

Mercia
Learning Trust

Scheme of Delegation

Author	Governance Officer
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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every year. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

1. Background and Approach

- 1.1. This document outlines delegated responsibilities for the key governance tiers of Mercia Learning Trust. It sits alongside but does not seek to replicate information contained in other key documents such as the Articles of Association, Master Funding Agreement or policy schedules.
- 1.2. The purpose of the Scheme of Delegation is to provide clarity on the role and responsibilities of those who contribute to the governance and oversight of our trust and its schools. All those with governance and management responsibilities must be familiar with it so appropriate steps can be taken to ensure sufficient and proper challenge of those with leadership responsibilities, with regard to performance of the schools and financial stability within our trust.
- 1.3. There is an expectation that all involved with governance of our trust and schools are committed to undertake their roles in line with Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- 1.4. Mercia Learning Trust expects professional candour at all levels of leadership. The Executive Leadership Team will work openly and constructively with Trustees and Members, ensuring that information, risks, challenges and opportunities are communicated transparently and in a timely manner to enable effective scrutiny, support and decision making.

2. Mission and Values

- 2.1. Why do we exist?
- 2.2. To empower everyone in our communities, especially the most disadvantaged, to succeed.
- 2.3. How do we behave?
- 2.4. We are kind - showing care and supporting each other.
- 2.5. We have integrity - doing the right thing and always putting children first.
- 2.6. We work with diligence - overcoming obstacles and having no excuses.
- 2.7. What do we do?
- 2.8. We run schools that focus on academic excellence, cultural capital and the development of character.
- 2.9. How will we succeed?
- 2.10. A culture of excellence - high standards shaped by clarity, not control.
- 2.11. Academic focus - empowering all children through an exceptional curriculum.
- 2.12. Purposeful collaboration - relationships build on trust, reducing sub-optimisation and driving collective success.

3. Governance Model

- 3.1. Mercia Learning Trust is a multi-school trust and company limited by guarantee. Details of Trust Members, Trustees and senior staff, including business interests and attendance at meetings, can be found on our trust's website.
- 3.2. Mercia Learning Trust has set up a governance model that ensures clear and non-duplicative roles and responsibilities within the overall governance structure. There is clear separation between Members and Trustees, and executive and non-executive. The trust leadership team facilitates communications between levels of governance as well as a culture of regular self-evaluation.
- 3.3. Our trust's governance structure is as follows:
- 3.4. Members: the guardians of the constitution (Articles of Association) who ensure the charitable objects are fulfilled. As outlined in the Department for Education Academy trust governance guide, members are the founders of the academy trust. They have a general duty to assure themselves that the governance of the trust is effective. Given Members' roles, they are not included on the breakdown of delegations as set out below.
- 3.5. Trustees (also known as Directors under company law): accountable to the Members, Secretary of State for Education and the wider community for the quality of the education provided to students and for the appropriate expenditure of public money. The Board hold ultimate legal responsibility for all aspects of operational delivery and are required to have systems to assure themselves of the quality, safety and good practice of the affairs of our Trust. The Board delegates some responsibility including for day-to-day management.

- 3.6. Local Governing Bodies (LGB): provide a crucial challenge and support role and have some delegated responsibilities particularly for their own school.
- 3.7. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with the Leadership Team: have delegated responsibilities for operational running of our trust. The CEO is the Accounting Officer, supported by the Director of Finance and Operations who is the Chief Financial Officer.
- 3.8. Headteachers: responsible for the performance and defined operational delivery areas within their own school including management of their senior leadership team.

4. Structure

- 4.1. The document is divided into five key areas of responsibility and activity. The following levels of delegated power are used throughout:
- 4.2. **Approve:** has primary responsibility for approval, making relevant appointment, determining how the task should be undertaken, setting appropriate milestones or targets and ensuring the task is completed.
- 4.3. **Consult:** the individual/group that should be consulted as part of the process of completing a particular task.
- 4.4. **Develop:** the individual group responsible for creating the policy or process related to the task.
- 4.5. **Deliver:** the individual/group that has responsibility for undertaking the particular task delegated to them and reporting on its delivery at suitable intervals. In the case of the CEO this will be at trust level. In the case of the headteacher this will be at school level.
- 4.6. **Monitor:** the individual/group has responsibility for overseeing, reviewing and evaluating the specific area of performance to ensure accountability and compliance with policies, regulation and strategic objectives.

5. Audience

- 5.1. This document is designed for use by key governance stakeholders within our trust as well as externally. It will be made available on our trust's website.

6. Approval and Renewal

- 6.1. The Mercia Learning Trust Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed at least annually and approved by the Trust Board, so that the roles and responsibilities can be updated to reflect organisational priorities, good practice and updates to requirements or legislation.

7. Delegation Structure

- 7.1. Governance operates through defined layers of delegation. **Members** are the guardians of our trust's constitution and have limited but crucial powers, including the appointment and removal of Trustees.
- 7.2. **Trustees** form the Board and are the accountable body for the performance, strategic direction and financial integrity of our trust.
- 7.3. Trustees delegate responsibilities to our **Executive Leadership Team**, led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is responsible for the operational delivery of our trust's strategic objectives.
- 7.4. **Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)** are established to provide local oversight, support, and challenge at individual school level, focusing on educational performance and compliance within the parameters set out in this Scheme of Delegation.

8. Reserved Matters

- 8.1. Decisions that are novel, contentious, or repercussive in nature, meaning those that could create precedent, generate significant public or stakeholder interest, or have material financial or reputational impact, are reserved to our Trust Board and shall not be delegated.

Detail of delegations

1. Culture and engagement

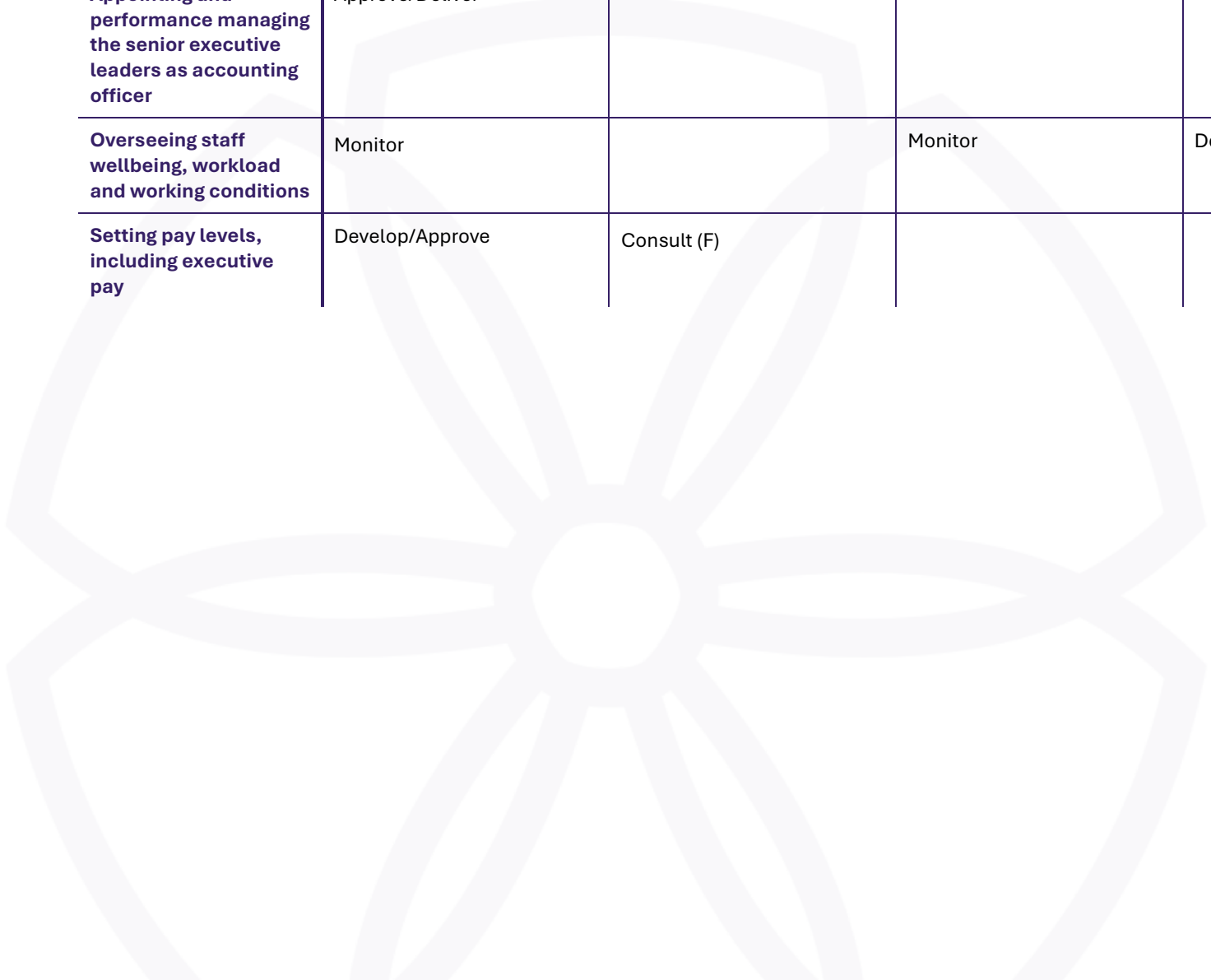
Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Setting trust vision	Approve		Consult	Develop/Deliver	Consult/Deliver
Setting trust culture and values	Approve		Consult	Develop/Deliver	Consult/Deliver
Setting expectation for trustee conduct	Approve/Deliver			Develop	
Fostering equality, diversity and inclusion, within governance	Monitor (Whole Trust) /Deliver (in relation to Trust Board)		Monitor (school) /Deliver (in relation to LGB)	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Ensuring transparency of information	Approve	Deliver	Deliver	Deliver	Deliver
Engaging with stakeholders	Monitor	Monitor	Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Adhering to the Articles of Association	Deliver	Deliver	Deliver	Deliver	Deliver

2. Strategy

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Setting trust strategy	Approve	Deliver		Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Reviewing progress against the strategy	Monitor	Monitor (A&R, F)		Monitor/Deliver	
Setting school improvement plan in line with trust priorities	Monitor		Monitor	Develop/Approve	Develop/Deliver
Approve to progress to due diligence	Approve	Consult (A&R, F)		Deliver	
Approve growth opportunities	Approve	Consult (A&R, F)		Develop/Deliver	

3. Non-executive leadership and evaluation

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Establishing a high performing governance structure including financial experience and appointing board committees	Develop/Monitor	Deliver (A&R, F)	Deliver		
Approve scheme of delegation	Approve	Deliver	Deliver	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Appointing board and committee chair and vice chair and nomination for link trustee roles (SEND, Safeguarding and Careers)	Approve				
Appointment and removal of local governing body chair and vice chair	Approve/Monitor		Consult	Approve/Monitor	Consult
Appointment parent local governors	Approve		Deliver	Approve/Monitor	Consult
Appointment of local governors	Approve		Deliver	Approve/Monitor	Consult
Appointment of trust governance professional	Approve			Consult	
Ensuring appointment checks, induction and training	Monitor	Monitor (A&R)	Consult	Develop/Deliver	Deliver

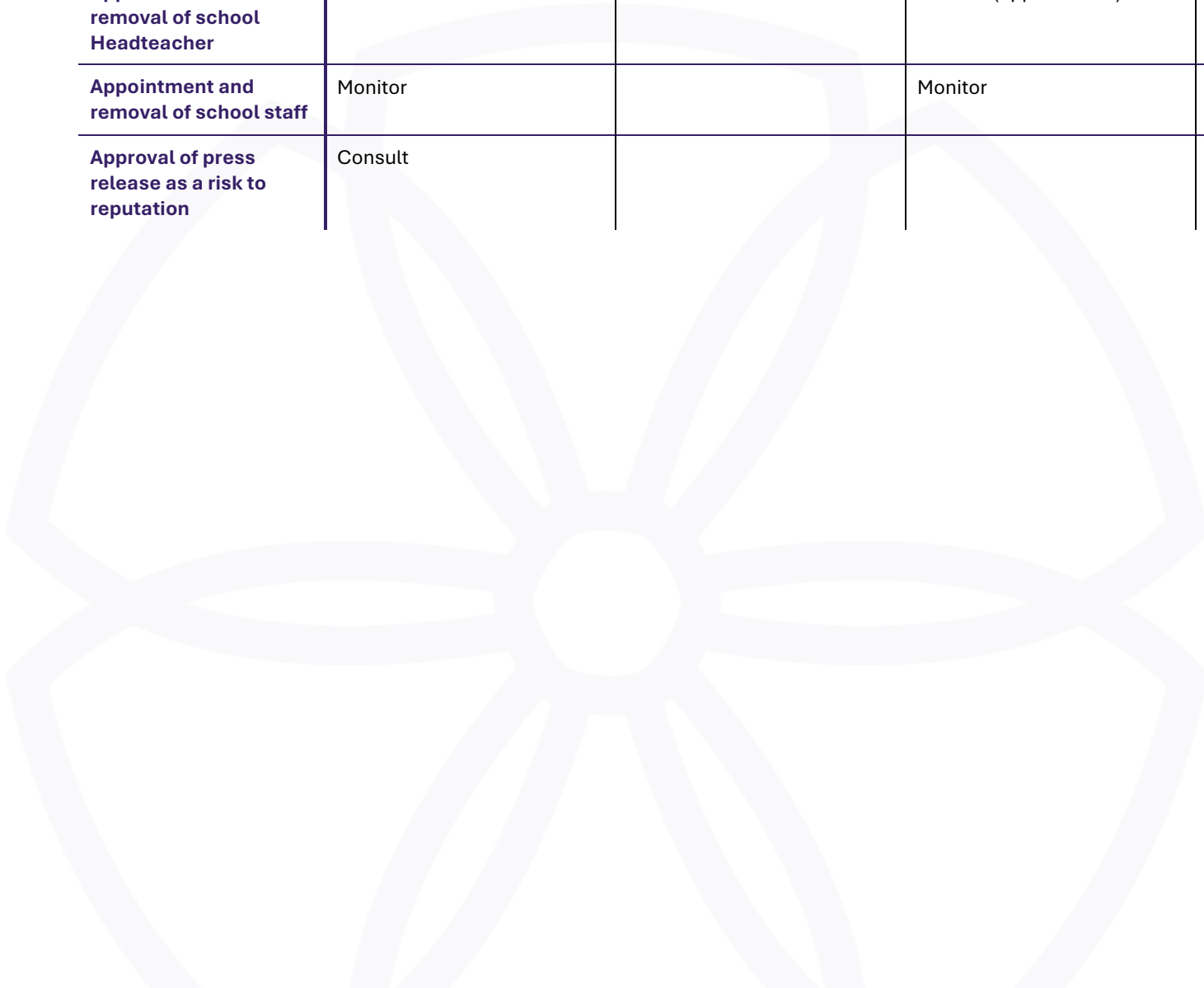


Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Evaluating governance regularly	Monitor/Deliver	Deliver	Deliver	Consult	Consult
Appointing and performance managing the senior executive leaders as accounting officer	Approve/Deliver				
Overseeing staff wellbeing, workload and working conditions	Monitor		Monitor	Deliver	Deliver
Setting pay levels, including executive pay	Develop/Approve	Consult (F)			

4. Accountability

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Ensuring strategic oversight and accountability	Monitor	Monitor (A&R, F)	Monitor	Deliver	Deliver
Setting trust approach to curriculum and assessment, with regard to statutory requirements	Monitor/Approve		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Delivering Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in line with statutory requirements	Monitor/Approve		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Developing curriculum policies as required by school(s) (religious education, relationships, sex & health education, collective worship and careers)	Monitor/Approve		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Standards of teaching	Monitor		Monitor	Develop/Deliver/Monitor	Develop/Deliver
Production and analysis of data	Monitor	Monitor (A&R, F)	Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Appointing Chief Finance Officer (CFO)	Approve	Consult (F)		Approve	
Setting delegated authority limits for financial transactions	Approve	Consult/Develop (F)		Develop/Deliver	Deliver

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Developing budget	Approve	Consult (F)		Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Delivering monthly management accounts and forecasts	Monitor/Approve	Monitor (F)		Develop/Deliver	
Managing cash position	Monitor	Monitor (F)		Develop/Deliver	
Delivering annual report and accounts, with regard to accounts consolidation exercises required by DfE	Approve	Consult (F)		Develop/Deliver	
Development of finance policies (charging and remission, procurement)	Approve	Consult (F)		Develop/Deliver	
Ensuring adequate insurance cover is in place	Monitor	Consult (A&R)		Deliver	
Maintaining risk register	Approve	Monitor (A&R)		Develop/Deliver	
Managing conflicts of interest and related party transactions	Monitor/Deliver	Monitor (A&R, F)	Deliver	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Approve a business continuity and emergency response framework	Approve	Consult (A&R)	Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver



Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Appointment of school trust leadership positions	Consult			Approve/Deliver	
Appointment and removal of school Headteacher	Consult		Consult (appointment)	Approve/Deliver	
Appointment and removal of school staff	Monitor		Monitor	Monitor/Consult	Approve
Approval of press release as a risk to reputation	Consult			Approve	

5. Compliance

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Setting admissions policies	Approve		Consult	Develop	Deliver
Keeping admission and attendance registers			Monitor	Monitor	Deliver
Ensuring compliance with SEND code of practice	Monitor		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Delivering support for looked after children	Monitor		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Monitoring pupil premium spend, Inclusive Mainstream Funding and PE and sport premium	Monitor		Monitor	Develop	Deliver
Setting health and safety policies and estate management strategy	Approve	Consult (A&R)		Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Setting governance policies (data protection, information sharing, cyber security, code of conduct, complaints)	Approve			Develop/Deliver	Deliver

Operational area	Trust Board	Committee	Local Governing Bodies	Chief Executive Officer/Leadership Team	Headteachers
Setting trust safeguarding policies, with regard to statutory guidance, including appointing designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Monitor/Approve		Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Setting behaviour and welfare policies (behaviour, exclusions)	Monitor		Approve/Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Setting the school day and year	Approve		Consult	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Managing school premises ensuring health and safety regulations are followed	Monitor	Monitor (A&R)	Monitor	Develop/Deliver	Develop/Deliver
Setting the uniform policy	Monitor		Consult	Approve	Develop/Deliver
Setting approach to staff appointment and dismissal with regard to statutory requirements	Approve			Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Setting HR policies (appraisal, pay, disciplinary, grievance, capability, safer recruitment)	Approve			Develop/Deliver	Deliver
Setting whistleblowing procedures	Approve			Develop/Deliver	Deliver