, one in each full School term.

The Clerk to the LGB shall give written notice of each meeting and circulate an agenda and any reports or other papers to be considered at the meeting at least seven clear days in advance of each meeting except where the LGB Chair determines there are matters demanding urgent consideration, in which case it shall be sufficient if the written notice of the meeting states that fact and the notice, copy of the agenda and other papers are given within such shorter period as the LGB Chair directs.

The Local Governors may invite persons who are not Local Governors (such as a member of a committee, any trustee, any employee, any pupil, any professional adviser and any experts of any kind) to attend the whole or part of any meeting for purposes connected with the meeting.

The convening of a meeting and the proceedings conducted at meetings shall not be invalidated by reason of any individual not having received written notice of the meeting or a copy of the agenda.

4.9 Voting at meetings of the Local Governing Body

The quorum for meetings of the LGB and for any vote on a matter at such meetings is one half of the total number of Local Governors in office at that time (rounded up to the nearest whole number), provided that if more than one third of the Local Governors present are employees of the Trust then those present who are such employees shall not count towards a quorum to the extent that they exceed one third of the total. If the meeting is still quorate, then that Local Governor shall not vote on any matter during the meeting.

(E.G., if you have 12 local governors, 7 are present, but 3 of those are employees of the Trust, one of the employees will not count towards a quorum.)

A meeting shall be terminated if the number of Local Governors present ceases to constitute a quorum. Where a meeting is not held or is terminated before all the matters

specified as items of business on the agenda for the meeting have been disposed of, then the Chair will decide that either:

those items of business be transferred to the next scheduled meeting; or

a further meeting shall be convened by the Clerk as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within seven days of the date on which the meeting was originally to be held or was so terminated.

Any Local Governor shall be able to participate in, and be counted as present at for the purposes of the quorum, meetings by telephone or video conference provided that the LGB has access to the appropriate equipment and provided that, if after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for that Local Governor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

Every question to be decided upon at a meeting of the LGBs shall be determined by a majority of the votes of Local Governors present and voting on the question.

Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair has a casting vote.

The Local Governing Body may continue to act when it has vacancies for particular types of Local Governor, may but, if the number of Local Governors means that it cannot achieve a quorum it cannot do anything other than take action to appoint more local Governors.

A resolution in writing, signed by all Local Governors entitled to receive notice of a meeting shall be valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting duly convened and held.

Such a resolution may consist of several documents in the same form, each signed by one or more Local Governors and may include an electronic communication by or on behalf of the LGB indicating his or her agreement to the form of resolution using the Local Governors Equa email address.

4.10 Interests of Local Governors

Local Governors shall complete a register of their relevant personal and business interests, which shall be reviewed annually and published in summary on the School's website and notified to the Clerk to the Trustees.

Any Local Governor who has any duty or personal interest that conflicts or may conflict with

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his or her duties as a Local Governor shall:

- disclose that fact to the LGB as soon as he or she becomes aware of it. A Local Governor must absent himself or herself from any discussions of the LGB in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the School and such duty or personal interest;
- withdraw from any meeting for that item unless expressly invited to remain in order to provide information;
- not be counted in the quorum for that part of any meeting; and
- withdraw during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

4.11 Committees of the Local governing body

The LGB may establish committees to carry out certain functions of the LGB by forming a sub-committee. The LGB must determine the constitution, membership and terms of reference of any committee it decides to establish and review them annually.

The establishment of any new committees, other than those with remits on educational standards and resources or temporary, ad hoc committees required to deal with specific issues, must be notified in advance to the Trustees by submitting the proposed terms of reference to the Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees (to ensure transparency of delegation in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook).

4.12 Minutes

Attendance at each LGB meeting, issues discussed and recommendations for decisions shall be recorded in writing. An electronic copy of the draft minutes shall be forwarded by the Clerk to the LGB as soon as is reasonably practicable after the meeting to the Clerk to the Trustees. After the minutes have been approved and signed by the LGB Chair at the next meeting of the LGB, they shall be made publicly available in school and published on the school's website, and an electronic copy of the signed minutes sent to the Clerk to the Trustees.

4.13 Delegation to the LGB

The LGB shall have the roles set out in this section and any other role that the Trustees agree shall be carried out by the LGB and that is communicated in writing to the Chair of the LGB.

4.13.1 General

The governance of the School is delegated to the LGB who may exercise the powers of the Trust in so far as they relate to the school, save those decisions referred to in this Scheme of Delegation as being reserved to the Members or Trustees, or in which the Members or Trustees must, according to this Scheme of Delegation, participate.

Local Governors acknowledge that the duties and responsibilities in relation to the operation of the Trust sit with the Trust Board and as such the Trust Board is entitled:

- to overrule a decision of the LGB; and/ or
- to remove delegated powers from an LGB

if (in their reasonable opinion) they consider it to be in the best interests of the School or the wider Trust.

4.13.2 Financial matters

The draft annual budget for the subsequent financial year prepared by the school's Headteacher, senior leadership team and Equa's Chief Finance Officer shall be made available for consideration by the LGB (or by or a governor or sub-committee responsible on its behalf). Any comments made by the LGB (or a governor or sub-committee responsible for finance) will be submitted to the Resources Committee with the draft budget and the Resources Committee will consider but not be bound by those comments.

4.13.3 Not Used

4.13.4 Key functions of the LGB

The LGB is asked to carry out the following functions:

a Governance

- To champion Equa's vision and values in the school and to ensure the spiritual

wellbeing of the pupils.

- To protect and develop the character, mission and ethos of the school, and in the case of the Church Schools to develop the distinctively Christian character of the school, providing a positive encounter with Christianity for children of all faiths and of none.
- To ensure that the school has a vision for its future and a robust strategy for achieving it.
- To propose in accordance with Equa guidelines a nominee for LGB Chair to be approved by the Trustees and where required (where the nominee is a Foundation Governor) by the SDBE.
- To appoint (and remove) from its number, subject to any specific approvals required of the Trustees, the LGB Chair, LGB Vice-Chair and Local Governors with specific responsibilities for special educational needs and inclusion, safeguarding, disadvantage (including statutory grants, and health and safety.
- To review, amend and scrutinise the implementation of school policies.
- To abide by Trust wide policies.
- To implement a means whereby the school can receive and react to pupil, parental and staff feedback.
- To establish and maintain a positive relationship with the members of the local community that contributes to the objectives of the school and or Equa and the outcomes and opportunities for children, and in the case of the Church schools this must include fostering the relationship with the Church and Parish.

b Finance and contracts

- To consider the annual budget for the School prior to submission to the Resources Committee.
- To ensure that a register of Local Governors' business and personal interests is maintained and published.
- To support the Trust Board in its monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of any

central services/functions provided/procured by the Trust.

- To ensure compliance with the financial scheme of delegation.

c Curriculum and standards

- To approve the curriculum proposed by the Headteacher (to the extent that it is consistent with the Trust-wide policy).
- To ensure effective processes are in place for monitoring the quality assurance of teaching and learning, the curriculum, inclusion and the sharing of good practice across the school.
- To monitor the KPI figures reported from the Headteacher relating to standards.
- To monitor and evaluate school performance against agreed targets.
- To develop, monitor and approve the School Improvement Plan.
- To appoint a Local Governor responsible for SEN and inclusion.
- To review and maintain the Trust's SEND policy.
- To provide oversight of the implementation of the SEND policy within the school and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

d Safeguarding

- To appoint a designated governor for safeguarding.
- To adopt the Equa safeguarding and child protection policy for the school and monitor/ensure its implementation.
- To ensure the completion of the single central record.

e Behaviour

- To review and maintain a behaviour policy for the school in line with any Trust prescribed policy.
- To convene a committee to review the exclusion of a pupil by the Headteacher as required by Department for Education guidance on exclusion.

- To review the number, duration and reasons for exclusions at the school at least annually.

f Admissions

- To undertake consultation, publish admissions and determine arrangements consistent with the School's Admissions Policy, as required in accordance with the School Admissions and Appeals Codes.
- To make arrangements for determining admissions and hearing admission appeals.
- To ensure effective arrangements are in place for pupil recruitment.
- To contribute to the development of the School prospectus.

g Pupil related matters

- To review attendance and pupil absences (as part of the KPI report).
- To appoint a Local Governor responsible for disadvantage including statutory grants such as pupil premium.
- To monitor the impact of the pupil premium in the School.
- To monitor the impact of other ring-fenced grants such as the Sports Premium.
- To adopt the Equa Complaints policy.
- To hear complaints at the relevant stage.
- To ensure effective arrangements are in place for pupil support and representation at the school.
- To support the Trust and the Headteacher in any extended school provision in the school.

h Staffing

- Performance management of the Headteacher will be led by the CEO (or other person to whom the headteacher reports), in partnership with the local governing body (usually the Chair), and involving as appropriate either a Trustee, a further representative from the school's LGB, the DCEO/Primary Lead, or with the support

of an external advisor.

- In case of a vacancy in the post, to work with the CEO (or other person to whom the headteacher will report), and Trustees to appoint the Headteacher such process always to include both the CEO and a Trustee on any selection panel. Such selection panel is to include 5 people, three of whom are either part of the Executive Team or Trustees and two of whom are Local Governors at the school. In the case of the appointment of a headteacher at a Church school, at least half of the selection panel must be approved as “Foundation”, and the panel must be joined by an advisor appointed by SDBE.
- To support the Headteacher in the development and review (from time to time) of an appropriate staffing structure for the school in line with agreed budgets, and for the appointment of school staff to ensure that the school is fully staffed in accordance with that structure.
- To communicate effectively with the Headteacher.
- To ensure that the Trust's policies on all HR matters are implemented in the school.
- To monitor the implementation of the Trust's policies at the school for HR matters including the appointment, induction and performance management of staff, pay review process and procedures for dealing with disciplinary matters, grievances and dismissal, and to take part in those procedures for the Trust as appropriate.

i Information management and communication

- To ensure the effective implementation of the data protection policies and procedures in the school, and in particular for each Local Governor, not to download or retain any personal or otherwise confidential data on any device not belonging to the school / Trust.
- To ensure systems are in place at the school for effective communication with pupils, parents or carers, staff and the wider community including the support of a local parent teacher association (if established) and in line with the Trust's strategy and Scheme of Publication.

j Health, safety, risk and estates

- To appoint a Local Governor responsible for health and safety.
- To review the risk register of the School and prepare a Risk report for the Resources Committee.
- To adopt a health and safety policy for the School in line with the Trust-wide policy.
- To review the implementation of the above policy and ensure that appropriate risk assessments are being carried out in the School.
- To conduct site inspections to review any health and safety issues and the security of premises and equipment.

k. Other

- To enable strong leadership in teaching and learning within the school by providing support and challenge to the leadership team within the context of the Trust Strategic Plan in so far as it relates directly to the individual school and its School Development Plan.
- To promote the individual ethos and values of the school and the wider ethos of the trust within the local community.
- To act as a conduit for concerns, recommendations and sharing success between the local community and the Trust.
- To determine the individual school admissions policy (in line with the overarching Equa Admissions Policy).
- To sit on panels for the recruitment of staff (in the case of recruitment of a Headteacher in conjunction with the CEO and a Trustee).
- To sit on panels to support the Headteacher in making decisions on admissions, exclusions, disciplinary and grievance issues.
- Along with a member of the Standards and the CEO, the LGB Chair will support the Headteacher during an Ofsted inspection [and for Church Schools during a SIAMs inspection].
- The LGB Chair will support the designated lead safeguarding officer in the event of any safeguarding disclosure and provide support in ensuring that safeguarding

policy is adequate and observed within the school, including carrying out internal audits.

5 Withdrawal or restriction of delegation to an LGB

5.1 Triggers of Intervention

Equa is committed to the principles of collaboration and school-to-school support. The Trust is an open and honest partnership where challenge is welcomed by all. We strive to make sure that through the sharing of expertise and resources we promote our ethos and culture of supportive challenge and school improvement. Leaders are expected to be open about the strengths and areas for development for their school.

Equa assumes that the local governors are best placed to provide the support and challenge to their headteacher to sustain performance and address challenges in their school, but also recognises and seeks to pre-empt challenges in capacity. The Trustees must take appropriate action to tackle and resolve issues in capacity in an LGB for the benefit of the children within the Trust. Areas of need and challenges are likely to be identified from the following:

- External inspections or verification visits such as Ofsted, HMI, Annual Performance Dialogue and in the case of a Church school, SIAMs.
- An unexplained drop in pupil data or pupils not on track with targets
- High levels of teaching and learning and assessment requiring improvement
- Significant issues relating to the behaviour of children
- Falling rolls, beyond the local trend
- The school being at risk of facing significant financial difficulty
- Staffing issues, including recruitment, retention and absence
- Significant concern about safeguarding at a school

An annual cycle of performance evaluation and risk assessment will be carried out with all schools and monitored at least termly. This will inform the level of support required by the school. In the spirit of our leadership culture, the willingness of the school to engage with school improvement activity and the leadership capacity necessary to drive these

improvements in the school will be evaluated as part of the performance evaluation and risk assessment process.

5.2 Support and Intervention strategy

Equa schools effectively work together to bring about challenge and improvement within a supportive and cohesive culture. Developing our staff and growing our own leaders forms the heart of our strategy. There are excellent and highly skilled practitioners at all levels within the trust, and skills are effectively deployed between schools.

All schools benefit from a core package of support which is responsive to need both across schools and on an individual basis. The heads work closely together as a supportive group, with the CEO brokering support across schools. This could be anything from sharing resources, coaching and mentoring support, support visits all the way to employment of staff across schools or secondments of staff between schools.

The CEO will report to the trust board (standards committee) on a termly basis, detailing the support provided across schools and the impact of this support. If an LGB is identified as needing additional support the *Additional support process for LGBs* will be used.

Any intervention beyond core support will be discussed at the standards committee on a termly basis. If there is a resource and cost implication of the intervention, this will be discussed with the CFO and costed, and will be reported to the trust board (resources committee), or approval sought in event of any spend which is out of the agreed budget, in accordance with the financial scheme of delegation.

Our strategy operates at three levels, which aligns with intervention triggers:

1. Core support for all schools;
2. Additional support for vulnerable schools
3. Intensive support where schools are at risk of falling below the floor standards

**Core support
provided to all schools where outcomes remain above the national average in all
key measures**

Regular fortnightly 1:1 line management meetings for heads with CEO
 Equa school improvement group meeting (All Headteachers, monthly)
 Support from the MAT EYFS lead for all primary schools
 SENCO best practice group with representation from each school
 Cross school moderation and standardisation meetings for English
 Bespoke support from a team of 8 SLEs covering a wide basis of skills and expertise
 Support and training with SIAMS and spirituality
 Regular HT group meetings to share best practice, identify issues and share solutions
 Headteacher annual appraisal and mid-point review meeting
 Annual Peer reviews
 Annual self-evaluation programme
 Access to leadership programmes for all staff
 Access to coaching and mentoring
 Joint CPD programmes
 Governor support and training programme
 Access to central services for HR, finances, premises
 Monthly financial monitoring visits from CFO
 Support from a link trustee

Additional support

The CEO and HT will agree the most appropriate support when standards fall below expected. A clear support plan will be put in place and agreed which outlines school based internal interventions and additional support from the trust. The standards committee would be informed of this, and the progress made towards the targets will be reported at each meeting. The CEO will work with the head more regularly in a coaching capacity and will broker additional support for the school from within the trust or from external sources. The SIP will be closely monitored, and clear actions against time scales agreed at line management meetings.

Likely triggers for the need for additional support are:

- the performance of a sub cohort of pupils falls below, or is at risk of falling below, the national average
- the gap for disadvantaged widens or is at risk of widening
- attendance thresholds are or are at risk of being breached
- increase % of teachers being less than good
- the performance of a subject falls below, or is at risk of falling below, the national average
- there is a budget deficit forecast
- there is a significant safeguarding concern which cannot be addressed at school level
- there are leadership difficulties, for example, absence of a member of the leadership team for a significant period of time
- fall in student or staff wellbeing which cannot be addressed at school level
- there is a significant decline in the NOR, with an increase in pupils leaving throughout the year
- increase in parental complaints of a nature which pose a risk to the school
- staff recruitment/ retention issues leaving vacancies unfilled
- significant policy breaches which need addressing above school level
- schools acting independently and not in accordance with the scheme of delegation

Support may be:

Trust led internal review of areas causing concern

Support from an effective leader from another school
 Implementation of a standardised teaching package or curriculum with training for staff on effective use
 Additional support from the CEO or another headteacher
 Mentoring from an SLE/LLE/NLE/NLG
 Additional support from consultants
 Programme of visits to other schools for key personnel
 Staff placed on support programmes with a personalised CPD package
 Specific Governor training
 Stage 1 action-plan for LGB support
 Support from a trustee

Intensive support – this would be provided if a series of indications demonstrate that a school does not have the capacity to improve with the additional support provided. This would be agreed with the trust board, and could be directed by the trust board if there is a lack of willingness to embrace the support package identified. A clear support plan will be produced and implemented, with transparency of any cost implications of additional resources.

Likely indicators of the need for intensive support are:

- the school is below, or at risk of becoming below the floor standard in a key measure
- the school is graded as requires improvement at Ofsted inspection point
- the school is graded as requires improvement at a SIAMS inspection
- the school is coasting, or at risk of becoming coasting
- there is a forecast or actual deficit budget
- there is a serious breach of safeguarding
- there is no Headteacher
- significant fall in role
- weak governance
- cash flow issues
- failure to follow internal financial procedures

Actions –

- internal / external review of the area causing concern.
- monthly action plan produced to be implemented against clear targets and timescale to be achieved.
- contracting in an external consultant
- deployment of a senior leader from another school to work in the school needing support
- enhanced capacity through the secondment of a strong practitioner from another school
- CEO to work in the school for an agreed number of days per week
- deployment of a headteacher from another school
- deployment of CFO to work in the school 1 day per week
- NLG to review governance
- Stage 2 action plan
- the opportunity to change governance and loss of delegated authority through implementing an Interim Academy Board (IAB)

6 Central Committees

The Trustees have appointed four central committees.

- Resources Committee
- School Improvement and Standards Committee – could we reverse name?
- Marketing and Communications Committee
- Remuneration Committee.

6.1 Constitution of Central Committees

6.1.1 Membership

The Committees will be appointed by the Trust Board and will comprise no more than seven and no fewer than three people, of whom a majority will be Trustees.

The Board will appoint one of the members of the Committee as its Chair (the Committee Chair) A Trustee will not be eligible for appointment as Chair of a Central committee during the period when he or she is either Chair of the Trustees or acting as representative of SDBE in its role as corporate Member

The Committee will be supported by the Clerk to the Trustees.

Each Committee will have at least one annual meeting, or part of one meeting, with each of the external auditor and the head of internal audit without the senior executives being present.

6.1.2 Voting

The quorum for each meeting shall be one half of the members of the Committee rounded up. Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by a simple majority of those present and voting. The Committee Chair will have a casting vote on an equality of votes.

6.1.3 Meetings

Committees (apart from Remuneration Committee) shall meet at least 3 times a year on such dates as shall be determined by the Trust Board from time to time and at such other time as the Trust Company Secretary shall specify at the request of any member of the Committee or Trust Board. The Remuneration Committee will meet once a year.

Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, date and time together with an agenda shall be sent to each member of the Committee and any other

person invited or required to attend no fewer than five working days prior to the date of the meeting.

6.1.4 Minutes

The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees will minute the proceedings and resolutions of the Central Committees and ascertain, at the beginning of each meeting, the existence of any conflicts of interest and minute them accordingly.

Minutes of each Committee meeting will be sent to all members of the Central Committees and the Trust Board within seven working days of the meeting.

6.1.5 Authority

Central Committees are authorised by the Trust Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees are directed to cooperate with any request made by the Central Committees

The Central Committees are authorised by the Trustees to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of any person at any Central Committee meeting with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary.

6.2 Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for each committee are available in a separate document. Terms of Reference are reviewed annually by the committee membership and approved by the Full Trust Board.

6.3 Ad Hoc Committees and Panels

Members, Trustees and Local Governors will be prepared, from time to time to serve on ad hoc committees and panels to carry out specific tasks such as

- Recruitment of staff a member or volunteer
- Investigation of a complaint, grievance or disciplinary matter (in relation to Equa or any of its schools)
- Supporting a Local governing body during a suspension or restriction in delegation

- Overseeing the conversion of a new school to Equa
- Reviewing admissions decisions
- Reviewing exclusion decisions

And the remit of any such panel or committee shall be determined either by the relevant Equa policy or by the Trustees.

7. Financial Delegation

7.1 The level of authority required to make decisions is set out in Annexe B. Decisions must be consistent with the requirements of the public procurement rules and the requirement of the Articles and the Academies Financial Handbook.

7.2 Reserved Decisions

The disposal of a proprietary interest in land is a significant change which requires written consent from the Secretary of State for Education following submission of a full business case to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Prior to submitting such an application, the Trust shall first obtain the approval (by a majority) of the LGB for the school where such land is situated, the Trustees and the members.

Any business case submitted will demonstrate how the proceeds of such disposal will be used for the benefit of pupils at the school where such land is situated.

ANNEX A

The Skills of Governance

A1 – Desired skills and experience of the Members

- Local knowledge
- CofE Foundation
- Corporate Governance

A2 – Desired skills and experience of the Trustees

- Corporate Management
- External Educationalist
- Finance / Accounting
- HR / people Mngt
- Legal / Compliance
- Estates
- Previous Governance experience / corporate Governance
- Change Management
- Growth Management
- Marketing & Communications
- Health / Social

ANNEX B – Financial Delegation

Duty	Value	Delegated authority	Method
Virements of budget provision between budget headings	Up to £10,000	CFO	Report to the Board
	£10,001 to £30,000	CFO with approval from the Resources Committee	
	Over £30,000	Resources Committee	
Ordering goods and services within the agreed budget	Up to £1,000	Budget holder	Selection from preferred supplier list
	£1,001 to £5,000	Budget holder with the approval of the CFO	Minimum of three quotes required
	£5,001 to £100,000	CFO with the approval of the CEO	Minimum of three quotes required
	Over £100,000	Resources Committee – reporting to the Board	Formal tendering process, including advertising in the OJEU where necessary.
Signatories for cheques, BACS payment authorisations, bank transfers, ESFA grant claims and ESFA returns	Any	CEO, CFO and other specified personnel	Two signatories per transaction are required.
Authorising invoices	Up to £1,000	Budget Holder	Must be accompanied by correctly authorised Order with relevant quotes
	£1,001 to £10,000	Budget Holder and CFO	
	Over £10,000	CFO with approval of the CEO	Must be accompanied by correctly authorised Order with relevant quotes
Unbudgeted expenditure	Up to £5,000	CFO and CEO	Reported to the full Board
	£5,001 to £50,000	Resources Committee	
	Over £50,001, but within the Trust's reserves	Trust Board	

Duty	Value	Delegated authority	Method
Banking cash and cheques	Any	SBM	Cash and cheques kept on the school property will not accumulate above £1,000. Banking will be checked and agreed by another member of staff.
Disposal of assets	Up to £10,000	CFO	Original cost, maintaining the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money.
	£10,000 to £30,000	Resource Committee	
	Over £30,000	Trust Board	
	Land, buildings and heritage assets	Trust Board plus prior written approval of the ESFA	
Acquiring of assets	Freehold of land or buildings	Trust Board plus prior written approval of the ESFA	
Writing-off debts	Up to £1,000	CFO, reporting to the Resources Committee	Anything above these limits requires approval by the Secretary of State through the ESFA.
	£1,001 to £10,000	Resources Committee	
	Below 1% of total annual income or £45,000 (whichever is smaller) per single transaction subject to a maximum of £250,000	Trust Board and the ESFA where applicable	
Special payments, including staff severance and compensation payments	Up to £49,999	Trust Board	
	£50,000 and above	Trust Board plus ESFA approval before an offer is made to the employee	
Ex-gratia payments	Any	ESFA prior approval required	
Novel or contentious payments	Any	Trust Board plus prior ESFA approval	
Bank cards and online banking	Same limits of authorisation as ordering goods and non-budgeted expenditure		Charge cards will be kept in a safe and secure location when not in use.

Duty	Value	Delegated authority	Method
Leasehold or tenancy agreement exceeding seven years	Any	Trust Board plus ESFA approval	
Recruitment in budget replacements	Any	CFO and/or CEO	
Recruitment not in budget	Any	Resource Committee approval	
Borrowing	Any	Trust Board plus ESFA approval	