

EMAT Trustee Role Description

Purpose

Trustees work together to fulfil the purpose of the trust board:

- strategic leadership – defining the vision, fostering the trust’s culture and setting the strategy
- accountability and assurance – robust and effective oversight of trust operations and performance
- strategic engagement – oversight of relationships with stakeholders, ensuring decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement

Trustees are responsible for governing a charitable company and directing how it is managed and run. Trustees must also ensure that the trust complies with all legal and statutory requirements. Trustees should seek the advice of the board’s governance professional and other professional advice as appropriate.

The trust board’s strategic responsibilities

The trust board works closely with the CEO and wider executive leadership team. The executive leaders are responsible for day-to-day operational management of the trust and its schools, whereas the role of the board is strategic. As such, trustees are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the trust
- deciding the principles that guide trust policies and approving key policies
- appointing and appraising the senior executive leader and making pay recommendations
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that stakeholders are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all schools in the trust deliver a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- taking ownership of the trust’s financial sustainability and ensuring effective resource management across the trust
- agreeing the trust’s staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management policy and procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

Monitoring and evaluating trust performance

Trustees must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the trust's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the trust is operating effectively in line with these policies
- holding the CEO to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by executive leaders and external reporting on all aspects of trust performance
- asking challenging questions of executive leaders in order to hold them to account
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

Contribution to the trust board

Trustees should ensure that they make a positive and meaningful contribution to the board by:

- attending meetings (typically 6 full board meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for executive leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with executive leaders and colleagues on the board of trustees
- getting to know schools within the trust, including visiting occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

Support of local governance arrangements

EMAT operates Local Advisory Boards at academy level, Trustees ensure their effectiveness by:

- ensuring that the trust's governance structure meets the needs of the trust
- agreeing clear schemes of delegation, outlining the responsibilities delegated to the senior executive leader and the responsibilities of the board and academy committees
- ensuring effective communication channels are in place

Person Specification

Governors & Trustees must be aged 18 years or over and be able to pass the eligibility checks clearly laid out in the application form. Over and above this there are no specific qualifications or requirements for the role - every governing board needs a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience. You don't need to be a parent or to have a background in education.