

Trustee/Director Role Description

Statement of Values

The Board of Trustees/Directors (the Trust Board) commits to working collaboratively, effectively and with positivity to ensure the success of the Trust. In doing so, members commit to upholding the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Trustees/Directors work together to carry out their core functions:

- ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff;
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent;
- ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

Trustees/Directors are responsible for governing Swale Academies Trust (the Trust), a charitable company, and directing how it is managed and run. They are accountable to the Members and to the Secretary of State for Education. Trustees/Directors are both charity trustees and company directors. They must comply with the Trust's charitable objectives, with company and charity law, and ensure that the Trust complies with all legal and statutory requirements, including the Articles of Association and the Academies Trust Handbook. They 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 Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO and other executive leaders are responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the Trust and its schools, whereas the role of the Board is strategic. As such, Trustees/Directors 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 to ensure 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 as defined in the Risk Register are appropriate and effective.

Monitoring and evaluating Trust performance

Trustees/Directors 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 senior executive leader to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies;
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by senior executive leaders and external reporting on all aspects of Trust performance;
- asking challenging questions of the senior executive leader 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/Directors should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the Board by:

- attending meetings (typically a minimum of six full Board meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for the senior executive leader in advance;
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior executive leaders and colleagues on the Trust Board;
- getting to know schools within the Trust, including visiting occasionally during school hours in line with the relevant visits' protocol;
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis;
- 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, its Committees and Local Governing Bodies;
- ensuring effective communication channels are in place.

Safeguarding

The Trust Board has a duty to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- have regard to any statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State;
- ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors and proprietors.

Health and safety

The Trust Board has a duty to follow:

- the Department's 'Health and Safety: responsibilities and duties for schools';
- the 'Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance for Education'.

Expenses

Trustees/Directors are entitled to claim reimbursement for expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role, and as outlined in the Trust's Financial Regulations Policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel.

Credit: National Governance Association; Confederation of School Trusts; Academies Trust Handbook.