



Academy trustee role description

Academy trustees are volunteers. The Charity Commission defines trustees as the people responsible for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run.

In academy trusts, this means:

- **Holding executive leaders to account for the educational and financial performance of the trust**

The board creates robust accountability for executive leaders through rigorous analysis of performance data and financial information.

- **Setting the trust's vision and values, and the strategy for achieving this vision**

The trust's vision will centre on pupil progress and achievement. Working with senior leaders, the board sets strategic objectives to help the trust reach its goals.

- **Ensuring the trust's financial success and probity**

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the trust operates with regularity, propriety and value for money, using only the resources it has available.

Responsibilities

- Develop the trust's vision and strategy
- Establish a culture of high educational standards, which promotes staff and pupil wellbeing
- Ensure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Monitor provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities
- Monitor educational performance of the trust's academies, using a range of data sources
- Ensure stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff and the local community) are informed and consulted as appropriate
- Approve the budget for the academy trust, and where relevant, for academies within the trust
- Monitor and evaluate the trust's financial performance

- Approve and review school policies, and hold staff to account for their implementation •
- Ensure the trust is compliant with legal requirements, including that all statutory policies and documents are in place
- Carry out the appointment and performance management of the principal/chief executive •
- Monitor and evaluate the trust's staffing structure(s)
- Monitor health and safety in the academy/across the trust
 - In a multi-academy trust, work with those involved in local academy governance, supporting and holding them to account

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

The time commitment for the trustee role will vary. However, all trustees must attend at least 3 meetings of the full board per year. The term of office is 4 years.

Usually trustees sit on a committee focused on an area they have knowledge of, or are particularly interested in; for example, the finance committee. Committees generally meet up to 4 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.

Additional information

Academies are both charities and companies limited by guarantee. Academy trustees are therefore both charity trustees and corporate directors, and must comply with company and charity law. This includes the academy registering trustees with Companies House as a director.

If you have any questions about this, or would like to know more about becoming an academy trustee you can get in touch with the chair of trustees, Tina Byrom.

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