

MAT Governance Structure

Updated – December 2016

Introduction

Cambridge Meridian Academies' Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust established by the Swavesey Village College's educational trust (Cambridge Meridian Educational Trust) on 1st April 2011.

The purpose of the Trust reflects the Objects of Cambridge Meridian Education Trust:

'high quality educational provision at the heart of the community'

Where every child is a:

Successful Learner, who enjoys learning, makes progress and achieves;

Confident Individual who is able to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life;

Responsible Citizen who makes a positive contribution to the communities in which they live.

Where the school is a:

- **hub for community activities** and a place where people of all ages meet and integrate;
- **centre for extended services** for children, families and the community;
- **source of immense pride** for the whole community.

To reflect this, the academies share ***the same five Values***:

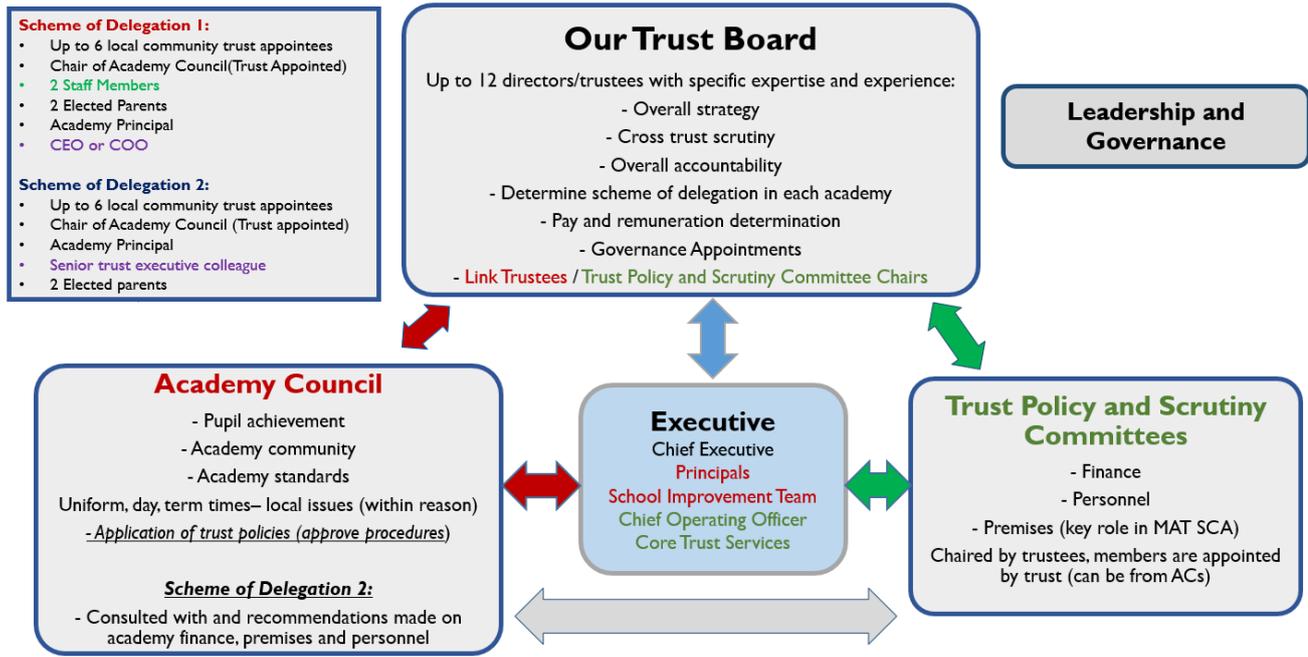
1. committed to the pursuit of excellence;
2. values people;
3. encourages individual achievement;
4. provides a high quality learning environment;
5. extends the boundaries of learning.'

The academies also share a broadly consistent format for three year ***'Academy Improvement Plans'***, with the ***same categories making up the three 'Whole School Priorities'***:

- Achievement
- Quality
- Experience

The trust has an "evolution plan" which seeks to find answers to the questions and challenges that present themselves as we develop.

Trust and Governance



The Memorandum and Articles of the Trust and the two schemes of delegation outline the responsibilities devolved to the academy councils to address and reflect the local and particular priorities of the academy.

The executive functions provide for efficient and effective leadership, quality assurance and sharing of practice, systems and resources across the family of academies.

Each academy has its own academy council (AC). Our schemes of delegation, reflect two distinct levels of local governance for the best interests of the children and the community they serve. The directors determine which scheme applies in each academy.

An annual calendar of meetings is approved by Trustees in the Summer Term of the preceding year after AC Chairs and directors have evaluated the work of the trust governance in the preceding year.

Trust Members and Directors

CMAT is currently seeking to alter its articles to enable a separation of roles between members and directors. It is planned that the Trust Chair and Vice Chair will be members along with three others. At least two of these will not be directors. The members will be responsible for the appointment of directors and ensuring that they achieve the trust's objectives.

The directors are appointed by the members (formerly by the trustees). The trust undertakes a regular skills audit and appoints individuals to meet gaps that are identified. On the completion of a term of office, the director is invited to reapply to be considered for a new term. In this application their previous impact and future plans for developing the trust are considered. In addition to the skills required, the trust is keen to ensure that the board reflects the communities we serve.

The directors appoint the Academy Council, and Policy and Scrutiny Committee Chairs. The Chairs of Policy and Scrutiny Committees are Trustees.

The focus of the Trust will be

- The strategic direction of the Trust as it responds to local and national demands and policy;
- Efficiency and effectiveness of executive leadership and services across the schools;
- Standards and achievements across the Trust's schools;
- Financial planning and probity, and resource management across the Trust.

The trust members will meet annually to consider the annual report and will be asked to approve trustee appointments recommended by the directors as required.

The directors will meet four times a year to evaluate progress, approve significant changes and set strategic direction. The directors will also hold two "away days" annually. The first in January to review outcomes from the previous year, determine the approach to growth. The second will be in July and will approve the budget,

The Trust will receive the minutes of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees and AC meetings; and an "academies data dashboard" alongside other strategic documentation to inform decision making.

A key aspect of communication and triangulation is the role of the "Link Trustee". The link trustee must make contact with the Academy Council Chair and Principal and draw attention to key aspects of their linked academies at board meetings when current progress is being considered. The Link Trustee will attend one academy council meeting annually to ensure that academy council members are aware of their role.

Policy and Scrutiny Committees – Personnel, Finance and Premises

The directors have established three “policy and scrutiny” committees to oversee the effective and efficient deployment and management of resources and staffing across the MAT. This will significantly reduce the demands on academy councils with

- consistent policies and systems across the trust’s academies;
- efficiency savings in terms of leadership and management;
- opportunities, through financial economies of scale, to develop key expertise in specialist areas;
- the deployment of resources monitored to maximise impact on standards;
- Enable academy councils to focus on the “Ronseal” test – do we do what we say on the tin?

The chairs of these committees will be directors appointed by the board. Membership will be sought from academy councils and our local community to reflect the expertise and experience required. These committees will be serviced by the trust executive officers, and will meet approximately quarterly. The annual schedule is set by the committee and additional business meetings called when required.

Committee	Oversight	Indicative Policies	Core Teams
Finance	Financial Health Budget setting Procurement and contracts (inc, related party transactions) Catering Internal and external audit Adopting accounting and reporting systems Pecuniary interest register	Financial Handbook Audit	Finance Internal Audit
Personnel	Recruitment and retention Human Resources Performance Management and Appraisal Continuing Professional Development Staff welfare	Pay Policy Complaints Sickness and absence	Human Resources School Improvement
Premises	Site, Building Health and Safety IT Data Management Procurement SCA fund	Health and Safety CCTV Data Protection Staff use of IT	Estates and facilities IT Health and Safety

For academies using scheme of delegation 1, the committees will receive detailed reports and interrogate the progress being made to resolve the issues. For scheme of delegation 2, the committees will have access to headline figures etc. and any reports provided to the academy council but discussions are on a “significant exceptions” basis.

Academy Councils (ACs)

ACs are sub-committees of the trust. The AC should support and strengthen the Principal's leadership and, by working with the CEO and other executive leaders, hold them accountable for the performance of students and staff.

ACs are focused upon individual academy contexts, monitoring standards and achievement and how the academy meets the local community's needs and aspirations.

- Develop strategic priorities and plans for the individual academy with the SLT and trust leaders;
- Ensure that students achieve the levels of progress and achievement the trust/AC expects;
- Monitor and challenge standards within the academy;
- Ensure trust policies are implemented and monitor their impact;
- Engage with all stakeholders to improve outcomes for students;
- Ensure that Quality Assurance procedures within the academy are accurate and moderated;
- Monitor the use of Pupil Premium funds and ensure student outcomes improve;
- Evaluate Student attendance, admissions, exclusion, well-being, preparation for their futures and views by analysing a range of data; and take action to ensure the academy fulfils CMAT's objects.

Directors may attend any academy council meeting and the "link trustee" must attend at least one meeting annually.

Committee membership and meeting scheduling

AC and trust meetings will be planned to ensure that routine Governance functions can be managed efficiently for the individual schools and across the Trust. The order of the meetings will reflect the order above allowing for Local Governor Body decision making prior to reference to issues and priorities across the Trust academies.

AC members will be invited to sit on one of the "Policy and Scrutiny Committees" reflecting current membership and required expertise.

Scheme of Delegation I

Typically, this scheme is applied when:

CMAT has been asked by a Local Governing Body, Regional School Commissioner or a Local Authority to support a school in difficulty– as a result of either a concerning Ofsted judgement, financial viability, poor reputation, absence or weakness of leadership or similar threat.

- The AC focuses on and reports to the trust about : student achievement and experience alongside the role of the academy in the local community (inc. Pupil Premium spend)
- The Principal and Trust inform the AC of headline financial, personnel and premises information but the Policy and Scrutiny Committees ensure the impact of the work undertaken by the trust executive.
- The council is broadly representative of the academy community and either the trust CEO or similar senior officer will attend.

The target is for academies to move on to scheme of delegation two. During this period of transition, work will be undertaken to prepare for skills-based governance. A MAT Director may be required to chair the AC initially.

Scheme of Delegation 2

This scheme is applied when an academy is “confident” (either joining as OR has grown to be) which will be indicated by:

A positive Ofsted judgement, strong pupil outcomes, good reputation, stable financial position and successful, experienced and skilled leadership and AC.

In addition to the roles in Scheme of Delegation 1, the AC will also have oversight of, influence over and hold the Principal accountable for the detail of **finance, premises and personnel** aspects of academy development working in conjunction with the trust executive. The trust “policy and scrutiny committees” will be provided with headline information on these aspects and have access to the reports shared.

The “Champions” system enables academy council members to utilise their skills. Through joint meetings with the wider trust executive and leaders within the academy, key issues can be considered collaboratively.

- Achievement
- Experience
- Safeguarding
- SEN and vulnerable groups (PP)
- Premises
- Personnel (Pay reviews etc)
- Finance (participate in quarterly reviews)
- Stakeholders /Communications: Staff Committee, Parent Forum, Student Leaders, Questionnaires, Commercial partners

Guidance is provided for each role and reports are tabled at academy council meetings with issues to be discussed.

Principals' Committee

This committee meets monthly. A working day is held each half term to undertake more detailed work.

The Principals' Committees' four primary functions are:

- 1) Ensuring internal communication of areas of trust progress and challenge
- 2) Directing and approving the work of its sub-committees in terms of trust development and policy
- 3) Contributing and directing the development of trust core service elements
- 4) Designing and implementing trust wide quality assurance mechanisms

The sub-committees are aligned with the CMAT values and are chaired in pairs by Principals and report back or present policies for approval.

Sub-committee	Oversight	Indicative Policies
Individual Achievement: Achievement	Data tracking Subject leader meetings Cross-trust moderation	Curriculum Target setting
High Quality Learning Environment: Quality in Learning and Teaching	Teaching and learning Teacher CPD Links to Whole Education	Teaching and Learning Policy Observation protocols
Values People (Students): Welfare and Experience		Safeguarding Policy E-safety Pledges Anti-bullying

Policies are taken to the Principals' Committee for ratification and implementation. All policy approvals are notified to the Trust Governance Leader to update areas of publication and ensure that AC clerks include the policy for consideration on the next AC agenda.