



Non-executive Director/Trustee

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Directors of an academy trust are both trustees of the trust as a charity and directors of the trust as a Company limited by guarantee. The Charities Act 2011 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity, regardless of what they are called. They are known collectively as the trustee board.

Under charity law the trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the trust, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for which it has been set up. In law trustees have several legal duties, which are often described as those of compliance, care and prudence.

Non-executive directors work in partnership with the Chair of Directors, other directors and the trust's leadership team to provide clear vision, mission and strategic direction for the trust to:

- Contribute to the development of the trust's future strategic goals, ensuring that the best interests of pupils and local communities are always at the top of the agenda;
- Ensure the highest standards of educational provision across all academies within the trust, and that the leaders of the trust and all academies are held to account to deliver outstanding outcomes for pupils;
- Ensure the highest levels of transparency, audit, governance and accountability in the education, corporate and financial affairs of the trust;
- Provide strategic leadership and direction to the trust through oversight of and contribution to key strategy documents as well as by setting the strategic priorities;
- Have an awareness and understanding of the national policy context and of local needs for education;
- Develop and review the trust's internal controls and an audit regime to ensure that these identify the risks and opportunities to enable the trust to be sustainable and relevant for all of the stakeholders;
- Work with other directors in a supportive, helpful and constructive way to ensure the board is effective when it meets;
- Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control whilst ensuring openness and transparency in decision making;
- Ensure the trust establishes key objectives and control and management frameworks to deliver the agreed plans, identifies and assesses the risk of achieving them and regularly monitors performance to ensure appropriate corrective action can be taken;
- Ensure consistent focus upon what is best for the trust's schools and their students by providing challenge and advice to the trust's executive leadership team;

- Be familiar with the articles of association of the trust and awareness of its powers, duties and objectives;
- Be familiar with and ensure compliance with the trust's funding agreements and the Academies Handbook published from time to time by the Education and Skills Funding Agency or its successor organisation;
- Be familiar with the directors' code of conduct and any standing orders of the trust;
- Represent the trust in a positive manner with national, regional or local bodies or individuals in order to enhance the position of the trust;
- Lead or participate in relevant board committees or task groups of the trust;
- Contribute to the appointment and, if necessary, removal of the chair as well as participation in the recruitment and selection of future non-executive directors;
- Work as part of a team, and to accept shared responsibility and accountability, as well as to commit to undergoing a personal annual appraisal, reviewing own performance and that of board members, then to abide by its outcome in terms of personal development.

Non-executive directors are subject to company legislation and are obliged to:

- Act within your powers (for example in accordance with the constitution and any agreements with the DfE);
- Promote the success of the trust;
- Exercise independent judgment;
- Exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- Declare any interest in transactions

Person Specification

Every trustee is expected to abide by the trust's code of conduct and the 7 Principles of public life set out by Lord Nolan: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

The Competency Framework for Governance (DfE) 2017 details the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for effective governance: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583733/Competency_framework_for_governance_.pdf

Skills and experience

Essential:

- Critical listening and the ability to ask effective questions
- Strategic thinking
- Excellent communication
- Problem solving and analysis

Desirable:

- Understanding of data

- Finance and/or accounting knowledge
- HR experience
- Knowledge of education
- Leadership and management
- Risk management
- Legal expertise, particularly knowledge of charity law
- Marketing and communications

Time commitment

Directors must be willing and able to contribute up to 15 hours per month to deliver the role effectively. Initially much of this time would be spent visiting the schools, background reading and undertaking training. There are approximately 4 meetings per term, including Trust Board and committee meetings, with additional ad hoc meetings and visits to schools. The term of office is 4 years.

Usually directors sit on a committee focused on an area they have knowledge of, or are particularly interested in; for example, the Finance & Audit committee. Committees generally meet up to 6 times a year.

Preparation for meetings includes reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders.

You will also be expected to undertake any training required to enable you to discharge your role effectively.