Financial Scheme of Delegation

V 1.0

Leverhulme Academy Trust Document Control Table			
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Document History		
Version	**Date**	**Notes on Revisions**
1.0	8th July 2026	New – No changes to the underlying governance / delegation principles. Revised Scheme represents improvement in governance documentation by separating financial delegations into a dedicated Financial Scheme of Delegation and implements recommendations arising from the Trust's independent External Review of Governance.

1. Introduction and Scope

The Financial Scheme of Delegation establishes the framework through which financial authority is delegated across Leverhulme Academy Trust. The Trust Board retains ultimate accountability for stewardship of public funds.

This scheme applies to Members, Trustees, Committees, CEO, CFO, Executive Leaders, Headteachers/Heads of School, Budget Holders and all staff exercising delegated authority. Delegated authority does not remove Board accountability.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

The scheme of financial delegation operates within the following framework

- Academy Trust Handbook 2025
- Companies Act 2006
- Charities Act 2011
- Procurement Act 2023
- Managing Public Money
- ESFA Guidance
- DfE Capital Guidance

3. Financial Governance Principles

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that public funds entrusted to the Trust are managed with the highest standards of governance, integrity and accountability. These principles apply to all individuals exercising delegated financial authority.

All expenditure and financial transactions must comply with legislation, the Funding Agreement, Academy Trust Handbook, Financial Regulations and delegated authority.

Financial decisions must demonstrate integrity, fairness, impartiality and adherence to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

Decision makers must seek economy, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, considering whole-life costs where appropriate.

Financial commitments should only be approved where funding is available, expenditure is affordable and resources exist to deliver the proposal.

Delegation does not remove accountability. Financial decisions must be capable of independent scrutiny and audit.

Financial decisions should be documented, evidenced and supported by accurate accounting records.

Appropriate separation of requisitioning, approval, ordering, receipt, payment and reconciliation shall be maintained.

Delegated authority may only be exercised within approved budgets, financial limits and Trust policies.

Actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest must be declared and managed in accordance with Trust policy.

The Trust operates a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, bribery and corruption and maintains robust internal controls.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Delegated financial responsibilities support efficient decision-making while maintaining Board accountability.

The Trust Board is responsible for strategic financial oversight, financial sustainability, risk appetite, approval of the annual budget, statutory accounts, major contracts, investments, major capital projects, financial policies and this Financial Scheme of Delegation.

The Finance Committee monitors financial performance, management accounts, cash flow, reserves, budget monitoring, internal scrutiny, capital programme, procurement, contract management, financial risks and recommends financial policies to the Trust Board.

5. General Financial Controls

The Trust will maintain a robust framework of internal financial controls to safeguard public funds, protect Trust assets and ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, Financial Regulations and this Financial Scheme of Delegation.

Budget Holders

Budget Holders are responsible for managing delegated budgets, ensuring expenditure remains within approved limits, monitoring commitments, achieving value for money and complying with procurement requirements.

Financial Authorisation

Financial commitments may only be entered into where expenditure is within an approved budget, delegated authority exists, procurement requirements have been met and sufficient funding is available.

6. Budget Management

Budget Setting

The Trust Board approves the annual budget and medium-term financial plan. Budgets shall support the Trust's strategic priorities and long-term financial sustainability.

Budget Monitoring

- Monthly management accounts
- Income and expenditure monitoring
- Staffing cost monitoring
- Cash flow forecasting
- Forecast outturn reporting
- Monitoring of reserves

Virements

Budget virements shall be approved in accordance with Appendix A and must not create an overall budget deficit or circumvent delegated approval limits.

Forecasting and Deficit Management

The Chief Finance Officer will maintain rolling financial forecasts and prepare recovery plans where significant overspends are identified.

7. Procurement and Contract Management

The Trust will procure goods, services and works in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, the Academy Trust Handbook, Financial Regulations and the Trust Procurement Policy.

Procurement Principles

- Value for money
- Fairness and transparency
- Competition
- Whole-life costing
- Social value where appropriate

Procurement Procedures

- Follow delegated financial limits in Appendix A.
- Obtain quotations or tenders where required.

Procurement Waivers

Waivers may only be approved in exceptional circumstances, must be documented with justification and reported to the Finance or Risk and Audit Committee.

8. Emergency Expenditure

The Trust recognises that exceptional circumstances may require immediate expenditure to protect pupils, staff, property or business continuity. Emergency expenditure should only be authorised where delay would expose the Trust to significant operational, safeguarding, financial or legal risk.

Emergency expenditure MAY BE authorised by the Chief Executive Officer and/or Chief Finance Officer in response to needs arising from :

- Safeguarding emergencies
- Health and safety risks
- Building or utility failures
- Cyber security incidents
- Business continuity
- Statutory compliance

9. Capital Expenditure

Capital investment shall support the Trust's strategic priorities, Estates Strategy and School Improvement Plans. Significant projects should be supported by a business case and approved in accordance with the delegated financial limits in Appendix A.

10. Definitions

Term	Definition
Budget Holder	Individual responsible for an approved budget.
Capital Expenditure	Expenditure on assets with benefit beyond one financial year.
Delegated Authority	Authority formally delegated by the Trust Board.
Emergency Expenditure	Urgent expenditure required to protect life, property or business continuity.
Procurement Value	Total estimated value used to determine procurement requirements.
Regularity	Compliance with legislation and funding requirements.
Propriety	Proper and ethical use of public funds.
Segregation of Duties	Separation of financial responsibilities to reduce fraud risk.
Value for Money	Optimum combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
Virement	Approved transfer of budget between headings.

Financial delegation Matrix

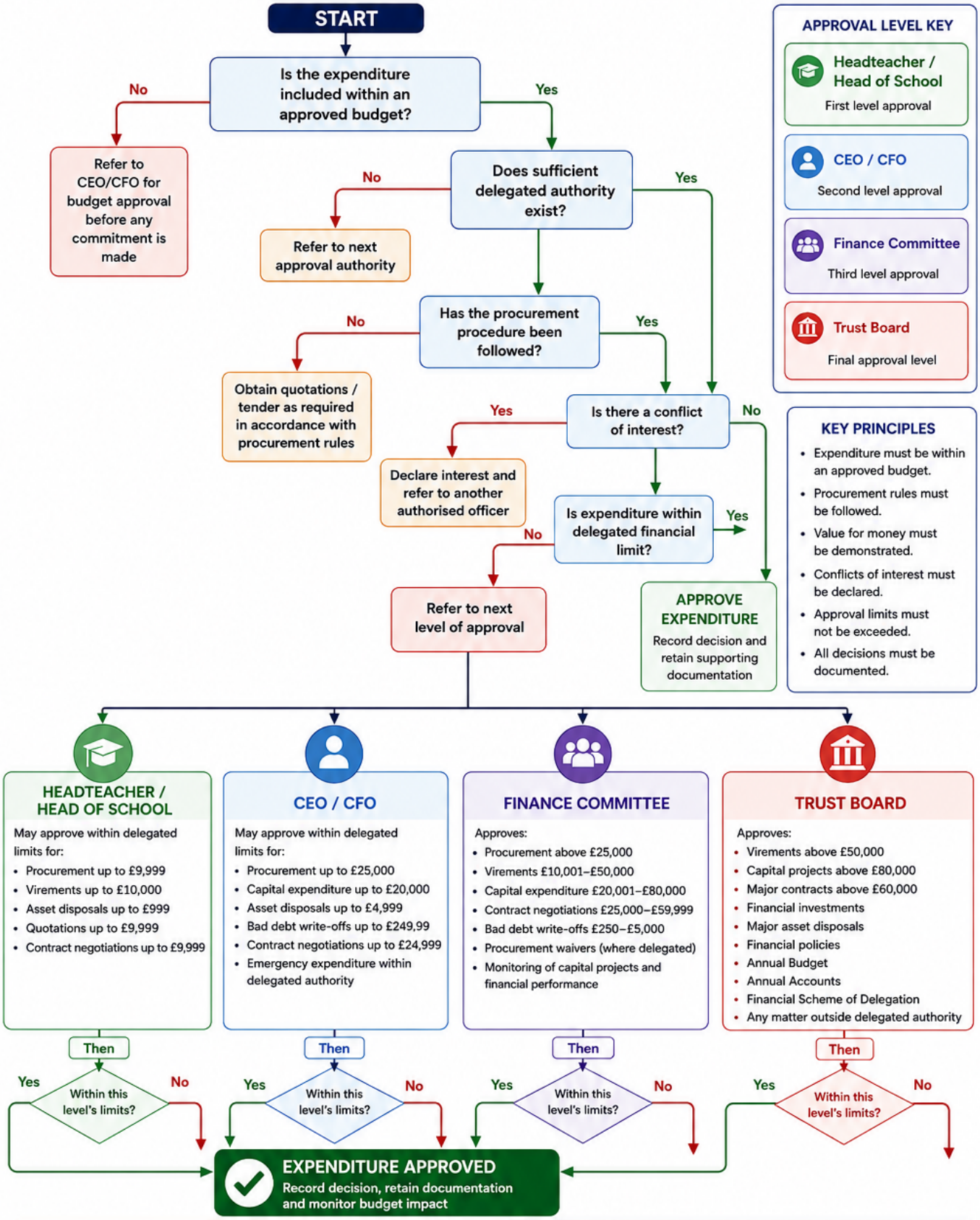
	Value	Trust Board	Finance Committee	CEO or CFO	Headteacher / Head of School	Notes
Procurement : Ordering good and services, in line with procurement requirements	Up to £ 9,999				x	
	Up to £25,000 within approved budget			x		Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer in the absence of the chief executive
	Over £25,000		x			
Virement of budget provision between budget heads	Up to £10,000				x	virements cannot create an overall budget deficit
	Over £10,000 TO £ 50,000			x		
	Over £ 50,000		x			
Disposal of assets	Up to £ 999				x	Requires consultation with Business manager for advice and CFO must be informed of any planned disposal prior to disposal to ensure procedures are being followed
	Above £ 1,000 up to £ 4,999			x		
	Over £ 5,000 (Except in respect of capital grant funded items over £ 20,000).		x			Disposals to connected parties are prohibited without Board approval
	Capital grant funded items over £ 20,000.	x				The Board must obtain approval from the DfE in writing if it proposes to dispose of an asset for which a capital grant in excess of £20,000 was paid
Capital expenditure not already approved in the latest budget plan	Authority in consultation with the CFO to incur additional capital expenditure up to £ 20,000 in a financial year (either on one item or in aggregate).				x	

	Value	Trust Board	Finance Committee	CEO or CFO	Headteacher / Head of School	Notes
	Authority to approve additional capital expenditure for a project up £ 80,000 in a financial year (either on one item or in aggregate).		x			
	Capital expenditure for projects exceeding £ 80,000	x				
Financial investments	Any value	x				investments must comply with Academy Trust Handbook and Board-approved investment strategy
Approval to accept a quotation from a minimum of 3 or a formal tendering process	Up to £ 9,999				x	
	Over £10,000 TO £ 24,999			x		
	Over £ 25,000 to UK Procurement Act 2023 thresholds (or current public procurement legislation)		x			
	Over UK Procurement Act 2023 thresholds (or current public procurement legislation)	x				
Approval to accept a quotation / tender other than the lowest	Up to £ 4,999				x	
	Over £5,000 to £ 9,999			x		
	Over £ 10,000 to UK Procurement Act 2023 thresholds (or current public procurement legislation)		x			
	Over UK Procurement Act 2023 thresholds (or current public procurement legislation)	x				
Authority to write off bad debts	Up to £ 249.99				x	
	Over £ 250 to £ 5,000			x		
	Over £ 5,000 to £ 45,000		x			

	Value	Trust Board	Finance Committee	CEO or CFO	Headteacher / Head of School	Notes
	Over £ 45,000 - Requires Secretary of State approval	x				
Negotiation and renegotiation of contracts, HP, Leasing, Services and other Agreements	Up to £ 9,999				x	The Headteacher will inform the CFO of any proposal to negotiate or renegotiate any external contracts, leases or other service agreements
	Over £ 10,000 and up to £ 24,999			x		Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer
	Over £ 25,000 and up to £ 59,999		x			Finance Committee
	Over £ 60,000	x				Trust Board

Financial Approval Flowchart

Financial Approval Decision Tree – "Who Approves What?"



EMERGENCY EXPENDITURE

If immediate expenditure is required to:

- protect pupils or staff
- maintain business continuity
- comply with statutory requirements
- respond to a serious health and safety issue
- respond to a significant building or ICT failure

the CEO and/or CFO may approve expenditure within their delegated authority.
Such expenditure must be reported to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

GOLDEN RULES BEFORE APPROVING EXPENDITURE

- ✓ The expenditure is within an approved budget.
- ✓ The expenditure is within my delegated authority.
- ✓ Procurement requirements have been followed.
- ✓ Value for money has been demonstrated.
- ✓ There is no conflict of interest.
- ✓ Funding is available.
- ✓ Appropriate documentation is retained.
- ✓ The decision complies with this Financial Scheme of Delegation and the Trust's Financial Regulations.

If you are unsure, do not commit expenditure. Seek guidance from the CEO/CFO.