



The Olympus Academy Trust Governance Framework Appendix N Urgency and Efficiency Policy

Document Summary

Document Owner:	L Day
Version:	V7
Document Status:	Approved
Date Last Approved:	March 2020
Date of Next Review:	March 2021
Review Frequency:	Biennially
Owner: (Olympus or School)	Olympus
Governing Committee:	Board of Trustees
Statutory or Optional policy:	Optional
Appendices:	
On Trust Website?	Yes
On School Websites?	n/a

Amendment History

Version	Amendment Date	Author	Amendment Summary
5	23 March 2016	VFi / RSI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor wording updates. Change from 'all trustees' to 75% of trustees for U&E decisions. Approved by Board of Trustees
6	21 March 2018	Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved by Board of Trustees.
7	April 2020	JAn / LDa / RSI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wording updates to reflect new governance arrangements. Also updated to reflect the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust recognises that urgent decisions may be necessary between scheduled board or committee meetings that could not be foreseen at the preceding meeting and cannot wait for the next scheduled meeting. A process is set out for agreeing such matters urgently.
- 1.2 The Trust also recognises that board and committee agendas can be long and that occasionally matters requiring a decision could be dealt with outside a meeting despite the fact that they are not urgent. In order to maximise the efficiency of governance arrangements and make best use of the time and commitment of trustees and committee members, a process is set out for agreeing matters efficiently.
- 1.3 All decisions taken under this policy must be supported by either a verbal or a written report in the format and to the standards expected at a normal meeting of the board of trustees or board committee.
- 1.4 All urgency reports must specify the reason why a decision is being sought as a matter of urgency. Use of the efficiency process must have prior authorisation of the relevant chair (or vice-chair in the chair's absence) and be effected in consultation with the company secretary.

2. Urgent Decision Making

- 2.1 Urgent decisions involving major issues of strategy, policy, principle, performance and/or major financial risk to The Trust (including any academy within The Trust) may be taken by the board of trustees.
 - At a special meeting which may be convened providing that seven days' clear written notice is given (seven days excluding the day the notice is issued and the day of the meeting). Written notice of the date of a meeting of the board of trustees must (in accordance with the articles of association) be emailed to the trustees Olympus address with a delivery/read receipt. The business at such special meetings will be conducted and recorded in the same way as for a scheduled meeting although the standards for the timescales to issue papers shall be suspended. If seven clear days' notice is not possible then the relevant chair can agree to hold the meeting within a shorter timescale. In certain circumstances, with the agreement of the chair of trustees and the CEO, these meetings may be held by teleconferencing or video conferencing. A record of all those present will be recorded in the minutes.
- or
- By resolution in writing sent to all of the relevant trustees and signed by 75% of trustees. Trustees may give 'notice' of their decision by email.

- 2.2 Decisions within the parameters of the agreed strategies and policies covering the work of the board of trustees, School Improvement Committee or board committee, not involving a major issue of principle or performance, and without major financial risk to The Trust (including any academy within the Trust) may be made by a delegated body:

For the Board of Trustees

- By the chair and vice chair of trustees and the CEO
- In the absence of any one of the above, the two others may (in consultation with the company secretary) nominate a third trustee or member of the executive leadership team

For a Board Committee

- By the chair of the committee, the chair of trustees and the CEO
- In the absence of any one of the above, the two others may (in consultation with the company secretary) nominate a trustee member of the relevant committee

For a School Improvement Committee

- By the chair and vice chair of the school improvement committee and the Headteacher or Associate Headteacher of the academy
- In the absence of any the above the other two may (in consultation with the company secretary) nominate another school improvement committee member (other than a staff representative)

- 2.3 All decisions taken under urgency within the parameters of this policy shall be binding either on the board of trustees, the school improvement committee or the board committee (as appropriate) as if they were made at a meeting.

- 2.4 All urgent decisions taken at a special meeting or using a resolution in writing will be reported to the next meeting of the board of trustees, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate) as a minute as the decision does not require further ratification. As the decision involved all trustees, school improvement committee members or committee members there is no requirement for any further papers to be made available to support the minute.

- 2.5 All urgent decisions taken by a delegated body as set out in 2.2 above must be reported to the next meeting of the board of trustees, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate) where the action taken will be minuted. The report must provide sufficient information for other trustees, school improvement committee members or board committee members to understand the key issues. Any trustee, school improvement committee member or board committee member may request that the detailed report is provided to them for information prior to the meeting at which the urgency action is reported and minuted..

3. **Efficient Board Decision Making**

- 3.1 Efficient Decisions not involving major issues of strategy, policy, principle, performance and/or major financial risk to the academy or the Trust may be taken by the board of trustees, a school improvement committee or a board committee:
- **By resolution in writing or by email** sent to all of the relevant trustees, school improvement committee members or committee members entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the board of trustees, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate). Trustees, school improvement committee members and committee members may give 'notice' of their decision by email. Except in the case of a school improvement committee, no decision will be effective unless the majority of responses are Trustees, subject to a minimum of three Trustees.
- 3.2 All decisions taken under efficiency within the parameters of this policy shall be binding either on the board of trustees, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate) as if they were made at a meeting.
- 3.3 All efficiency decisions taken using a resolution in writing will be reported to the next meeting of the board of trustees, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate) as a minute as the decision does not require further ratification. As the decision involved all trustees, school improvement committee members or committee members there is no requirement for any further papers to be made available to support the minute. If it was a school improvement committee or board committee decision, that minute will also be reported to the next meeting of the board of trustees along with the reported items from the last school improvement committee or board committee meeting.

4. **Emergency Decision Making**

- 4.1 From time to time an emergency situation may arise which cannot be foreseen and which may require a prompt decision to be taken. Operational issues will normally be covered by one of the authorities delegated to the executive leadership team specified in Appendix U.
- 4.2 If however a decision is required in an emergency and is not covered by delegated authority and there is insufficient time to operate the urgent decision making procedures set out above, then the CEO (or nominated deputy in their absence) may take appropriate action as necessary. This should include the following as a minimum:
- a face-to-face or telephone consultation with the chair of trustees (or vice chair in their absence) and if appropriate, the relevant school improvement committee chair or board committee chair (or vice chair in their absence).
 - in the absence of either chair or vice chair then any 2 trustees.
- 4.3 If the emergency is such that a decision must be taken immediately and there is no time to consult with trustees, then the CEO (or their nominated deputy) shall act in The Trust's best interests and decide accordingly, notifying the chair or trustees and if appropriate, the relevant school improvement committee chair or board committee chair (or their vice chairs in their absence), or other two trustees (as set out in 4.2 above) at the earliest possible opportunity.

- 4.4 Any such action taken in an emergency must be reported in writing to the next relevant meeting and minuted accordingly. Depending on the nature of the decision taken it may be necessary to seek a retrospective decision of the board, school improvement committee or board committee (as appropriate) using the urgency provisions above to back up the action taken.