Scheme of Delegation

2026-27

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1. Purpose and scope

1.1 This Scheme sets out who makes which decisions in The Cedars Academy Trust: the members, the Trust Board, its committees, and the co-headteachers and other leaders the Board delegates to.

1.2 The Trust is a single academy trust. It runs one academy, Cedars Academy, on two sites: Cedars Academy: Low Fell and Cedars Academy: High Heworth. The Scheme applies trust-wide. Where a decision belongs to one site, the tables say so.

1.3 The Scheme covers governance decisions. Money limits, such as spending, contract, write-off and disposal limits and bank signatories, are set in the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of financial powers, which the Board approves separately. Where both documents deal with the same matter, the Financial Regulations set the limit and this Scheme says who decides.

1.4 The Board is accountable in law for everything the Trust does. It cannot delegate that accountability, but it can delegate detailed scrutiny, oversight and decision making. A decision taken by a committee under this Scheme counts as a decision of the Board.

1.5 A committee or person may act for the Board only where this Scheme, a committee's terms of reference or a Board resolution gives them the power to do so.

1.6 The Scheme must be read with the Trust's Articles of Association, its funding agreement, the committee terms of reference and the Financial Regulations. Where this Scheme and the Articles or the funding agreement differ, the Articles and the funding agreement apply.

2. Legal and statutory framework

2.1 The trustees are both charity trustees, within section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011, and company directors under the Companies Act 2006.

2.2 This Scheme follows:

- the Academy Trust Handbook 2026, in effect from 1 October 2026 (ATH). Paragraph references in this Scheme are to that edition;
- the DfE Academy trust governance guide (updated 20 July 2026), section 4.3.6, which says the scheme of delegation must set out the structure and delegated remit of the members, the Board and its committees; and
- the Trust's Articles of Association and funding agreement.

2.3 Other law and guidance is named in the tables where it applies, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the DfE guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion (in effect from 26 July 2026) and the Children and Families Act 2014.

3. Governance structure

Members

3.1 The Trust has four members. Members are like the shareholders of a company. They appoint and remove trustees as the Articles allow, approve any change to the Articles, receive the audited accounts and the Board's annual report, and appoint and remove the external auditors (ATH 1.7, 4.5 and 4.7).

3.2 Members must not be employees of the Trust (ATH 1.5). Most members should not also be trustees (ATH 1.6).

Trust Board

3.3 The Board is responsible for the general control and management of the Trust. It has three core functions:

- making sure the Trust has a clear vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding the co-headteachers to account for the educational performance of the Trust and its pupils, and for the performance management of staff; and
- overseeing the Trust's financial performance and making sure its money is well spent.

3.4 The Board must meet at least three times a year (ATH 2.3). It keeps at least two places for parent trustees, who are elected by parents (ATH 1.9).

3.5 No employee of the Trust is a trustee. The co-headteachers attend Board meetings as principals. They report, advise and answer questions, but do not vote.

3.6 The Board may review this Scheme at any time and may take back any power it has delegated.

Committees

3.7 The Board has three standing committees. Each works to terms of reference the Board approves each year, which set its membership, quorum and how often it meets.

Committee	What it covers
Resources, Audit & Risk Committee	Finance: budget scrutiny, management accounts, benchmarking and value for money. Audit and risk: internal scrutiny, external audit, the risk register and internal control. Premises, health and safety. Staffing: the staffing structure, staff pay progression, absence and wellbeing. It is the Trust's audit and risk committee, combined with finance as the Handbook allows for trusts with income below £50 million (ATH 3.6).
Curriculum & Pupils Committee	Curriculum and pupil progress; attendance, behaviour, suspensions and exclusions; safeguarding reports; personal development, relationships and sex education, and careers; equality objectives; statutory information on the website. It is the committee the Board has named to oversee inclusion, including SEND (ATH 1.19).
Headteachers Performance Management Committee	The yearly performance review of each co-headteacher, with an external adviser, and a recommendation to the Board on co-headteacher pay.

3.8 Employees should not be members of the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee, but the Accounting Officer and the Chief Financial Officer should attend. At least one member should have recent or relevant accountancy or audit experience. The Chair of Trustees should not chair it. It should meet at least three times a year (ATH 3.7 and 3.9 to 3.11).

Panels

3.9 Some decisions are made by a panel of trustees set up for the case. Panel members must have had no earlier involvement in the matter. Panels are used for:

- stage 3 complaints (Complaints Policy);
- staff hearings and appeals that the HR policies give to trustees; and

- reviews of pupil suspensions and permanent exclusions where the Board must consider reinstatement. This panel has at least three trustees.

Link trustees

3.10 The Board names a trustee to lead on safeguarding and a trustee whom staff can contact to raise a whistleblowing concern (ATH 2.49). Office holders are named in Appendix A.

4. Executive roles

4.1 The Trust has no chief executive. Three co-headteachers of equal standing are jointly responsible for leading the Trust:

- the Headteacher, Cedars Academy: Low Fell;
- the Headteacher, Cedars Academy: High Heworth; and
- the Director of Inclusion, who is also the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

No co-headteacher reports to another.

4.2 Where the tables give a decision to the co-headteachers:

- trust-wide decisions are taken by the three co-headteachers jointly;
- decisions that affect one site only are taken by that site's Headteacher; and
- decisions on safeguarding, inclusion and SEND practice are taken by the Director of Inclusion.

4.3 A co-headteacher may ask another member of staff to carry out a task, but stays accountable for it. The deputy headteachers act for their site Headteacher when that Headteacher is not available.

4.4 Nobody may decide a matter about their own pay, contract, conduct or performance. Where a decision would fall to a co-headteacher about themselves, another co-headteacher or the Chair of Trustees takes it, as the relevant policy sets out.

Statutory appointments

4.5 The Board must make these appointments in writing. The people who hold them are named in Appendix A.

- **Senior executive leader (ATH 1.33).** The Headteacher, Cedars Academy: Low Fell, who is also the Accounting Officer, as the Handbook expects (ATH 1.34). In a single academy trust this should be the principal. This is the designation the Handbook requires. It does not give that co-headteacher authority over the other two.
- **Accounting Officer (ATH 1.34 to 1.41).** The Headteacher, Cedars Academy: Low Fell. The Accounting Officer is personally responsible to Parliament and to DfE's accounting officer for the Trust's financial resources, including regularity, propriety and value for money. This personal responsibility cannot be delegated. The Handbook says the Accounting Officer should be the senior executive leader and that the role must not rotate.
- **Chief Financial Officer (ATH 1.44).** The Headteacher, Cedars Academy: High Heworth. The Board delegates the Trust's detailed financial procedures to the Chief Financial Officer.

- **Governance Professional (ATH 1.48).** Someone who is not a trustee, principal or chief executive. The Governance Professional gives the Board and its committees independent governance advice and administrative support.

Other roles

4.6 The Academy Business Leader leads the Trust's business functions at both sites, including finance operations, HR administration, procurement, premises and health and safety compliance, IT and data protection, and supports the Board's governance work. The Academy Business Leader is a member of the senior leadership team.

4.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the responsibilities set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Each site Headteacher is a deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for their site.

5. How to read the tables

5.1 Each row in section 6 is a decision or task. The letters show each body's part in it:

Letter	Meaning
A	Approves. Makes the final decision.
R	Reviews and recommends. Scrutinises and recommends to the body that approves.
M	Monitors. Receives reports and checks progress.
D	Delivers. Does the work day to day and reports on it.

5.2 Columns: Members; Board, the Trust Board; RAR, the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee; C&P, the Curriculum & Pupils Committee; HPM, the Headteachers Performance Management Committee; Co-heads, the co-headteachers as explained in 4.2; ABL, the Academy Business Leader.

5.3 A blank cell means that body has no set part in the decision. Where a row says "panel", a panel of trustees makes the decision as described in 3.9, and the Board column shows it.

5.4 Rows are numbered so they can be cited, for example "row S4".

6. Delegation tables

Money limits are in the Financial Regulations. The letters and column headings are explained in section 5.

6.1 Governance

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
G1	Appoint and remove members.	**A**						
G2	Appoint and remove trustees, as the Articles allow.	**A**						
G3	Arrange elections of parent trustees (ATH 1.9).		**A**					
G4	Elect the Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees.		**A**					

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
G5	Appoint committee members and committee chairs.		**A**					
G6	Appoint and remove the Governance Professional (ATH 1.48).		**A**					
G7	Appoint in writing the senior executive leader, the Accounting Officer and the Chief Financial Officer (ATH 1.33, 1.34, 1.44).		**A**					
G8	Agree role descriptions for members, trustees, the Chair and committee members.	**A**	**A**					
G9	Approve changes to the Articles of Association, including the Trust's name.	**A**	**R**					
G10	Set up committees, and agree their terms of reference and this Scheme each year.		**A**	**R**	**R**	**R**		
G11	Agree the yearly schedule of Board and committee business.		**A**					
G12	Carry out a skills audit and recruit trustees to fill gaps (ATH 1.31).		**A**					
G13	Review the effectiveness of the Board and its committees each year, including each trustee's contribution and, from time to time, the Chair's performance.		**A**					
G14	Agree how trustees monitor the Trust's work, including any trustee visits.		**A**					
G15	Plan succession for the Chair, trustees and committee chairs.		**A**					
G16	Decide whether to join or form a multi-academy trust, or to make another significant change such as to the age range, capacity or sites. DfE approval is needed.		**A**				**R**	
G17	Keep and publish the register of business and financial interests of members, trustees and senior staff (ATH 1.51, 1.55).		**A**	**M**				
G18	Make sure the Trust website publishes the information the law requires, including the governance details in ATH 1.55.		**M**		**M**			**D**

6.2 Strategy, curriculum and pupils

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
P1	Set the Trust's vision, strategy, key priorities and key performance indicators.		**A**	**R**	**R**		**R, D**	
P2	Write and carry out each site's Development Plan, and report progress against it.		**M**		**M**		**A, D**	
P3	Set a broad and balanced curriculum at each site that meets pupils' EHC plans.				**M**		**A, D**	
P4	Agree the enrichment and extracurricular offer, including after school clubs.				**M**		**A**	
P5	Set the times of sessions and the dates of terms, holidays and training days.		**A**				**R**	

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
P6	Decide requests to withdraw a pupil from sex education. The Director of Inclusion decides, after discussion with the site Headteacher.				**M**		**A**	
P7	Provide careers guidance and give education and training providers access to pupils, as the Careers Policy and Provider Access Statement sets out.				**M**		**D**	
P8	Reply when the local authority consults on naming the academy in an EHC plan, and admit any pupil named in one (Children and Families Act 2014, sections 39 and 43). The site Headteacher decides, having taken the Director of Inclusion's view.				**M**		**A**	
P9	Oversee inclusion and SEND, including EHC plan annual reviews (ATH 1.19).		**M**		**M**		**D**	
P10	Approve and publish the SEND Information Report each year.		**A**		**R**		**D**	**D**
P11	Keep the attendance register (School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024).				**M**		**D**	
P12	Suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Only the site Headteacher may do this.				**M**		**A**	
P13	Consider reinstatement after a permanent exclusion, after suspensions of more than 15 school days in a term, or where a pupil would miss a public examination (panel, see 3.9).		**A**					
P14	Monitor attendance, behaviour, suspensions, exclusions and bullying.				**M**		**D**	
P15	Make sure safeguarding meets Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, including the Prevent duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, section 26). The Director of Inclusion leads as Designated Safeguarding Lead.		**M**		**M**		**D**	
P16	Provide free school meals to eligible pupils, and universal infant free school meals at Cedars Academy: Low Fell.			**M**			**D**	
P17	Meet the school food standards at both sites. Catering at Cedars Academy: High Heworth is contracted to Gateshead Council.			**M**			**D**	**D**
P18	Plan and report the pupil premium, and the PE and sport premium at Cedars Academy: Low Fell, and publish what the grant conditions require.			**M**	**M**		**D**	

6.3 Staffing and pay

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
S1	Approve the staffing structure.		**A**	**R**			**D**	
S2	Change the staffing structure where the overall budget does not increase.			**M**			**A**	

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
S3	Restructure or make staff redundant.		**A**	**R**			**D**	**D**
S4	Appoint a co-headteacher.		**A**					
S5	Appoint deputy headteachers and the Academy Business Leader, in consultation with the Board.		**R**				**A**	
S6	Appoint other staff within the approved structure.						**A**	**D**
S7	Keep the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks up to date.			**M**				**D**
S8	Suspend a member of staff. The co-headteachers decide together. Only the Chair of Trustees may suspend a co-headteacher (Disciplinary Policy and Procedure).		**A**				**A**	
S9	Dismiss for misconduct: the appropriate headteacher, or the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee where a co-headteacher is the subject (Disciplinary Policy and Procedure).			**A**			**A**	
S10	Dismiss on capability grounds: a panel of at least three trustees from the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee (Capability Policy and Procedure).			**A**				
S11	Dismiss on grounds of sickness absence (Sickness Absence Management Policy).			**A**				
S12	Decide a staff grievance: a panel of at least three trustees from the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee (Grievance Policy and Procedure).			**A**				
S13	Hear appeals against dismissal, and other appeals the HR policies give to trustees (panel, see 3.9).		**A**					
S14	Approve severance payments and settlement agreements. DfE approval is needed first where the non-contractual element is £50,000 or more (ATH 5.10).		**A**	**R**			**D**	
S15	Review each co-headteacher's performance each year, with an external adviser (the School Improvement Partner).		**M**			**A**		
S16	Decide co-headteacher pay (ATH 2.31 to 2.33).		**A**			**R**		
S17	Agree annual pay awards and teacher pay progression for other staff, under the Pay Policy.		**M**	**A**			**R**	
S18	Appraise other staff under the Appraisal Policy, and report moderated outcomes.			**M**			**D**	
S19	Monitor staff absence, wellbeing and training.			**M**			**D**	**D**

6.4 Finance

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
F1	Approve the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of financial powers each year (ATH 2.4).		**A**	**R**				**D**
F2	Approve the annual budget and the three-year budget forecast.		**A**	**R**			**D**	**D**
F3	Monitor income and spending against the budget each month, using management accounts.		**M**	**M**			**D**	**D**
F4	Spend, place orders, enter contracts, write off debts and dispose of assets, each within the limits in the Financial Regulations.		**A**	**A**			**A**	**A**
F5	Refer any novel, contentious or repercussive transaction to DfE before agreeing it (ATH 5.5). The Accounting Officer makes the referral.		**A**				**D**	
F6	Approve the annual report and accounts, including the governance statement and the statement on regularity, propriety and compliance. Send them to the members and publish them on the website by 31 January (ATH 4.4).	**M**	**A**	**R**			**D**	**D**
F7	Appoint, reappoint or remove the external auditors (ATH 4.5, 4.7).	**A**		**R**				
F8	Receive the external auditors' findings and agree the Trust's response.		**A**	**R**			**D**	
F9	Agree the internal scrutiny programme, and receive its reports and annual summary report (ATH 3.15).		**M**	**A**				**D**
F10	Invest surplus cash under the Investment and Reserves Policy. Up to 12 months: two of the co-headteachers and the Academy Business Leader. Over 12 months: the Chair of Trustees and two of them.		**A**				**A**	**A**
F11	Choose the Trust's bank and approve the bank mandate.		**A**					**D**
F12	Arrange the Trust's insurance, including membership of the Risk Protection Arrangement.		**A**					**D**
F13	Benchmarking, value for money and procurement planning.			**M**				**D**
F14	Decide remission and support fund requests (Charging and Remissions Policy). The co-headteachers and the Academy Business Leader decide together.						**A**	**A**
F15	Set charges for lettings.			**A**				**D**

6.5 Risk, premises and health and safety

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
R1	Keep overall responsibility for risk management, and review the full risk register at least once a year (ATH 2.43).		**A**	**R**			**D**	**D**

Ref	Decision or task	Members	Board	RAR	C&P	HPM	Co-heads	ABL
R2	Approve the Business Continuity Plan (ATH 2.44).		**A**	**R**			**D**	**D**
R3	Agree how compliance is checked and reported, for example on safeguarding, health and safety and employment.		**A**	**R**	**R**		**D**	
R4	Make sure the Trust meets its health and safety duties as an employer. The Director of Inclusion is the Trust's competent person (Health and Safety and First Aid Policy).			**M**			**D**	**D**
R5	Premises and statutory compliance, including asbestos, fire risk assessment, water hygiene and the DfE land and buildings collection.			**M**				**D**
R6	Enter leases and other contracts lasting more than three years, including the Cedars Academy: High Heworth lease.		**A**	**R**				**D**
R7	Data protection and cyber security, with the Trust's data protection officer.			**M**				**D**

7. Policy approval

7.1 The Trust Board approves the following itself, because the Handbook places the duty on the Board:

- this Scheme of Delegation (governance guide 4.3.6);
- the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of financial powers (ATH 2.4);
- the Investment and Reserves Policy (ATH 2.8, 2.23);
- the Pay Policy, which covers executive pay (ATH 2.31 to 2.33);
- the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (ATH 2.48); and
- the risk register at its full yearly review, and the Business Continuity Plan (ATH 2.43, 2.44).

7.2 Every other policy is approved by the body named for it in the Trust's Policy Register. The Board notes the Policy Register each autumn. A committee may refer any policy to the Board instead of approving it.

7.3 The Academy Business Leader keeps the Policy Register and tells each approving body which of its policies are due for review.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and review

8.1 The Board reviews this Scheme every year at its autumn meeting. It also reviews it at the next Board meeting after any of these (ATH 2.4; governance guide 4.3.6):

- a change of co-headteacher, or of anyone holding an appointment in 4.5;
- a committee being set up, merged or closed;
- a change to the Articles;
- a new edition of the Academy Trust Handbook; or
- a decision to join or form a multi-academy trust.

8.2 Committee minutes go to the Governance Professional for the next Board agenda, and each committee chair reports the decisions the committee has taken.

8.3 The Trust publishes this Scheme on its website, as part of the governance details the Handbook requires (ATH 1.55).

9. Linked policies and documents

Governing documents: Articles of Association; funding agreement; committee terms of reference; Policy Register 2026-27.

Finance: Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of financial powers; Investment and Reserves Policy; Expenses Policy; Charging and Remissions Policy; risk register; Business Continuity Plan.

Staff: Pay Policy; Appraisal Policy; Disciplinary Policy and Procedure; Capability Policy and Procedure; Grievance Policy and Procedure; Sickness Absence Management Policy; Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure; Allegations Against Staff and Low Level Concerns.

Pupils and parents: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Behaviour Policy; Admissions Policy; SEND Policy; SEND Information Report; Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy; Complaints Policy.

Premises: Health and Safety and First Aid Policy; Premises Management Policy.

Appendix A: Office holders

As at October 2026. Members and trustees are listed on the Trust website (ATH 1.55).

Role	Held by
Chair of Trustees	Andrew Thompson
Vice Chair of Trustees and safeguarding trustee	Elizabeth Neale
Whistleblowing trustee	Susan Farnie
Chair, Resources, Audit & Risk Committee	Andrew Thompson
Chair, Curriculum & Pupils Committee	Susan Farnie
Chair, Headteachers Performance Management Committee	Andrew Thompson
Governance Professional	Peter Robson
Senior executive leader	Michelle O'Reilly, Headteacher, Cedars Academy: Low Fell
Accounting Officer	Michelle O'Reilly, Headteacher, Cedars Academy: Low Fell
Chief Financial Officer	Julie Vincent, Headteacher, Cedars Academy: High Heworth
Director of Inclusion and Designated Safeguarding Lead	Keith Vincent
Academy Business Leader	Gareth Kyle