



Scheme of Delegation 2025 - 2026

Adopted by Symphony Learning Trust on	1 st September 2025
Updated and Approved by the Trustees on	30 th June 2025
Next Review Due	June 2026

Symphony Learning Trust



Chair of Trust – Mr Nigel Harrison

Chief Executive Officer – Mr Tim Sutcliffe

Chief Financial Officer – Mrs Talvinder Tundall

Scheme of Delegation

The role of the Members:-

The Members of the Trust have a different status to Trustees. Originally, they will have been the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding and will have agreed the Trust's first Articles of Association (a document which outlines the governance structure and how the Trust will operate). The Articles of Association stipulate arrangements for the appointment and removal of Members and Trustees. The Members appoint Trustees to ensure that the Trust's charitable objects are carried out. The Members will receive, from the Trust Board, an annual report on the performance of the Trust which includes the audited accounts.

Key responsibilities for Members of Trusts are:

- Ensuring the success of the Trust;
- Appointing Members and Trustees;
- Signing the Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- When Members should meet and how they can appoint and remove Trustees;
- Appoint the external auditors for the Trust;
- Approving any amendments made to the Trust's Articles of Association

- Holding the Trustee Board to account.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Governance Handbook states that it is clear that the role of Members in the running of any Trust is minimal and one of oversight; in Symphony Learning Trust Members have a limited and distinct role which avoids duplicating the role of the Trust Board.

While Members are permitted to be appointed as Trustees, in order to retain a degree of separation of powers between the Members and the Trust Board, and in line with DfE expectations, not all Members should be Trustees and in SLT, the limit is two. Members are not permitted to be employees of the Trust or to be related to employees of the Trust.

Members are tasked with assessing if the Trust Board is performing well and ensuring that the charitable object is being fulfilled.

The role of the Trustees:-

Trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the Trust in accordance with the provisions set out in the Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association. The Trust Board is the accountable body for the performance of all schools within the Trust and as such must:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold the Head Teacher team to account for the educational performance of the schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Oversee the financial performance of the Trust and make sure its money is well spent.
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Because Trustees are bound by both charity and company law, the terms 'trustees' and 'directors' are often used interchangeably, however, we use the term 'Trustee' in SLT.

The Trust Board is permitted to exercise all the powers of the Academy Trust. The Trust Board will delegate to the Chief Executive Officer responsibility for the day to day operations of the Trust. **The Trustees determine the Scheme of Delegation.**

The Trust Board has the right to review and adapt its governance structure at any time which includes removing delegation.

Trustees are responsible for delivering the three core governance functions, making key decisions and conducting the business of the Trust.

Trustees may do anything which is incidental or conducive to the exercise of their functions.

The role of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO):-

The CEO has the delegated responsibility for the operation of the Trust including the performance of the Trust's academies/ schools and performance management of the head teachers.

The CEO is the Accounting Officer and must ensure that the organisation is run with financial effectiveness and stability.

The CEO leads the Head Teacher team within the Trust. The CEO will delegate functions to the Head Teacher team and is accountable to the Trust Board for the performance of the Head Teacher team.

The role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO):-

The CFO has the delegated duty for the day to day management of financial issues including the establishment and operation of a suitable accounting system and the maintenance of effective internal controls within the Trust.

The role includes ensuring that the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the academies/schools, with the preparation of monthly management accounts. The CFO must ensure all forms are completed, and agreed with trustees as necessary, and submitted to the DfE/ESFA in strict accordance with the timetable in the DfE guidance.

The role of the Executive Head teacher/ Head teacher/ Head of School:-

The CEO will delegate responsibility for the day to day management of academies/schools to the Executive head teacher/ head teacher. Where there is an Executive Head teacher, many of the day to day functions of running a school are delegated to a Head of School who is also performance managed by the Executive Head teacher. Executive Head teachers and Head Teachers are managed by the CEO. They report to the Trust Board via the CEO and also to the LGB on matters which have been delegated.

The role of the Finance and Audit Committee

The main remit for this Committee is to review the Trust's financial management and reporting arrangements, provide constructive challenge to the actions and judgements of management in relation to the financial reports prior to submission to the Board, notably:

- Review and monitor critical accounting policies and practices;
- Review the extent to which the financial statements are affected by any unusual or complex transactions in the year and how they are disclosed;

- Ensure clarity and transparency of disclosures;
- Arrange for implementation of significant adjustments resulting from any audit;
- Compliance with accounting standards, DfE and legal requirements;
- Ensuring that each LGB effectively monitors the academy/school's budget;
- Review and maintain the Trust's Risk Register;
- Monitor the financial Key Performance Indicators (aka KPIs);
- Recommend approval to the Trust Board of any large capital project, in line with the Trust's Finance Policy.

The role of the local governing body (LGB):-

The Trust Board has established Local Governing Bodies which are subcommittees of the Trust Board. Trustees delegate authority to each LGB, (as set out in the chart below), but retain overall responsibility for each school in line with Government legislation and policy.

Trustees have delegated the responsibilities to each LGB to:-

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school;
- Hold the school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and their pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent;
- Report to the Trust Board in relation to the performance of the school.

Key	Red box Function cannot be legally carried out at this level.
	✓ Decision to be undertaken at this level
	A To action
	M To monitor

Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
People	Members: Appoint / remove	✓						
	Trustees: Appoint / remove	✓	A					
	Role descriptions for Members	✓	A					
	A minimum of two Local Parent Governors: elect				✓			
	Form Audit Committee	✓						
	Finance and Audit Board appoint and remove Chairs and the Responsible Officer			✓				
	HR/ Pay Board appoint and remove Chairs		✓					
	LGB chairs: appoint for a twelve month period at the first full LGB meeting in the school year				✓			
	LGB chairs: remove		✓		A			
	Clerk to Trust Board: appoint and remove		✓			A		
	Clerk to LGB: appoint and remove				✓			A

Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Systems and structures	Articles of association: agree and review	✓	A	A				
	Governance structure for the Trust: establish and review annually		✓		A	A		
	Terms of references: agree annually		✓			A		
	Skills audit: complete and recruit to fill gaps annually		✓			A		
	Annual self-review of Trust Board: complete annually		✓					
	Annual self-review of LGB performance: complete annually				✓	M		
	Chair's performance: carry out 360 degrees review periodically		✓ (Trust)		✓ (LGB)	M		
	Succession: plan		✓		✓	A		A
	Annual Schedule of Business for Trust Board: agree		A			✓		

Area		Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Reporting	Trust governance details on Trust and schools/academies' websites: ensure		✓		✓	M	M	
	Local governance details on academy/school website: ensure		M		✓	M		✓
	Register of all interests, business, pecuniary, loyalty for Members/Trustees/Local Governors : establish and publish		M		✓	M		✓
	Annual report on performance of the Trust: submit to Members and publish		✓			A	A	
	Annual report and accounts including accounting policies, signed statement on regularity, propriety and compliance, incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money: submit		✓	A			A	
	Annual report of work of LGB: submit to Trust		M			✓		

Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Being Strategic	Determine Trust wide policies which reflect the Trust's ethos and values		✓			A	A	
	Determine academy/school level policies which reflect the academy/school's ethos and values				✓			A
	Central spend -: agree		✓	A		A	A	
	Management of risk: establish register, review and monitor			✓	✓	A	A	A
	Engagement with stakeholders		✓		✓	A		A
	Trust's vision and strategy, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured: determine		✓	✓		A	A	
	School vision and strategy, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured.		M		✓	M		A
	Budget plan to support delivery of Trust key priorities: agree		✓	A		A	A	
	Budget plan to support delivery of academy/school key priorities: agree		M	M	✓			A
	Trust's staffing structure: agree		✓			A		

	Academy/school staffing structure: agree		M		✓	A		A
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Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Holding to Account	Auditing and reporting arrangements for matters of compliance (eg safeguarding, H&S, employment): agree		✓ (trust)	A	✓ (LGB)	A	A	
	Reporting arrangements for progress on key priorities: agree		✓ (trust)		✓ (LGB)	A		A
	Performance management of the Chief Executive Officer: undertake		✓					
	Performance management of head teacher/ exec head				✓	A		
	Performance management of academy/school staff				M	M		✓
	Trustee monitoring: agree arrangements		✓			A		
	LGB monitoring: agree arrangements				✓	M		A

Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Finance	Trust's Finance Policy: establish and review		✓	A		A	A	
	School's scheme of financial delegation: establish and review				✓			A
	CEO pay award: agree		✓					
	Exec head/ Head teacher pay award: agree		✓		✓	A		
	Heads of School pay award: agree				✓	A		
	Trust staff appraisal procedure and pay progression: monitor and agree		✓			A		
	Academy/school staff appraisal procedure and pay progression: monitor and agree		M		✓	M		
	Develop Trust wide procurement strategies and efficiency savings programme			✓		A	A	A
	Appoint and remove External Auditors	✓						
	Acquire and dispose of Trust land		✓					
	Oversee any changed use of Assets		✓					

Area	Decision	Delegation						
		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
Estates	Developing medium to long term strategic estates documents and plans (e.g. Estate vision, strategy and asset management plan)		✓		M	M	A	
	Making strategic decisions about the estate (e.g. to acquire or dispose of land and buildings)			✓		M	A	
	Managing the performance of the estate and ensuring it delivers value for money (e.g. as part of accountability for financial performance)			✓	M		A	A
	Setting a medium-term budget for the estate (e.g. as part of your 3-5 year overall budget planning process)			✓	M		A	
	Planning for emergencies and business continuity (e.g. ensuring the estate is integral in organisational emergency planning)						A	
	Instituting a health and safety policy for the estate and defining responsibilities across the organisation (e.g. ensuring the estate is integral in organisational health and safety policies)		✓		M		A	A
	Ensuring that all buildings are safe, secure and comply with statutory requirements (e.g. managing and monitoring the safe use and operation of the estate)				M		A	A
	Producing and implementing a properly funded maintenance plan (e.g. as part of organisational budget planning process)				M	M	A	
	Approving capital projects, building works and bids for capital funding (e.g. formal sign off for different levels of investment)			✓	M	A	A	

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Education and Curriculum	Key Performance Indicators – setting and reviewing performance of the Trust & the academies/ schools		✓		✓	A		A
	Quality of Teaching - ensuring appropriate levels of support, challenge and intervention to support delivery of education outcomes		M		M	A		✓
	Curriculum – setting the curriculum for the academy/ school and reviewing its effectiveness		M		✓	A		A
	Pupil Premium – reviewing and challenging the value for money/ impact of the Pupil Premium in terms of educational outcomes and narrowing the achievement gap		M		✓	A		A
	Set Admissions Policy				✓	A	A	A
	Establish the collective worship arrangements for academy/school without religious character				✓			A
	Resolve Pupil issues (including attendance, exclusions, punctuality and disciplinary matters) for each academy /school				M	A		✓
	Academy /School hours (including term dates) – setting the opening and closing times for the school/academy				✓	A		A

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		Members	Trust Board	Finance & Audit	LGB	CEO	CFO	Heads
HR and operations	Agree CEO job description and appoint / remove CEO		✓					
	Agree CFO job description and appoint / remove CFO		✓			A		
	Exec Head/ Head teacher: Appoint/ remove		✓		A	A		
	Trust staff : Appoint/remove		✓			A	A	A
	Head of School: Appoint/ remove				M	A		
	Head of School: Appoint/ remove				M	A		
	Academy/ school staff: Appoint/remove				✓	A		A
	Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment and Staff Code of Conduct		✓			A	A	
	Settlement agreement with staff member confirmation (inc final amount payable)		M			M	✓	
	Determine and allocate central services provided to the academies/schools by the Trust		✓			A	A	