ESCAT Risk Register 2025/26

- Risk Management Approach and Policy Compliant with:
  - Requirements of DfE and ESFA Academies Financial Handbook
  - Charity Commission for England and Wales Charities and Risk Management Guidance (CC26)

- ESCAT Board of Directors delegated responsibility for risk management to the Audit and Risk Committee

The assessment of risk here has taken into account a number of implicit mitigating factors i.e. Catholic nature of the Trust.

This Strategy will be monitored termly and reviewed annually.

Risk Identification and Review

Each Risk Explicitly Identifies:

Control procedures
Monitoring Process
Responsibility for Action
Further action required
Date of last review

Risk Review Responsibilities

Oversight: CEO, Board of Directors
Management: CFO, Audit and Risk Committee

Likelihood Impact	Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	Moderately unlikely	Very Likely	Highly likely	Extreme likely
Not critical						
Minor impact in limited areas						
Minor impact in many areas						
Significant impact – long term						
Significant impact – medium term						
Fundamental						

Key:

Light Green – Risk Score: 1 to 6 - Prioritisation: Insignificant - Action Plan Status: Keep under annual review
Dark Green – Risk Score: 7 to 12 - Prioritisation: Minor - Action Plan Status: Keep under termly review
Yellow – Risk Score: 13 to 18 - Prioritisation: Moderate – Action Plan Status: Consider action or contingency plan
Amber – Risk Score: 19 to 24 – Prioritisation: Major – Action Plan Status: Implement action or contingency plan
Red – Risk Score: 25+ - Prioritisation: Extreme – Action Plan Status: Requires immediate action

Risk Register

Summary of Risk Register							
No	Area	No. of risks identified	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
1	Safeguarding/Health and Safety	4	0	3	1	0	0
2	Financial	4	0	4	0	0	0
3	Trust Operations	5	2	1	2	0	0
4	Governance	2	1	1	0	0	0
Total		15	3	9	3	0	0
Percentage of total		100%	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%

ESCAT Risk Action Plan 2025/2026

1. Safeguarding/Health and Safety Risks									
No	**Risk Description**	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Score**	**Category**	**Control Procedures**	**Retained (Net) Risk**	**Monitoring Process**	**Responsibility for Action**
1.1	Inadequate Safeguarding and Child Protection	6	4	24	Major	Monitor individual school's procedures to ensure the proper levels of safeguarding are in place. Safer recruitment training and principles followed. Employment checks on all prospective employees conducted.	Minor	CEO reports to Directors. Safeguarding audits undertaken in each school and reported to Directors. Evidence from LGB relating to their own evaluation of governance on safeguarding	CEO/Directors Reviewed 17/3/26 - addition of evidence of LGB evaluation of governance on safeguarding
1.2	Inadequate Legal Compliance	5	3	15	Moderate	Policy statements and Policies in place to cover H&S and Data Protection	Minor	Regular H&S reports to Governors. Annual H&S report to Trustees. Advice from H&S Consultant	CEO/CFO Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change
1.3	Legal Action against the Trust	6	3	18	Moderate	Legislative compliance, Train employees on legislation e.g H&S; Insure against the risk of legal action Policies in place to keep us legal	Minor	Regular review of DfE, HSE and other government directives. Regular review of training requirements Annual review of insurance cover	Chair/CEO/Board Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change
1.4	Estate/Infrastructure depredation due to lack of funding	6	4	24	Major	Long Term Maintenance Plans completed. Statutory Testing and Servicing	Moderate	Regular review of the control measures by the	CEO/CFO/Directors

						completed by term Contractor. H&S and Fire Safety related risk assessments conducted. Annual bids on the Capital Improvement Fund. Routine maintenance conducted		Audit and Risk Committee	Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change

2. Financial Risks									
No	**Risk Description**	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Score**	**Category**	**Control Procedures**	**Retained (Net) Risk**	**Monitoring Process**	**Responsibility for Action**
2.1	A member of the Academy Trust staff or third party conducts an act of fraud, misappropriation, theft, money laundering, cybercrime or other criminal activity or professional irregularity which results in the loss of funds, reputation, loss of mutual trust, prosecution, fines or litigation against the Trust or individual employee.	6	3	18	Moderate	We employ professional finance and IT staff, have independent payment reconciliation and bank authentication, payment processes. We have proportionate controls to reduce the risk of cybercrime. We have a Finance Policy and Manual of Financial Procedures, including Cash Management, which comply with the Academy Trust Handbook as well as periodic internal verification checks and annual external audits.	Minor	External Audit and Internal Verification checks to ensure procedures and processes laid down in policy documents are being followed. Adherence to School Policies	Chair/CEO/CFO/Finance Committee/Board Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change
2.2	Financial security	6	4	24	Major	Maintain NOR at PAN in each academy.	Moderate	Regular Finance reports	CEO/CFO/Finance Committee

						Approved balanced budget. Maintain reserves 3-4 % of trust public generated income.		to ESCAT Finance Committee and Directors. Scheme of delegation in place for approval of variances. Follow direction given in the Academy Trust handbook.	Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change
2.3	Poor cash flow management	6	3	18	Moderate	Monthly monitoring of Trust finance, profiling of payments across fiscal cycle	Minor	Regular reporting to Directors	CFO/Finance Committee Reviewed 17/3/26 - no change
2.4	Fall in NOR	5	3	15	Moderate	Close liaison with feeder schools and secondary schools without a sixth form. Marketing campaigns to promote the school. Review of admissions policies. Oversight of regional demographic changes.	Minor	Regular reporting to Directors on admissions data. Regular review on budget impact.	CEO/CF/Finance Committee/Board of Directors Reviewed 17/3/26 - added control measure of oversight of regional demographic changes

3. Trust Operations									
No	**Risk Description**	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Score**	**Category**	**Control Procedures**	**Retained (Net) Risk**	**Monitoring Process**	**Responsibility for Action**

3.1	Trust academies being OFSTED graded 'needs attention' or 'urgent improvement' or 'safeguarding responsibilities not met' and the impact on trust reputation	6	3	18	Moderate	Regular review of Quality of Education, Safeguarding, behaviour and personal development. Trust School Improvement service.	Minor	School at a glance reports to Directors. Robust Q&A processes in Trust schools. Increased scrutiny by CEO and Directors as required.	CEO Reviewed 23/6/26 - Change in wording to reflect new OFSTED framework and additional Control Procedure and Monitoring.
3.2	Souring of relationships between schools in the trust and between schools and the Trust	6	3	18	Moderate	Monitor relationships between LGB, head teachers and individual academy school's key personnel. Use of area Hubs to represent views of cluster of schools. Providing clarity and transparency of processes	Minor	Regular meetings between Directors, LGBs, head teachers and other key personnel.	CEO/Chair Reviewed 23/6/26 - Added control measures
3.3	MAT growth – sufficient to ensure sustainability	5	3	15	Moderate	Continuous review of next schools to join. Liaison with Diocese to jointly manage priority for schools joining	Minor	Board, CEO, CFO ensuring that stringent due diligence of proposed new schools	Board, CEO, CFO Reviewed 23/6/26 - Risk score, category and retained (net risk) reduced.
3.4	Dilution of Catholicity	5	2	10	Minor	Recruitment of Catholic Leaders, maintain foundation directors. Maintain the Catholicity,	Insignificant	Use Catholic Schools Inspection (CSI) criteria to review distinctive nature of schools	Chair/CEO Reviewed 23/6/26 - amended

						identity and ethos of our schools.			Sec48 to read CSI.
3.5	Delays in implementing the Diocesan Academisation Programme	5	4	20	Major	Regular meetings with LGB's and key personnel of schools identified in the growth plan. Regular meetings with Diocesan staff. Publishing of all relevant documents on the ESCAT website. Establishment of partnership agreements prior to conversion.	Moderate	Board and CEO to review progress against growth plan and key milestones	Chair/CEO To be reviewed 23/6/26
3.6	Trust Officials (CEO, CFO, COO) Roles and other key Trust staff not being filled	6	5	30	Extreme	Maintain quality recruitment of staff with the appropriate skills and experience. Well defined job descriptions. Minimum 3 months' notice allowing for full recruitment process to be undertaken in a timely manner. Correct level of remuneration to attract the right people to the required roles. Interim plans put in place to cover short term gaps and absences.	Major	Board and CEO to review staffing levels and workload commensurate with the Trust's ability to meet statutory requirements and the needs of the schools within the Trust.	Chair/CEO New risk discussed and approved 23/06/26

4. Governance Risks									
No	**Risk Description**	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Score**	**Category**	**Control Procedures**	**Retained (Net) Risk**	**Monitoring Process**	**Responsibility for Action**

4.1	MAT policies are not adequate, compliant, monitored, reviewed or implemented correctly.	5	2	10	Minor	Strategic list of Statutory Polices compiled with. CEO and CFO reviews. Comment / acknowledgement minuted by LGBs. Evidence provided to the Directors via the more robust LGB Governance reporting requirements	Insignificant	Reviewed by Governance Clerk and added to Agendas for review at correct intervals. Scheme of Delegation signed by both LGBs.	Chair/CEO/Board/ Clerk Reviewed 23/6/26 - Risk wording now includes 'implemented correctly' and added control measure
4.2	Lack of awareness and correct implementation of significant changes arising from Central Government Legislation and statutory guidance.	6	3	18	Moderate	Review impact of legislative /political change, including the future role of Academies and take the necessary actions.	Minor	Monitor impact of legislative /political change and correct implementation	Chair/CEO/Board Reviewed 23/6/26 - Risk wording expanded to include awareness, correct implementation and statutory guidance. Control measure and monitoring process amended accordingly.