

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.

The purpose of the board of trustees is to provide:

- > Strategic leadership of the academy trust
 - Your role is to help set and embed the trust’s vision and strategy, and use these to monitor how the trust and its schools are progressing towards it’s strategic goals
- > Accountability and assurance, meaning the board has robust oversight of the operations and performance of the trust, including education, pupil welfare and finance
 - You'll monitor these areas and hold trust leaders to account for performance and compliance in them
- > Engagement
 - This means your board has strategic oversight of relationships with the trust's stakeholders: parents, pupils, staff, local communities
 - You'll make sure your schools and your trust are communicating with and involving these groups, so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement

Responsibilities

- > Develop the trust’s vision and strategy
- > Establish a culture of high educational standards, which promotes staff and pupil wellbeing
- > Set the trust’s strategic aims and objectives
- > Make sure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- > Monitor provision for pupils with SEND
- > 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 trust 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
- > Make sure the trust complies with laws that apply to charities and companies and within its funding agreement
- > Be a source of challenge and support to the principal/chief executive

- > 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 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 skills
- > Risk management skills
- > Legal expertise, particularly knowledge of charity law
- > Marketing and communications skills

Benefits to you

New skills you'll gain:

- > Strategic planning
- > Experience on a board
- > Holding senior leaders to account and ability to provide challenge
- > Finance, and maintaining oversight of budgets
- > Analysing data
- > Human resources and performance management
- > Project management
- > Marketing
- > Communication and teamwork
- > Decision making
- > Problem solving

Time commitment

The time commitment for the trustee role will vary – the trust board meets 6 times a year and meetings usually last two hours.

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, audit and risk committee.

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 company directors, and must comply with company and charity law.

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 via Mrs M Smith (Governance Professional)

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