



Risk Management Strategy

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| Approved by: | FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE | Date: 8 th October 2018 |
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Risk management is the process whereby the Greensand Multi-Academy Trust (the Trust) methodically addresses the risks attaching to its objectives and associated activities with the goal of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the whole range of activities.
- 1.2 Risk management will be aimed at ensuring that the Trust achieves its objectives in the most effective way and the resources are directed at those objectives. It will not be seen as a separate exercise, but as the means of best achieving the Trust's objectives.
- 1.3 This Risk Management Strategy has been designed to provide a framework for managing the risks the Trust faces and ensuring its objectives are achieved in the most effective way.
- 1.4 It has been designed for use by all staff of the Trust and it serves to:
 - Communicate the strategies for managing risk in the Trust;
 - Establish procedures which should be adopted in the risk management process.

2.0 The Aims and Objectives of Risk Management

- 2.1 The Trust's overall risk management plan is aimed at:
 - Protecting its students, staff and assets;
 - Managing risk in accordance with best practice and reducing the cost of risk;
 - Anticipating and responding to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements;
 - Raising awareness of the need for risk management;
 - Integrating risk management into the culture of the Trust;
 - Adopting legal compliance as a minimum standard.
- 2.2 These aims and objectives will be achieved by:
 - Establishing and maintaining a risk management organisational structure to act in an advisory and guiding capacity which is accessible to all staff;
 - Maintaining documented procedures for the control of risk;
 - Providing suitable information, training and supervision;
 - Maintaining effective communication and the active involvement of all staff;
 - Maintaining an appropriate incident reporting and recording system, with investigation procedures to establish cause and prevent recurrence;
 - Monitoring arrangements on an ongoing basis.

3.0 The Potential Benefits of Risk Management

- 3.1 Effective risk management protects and adds value to the Trust and its stakeholders through supporting the Trust's objectives by:

- Improving decision making, business planning and prioritisation by comprehensive and structured understanding of the wider business environment;
- Supporting more efficient allocation and use of resources within the Trust;
- Enhancing communication between schools and services;
- Protecting and enhancing Trust assets and image;
- Developing and supporting staff and the Trust's knowledge base;
- Helping to focus the internal audit plan.

4.0 The Structure and Administration of Risk Management

4.1 The Trust's Trust Board has a fundamental role to:

- Set the tone and influence the culture of risk management within the Trust;
- Determine the appropriate risk appetite or level of exposure for the Trust;
- Approve major decisions affecting the Trust's risk profile or exposure;
- Set policy and strategy for risk management;
- Frequently monitor the management of significant risks to reduce the likelihood of unwelcome surprises or impact;
- Satisfy itself that the less significant risks are being actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively;
- Annually review the Trust's approach to risk management and approve changes or improvements to key elements of its processes and procedures.

4.2 The Trusts' Executive Team will:

- Support and implement policies approved by the Trust;
- Establish internal risk policy and structures for individual school / services;
- Develop risk response processes, including contingency and business continuity programmes;
- Provide adequate information in a timely manner to the Trust Board and its committees on the status of risks and controls;
- Focus and co-ordinate risk management activities throughout the Trust;
- Raise the level of management awareness and accountability for the business risks experienced by the Trust;
- Develop risk management as part of the culture of the Trust;
- Provide a mechanism for risk management issues to be discussed and disseminated to all schools within the Trust.

4.3 The Headteachers of individual schools within the Trust will:

- Have primary responsibility for managing risk on a day-to-day basis in their school;
- Have responsibility for promoting risk awareness within their operations;
- Introduce risk management objectives into their school;

- Identify and evaluate the significant risks faced by their operations for consideration by the Local Governing Board and subsequently the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee;
- Ensure that risk management is incorporated at the conceptual stage of projects, as well as throughout a project;
- Ensure that risk management is a regular management meeting item to allow consideration of exposure and to prioritise work in the light of effective risk analysis;
- Report early warning indicators to the Executive Team of the Trust.

4.4 The Executive Principal for the Trust has responsibility for:

- Developing specific programmes and procedures for establishing and maintaining risk management activities within the Trust;
- Ensuring the dispersal of vital information;
- Providing guidance, interpretation and understanding of the risk management systems;
- Managing the overall, collective risks faced by the Trust.

5.0 Risk Identification

5.1 Risk is not only about adverse events, it is also about missed opportunities. All areas of activity within the Trust and partnerships with third party organisations should be considered together with what would stop them being as successful as they should. The key risks that the Trust faces will be those that would stop it achieving its objectives in these areas.

5.2 As the first step in the risk identification process, all staff with responsibility for delivering operations aims or targets need to understand the Trust's vision and the legal and regulatory environment in which it operates.

5.3 The second step is the translation of these objectives into operating aims and performance indicators for each area of activity. This should be an ongoing annual exercise with regular updating of the aims.

5.4 The next step is to identify what would stop each area as being as successful as it should. Risks can readily be identified through either brainstorming or a more structured approach.

5.5 Risks are grouped according to the following categories:

- **Strategic and Reputational risks** – concern the long-term strategic objectives of the Trust. They can be affected by such areas as capital availability, legal and regulatory changes, reputation and changes in the physical environment;
- **Operation risks** – concern the day-to-day issues that the organisation is confronted with as it strives to deliver its strategic objectives;

- **Financial risks** – concern the effective management and control of the finances of the Trust and the effects of external factors such as interest rate movement and other market exposures;
- **Compliance risks** – concern such issues as health and safety, environmental, trade descriptions, consumer protection, data protection, employment practices and regulatory issues.

5.6 The risks that have been identified should be recorded on the risk template and updated to the register for each school and incorporated, as necessary, into the Trust’s Risk Register.

6.0 Risk Estimation (Assessing Likelihood and Impact)

6.1 Having identified the risks that the Trust is facing, they are prioritised into a manageable order so that action can be focused on the significant risks.

6.2 Each risk is assessed in terms of the **likelihood** of its occurrence, and its **impact** on the Trust, should it occur.

6.3 The impact of a risk and the likelihood of it occurring are scored as follows:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. very unlikely 2. unlikely 3. moderately likely 4. likely 5. very likely | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catastrophic 2. Major 3. Moderate 4. Minor 5. Negligible |
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6.4 The scores are multiplied for likelihood and impact and then ranked by numerical value.

7.0 Risk Prioritisation

7.1 Risks should be prioritised as follows:

| Risk Score | Prioritisation | Colour | Action |
|------------|----------------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 to 5 | Low | Green | Keep under review |
| 6 to 12 | Medium | Amber | Consider action or contingency plan |
| 13 to 20 | High | Red | Immediate action |

8.0 Risk Mitigation

- 8.1 Once risks have been identified and prioritised, the Trust will decide how to address them.
- 8.2 As the first step, the Trust will assess the 'cost' of accepting the risk. This may be a financial cost or a lost opportunity. The Trust may decide that accepting a particular risk is appropriate and not take any further action.
- 8.3 If the Trust decides further action is needed then there are three main options:
- avoid the risk;
 - transfer all or part of the risk;
 - mitigate the risk.
- 8.4 A risk may be avoided by withdrawing from that area of activity, but doing so may result in a missed opportunity.
- 8.5 A risk may be transferred wholly or in part to a third party, possibly through insurance or a partnership arrangement.
- 8.6 In the majority of cases, the next step will be to put in place systems to mitigate either the likelihood or the impact of the risk. These will include systems addressing the whole operation of the Trust, as well as the areas where risks have been identified. Any system of risk mitigation should provide as a minimum:
- Effective and efficient operation of the Trust;
 - Effective internal controls;
 - Compliance with law and legislation.
- 8.7 Mitigating action plans should be recorded against each risk that has been listed in the Risk Register.

9.0 Gross and Net Risk

- 9.1 In completing the above mentioned assessment of risk, recognition needs to be given to the impact of the mitigating actions taken to reduce the impact of the risk. Accordingly, risks will initially be recorded at their gross value – the impact without mitigating actions. The same risks will then be recorded allowing for the impact of the mitigating actions.
- 9.2 Both the gross risk and net risk scores are to be recorded on the Risk Register.
- 9.3 The movement in these risk scores between reporting periods are to be recorded on these key documents to enable the reader to understand whether each risk is constant, decreasing or increasing over time.

10.0 Risk Monitoring

10.1 The likelihood or impact of an identified risk can change for a number of reasons including:

- Nature of the risk has changed or is changing;
- Existing controls are inadequate or not functioning;
- New controls are introduced.

10.2 Individual schools should:

- Review termly the risks which fall into their area of responsibility, the possible impacts these have on other areas and the consequences other areas may have on them;
- Use performance indicators to monitor the key business and financial activities, progress towards objectives and identify developments which require intervention;
- Have systems which communicate termly variances in budgets and forecasts to allow action to be taken;
- Report systematically and promptly to the Executive Team any perceived new risk or failures of existing mitigating or control measures.

10.3 The Executive Principal should:

- Ensure that the Central Risk Register is updated in the light of developments within the individual schools and the wider business environment;
- Review the Central Risk Register termly;
- Review key performance indicators and progress towards objectives;
- Take necessary action to address adverse departures from objectives;
- Provide adequate information to the relevant Trust's Committee on the most significant risks.

10.4 The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee should:

- Review the Central Risk Register and the Internal Audit monitoring document at its meetings;
- Provide ongoing advice to the Trust on the effectiveness of the risk management process.

11.0 Risk Reporting

11.1 Different levels within the Trust need different information from the risk management process.

11.2 Early warning indicators should be reported systematically and promptly to the appropriate level to allow action to be taken. The frequency of reporting should be related to how quickly a risk can materialise and its likely impact.

11.3 Staff in schools should:

- Understand their accountability for individual risks;
- Understand that risk management and risk awareness are a key part of the Trust's culture;
- Understand how they can enable continuous improvement of risk management response;
- Report systematically and promptly to the School Leadership Team any perceived new risks or failures of existing control measures.

11.4 Headteachers should:

- Report to the Executive Principal the outcome of their termly review of business and financial activities and progress towards objectives;
- Report systematically and promptly to the Executive Principal any perceived new risks or failures of existing control measures.

11.5 The Executive Principal should:

- Ensure accurate reporting of risk in terms of issue and risk values;
- Report to each Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meeting the most significant risks facing the Trust;
- Ensure appropriate levels of awareness throughout the Trust.

11.6 The Trust should:

- Report annually on the effectiveness of the risk management process in the Trust;
- Report to the Trust's stakeholders on a regular basis its risk management policies and the effectiveness in achieving its objective.

Approved by the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee.

Review date October 2019