



The Barton Court Academy Trust seeks to appoint a new non-executive Member to join an established Board of Members to provide additional capacity as the Trust grows in size.

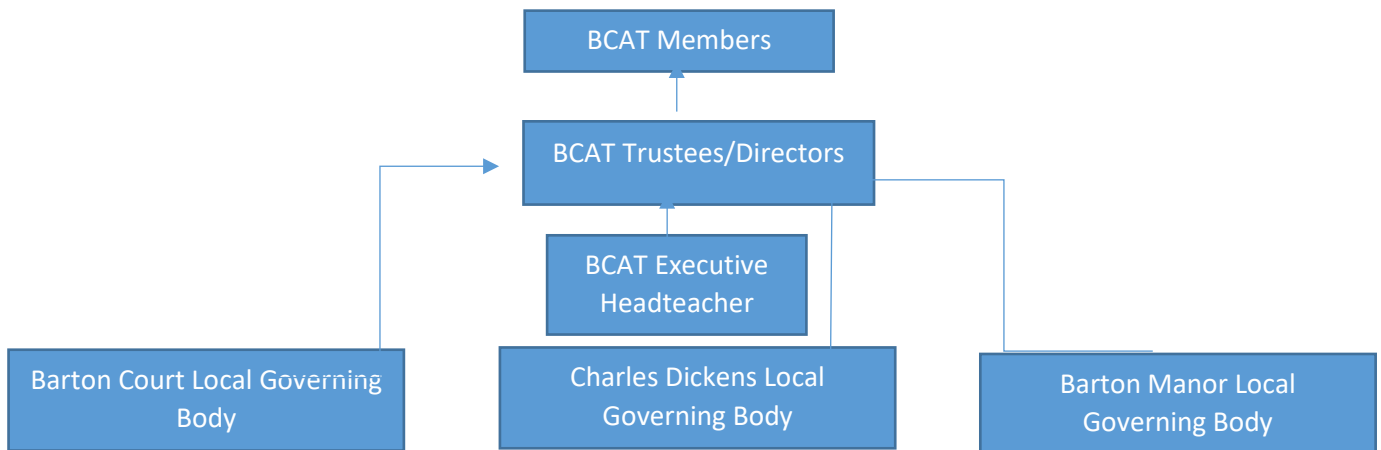
The Trust

Barton Court Academy Trust (BCAT) is a multi-academy Trust which was established in 2017.

It currently consists of three secondary schools: Barton Court Grammar School, an 11-18yrs, mixed selective school in the heart of Canterbury, rated “Good” with many outstanding features by Ofsted in February 2020, and The Charles Dickens School, an 11-16yrs mixed non-selective school in Broadstairs, which came out of special measures and is rated “Requires Improvement” by Ofsted in June 2019 and is a rapidly improving school. Barton Manor Free School, an 11 – 18yrs non-selective mixed school in the heart of Canterbury which opened to Year 7 in September 2022.

The diagram below shows the governance relationships within the Trust:

The Director/Governance Structure of Barton Court Academy Trust (BCAT)



Plans for the Future

BCAT has recently opened a non-selective, 11- 18yrs co-educational Free School on an adjacent site to Barton Court Grammar School in the heart of Canterbury. This school offers high quality educational provision to students who do not pass the Kent 11+ test. A joint Sixth Form with Barton Court Grammar School is planned with the grammar school offering excellence in academic post -16 courses and the Free school excellence in vocational post-16 courses.

Our key challenges will be ensuring that this new school opens successfully; that there is significant and sustained support and challenge for The Charles Dickens School, our sponsored secondary academy, whilst ensuring there is rapid school improvement. Our aim is for the school to achieve at least a “Good” rating from Ofsted in the next visit. To maintain the high standards and high quality education provision at Barton Court Grammar School. BCAT has extended its leadership team in Barton Court for phase one of expansion but will need to recruit and retain additional senior leaders for future expansion of the trust including the Free School. This would include an executive layer of school leaders.

Trust Values and Ethos

BCAT has academic excellence and high aspiration at the heart of its vision and ethos. Its lead school, Barton Court Grammar School has a track record of academic excellence and innovation. Barton Court has a language specialism and has promoted internationalism and Global Citizenship as essential values in equipping our children for 21st century working and living. Barton Court is also an accredited Advanced Thinking School with Exeter University and BCAT promotes cognitive tools throughout its schools to improve teaching, learning and robust self-assessment.

Role Summary

Academy trusts are founded by Members, who may then appoint additional Members to join them. The first Members are the signatories to the memorandum of association which is drawn up when the academy trust is first established. These first Members agree the academy trust's first articles of association, which include the academy trust's charitable purpose.

Members have a general duty to exercise their powers, to further the academy trust's charitable purpose. Members play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding academy trust governance. While they must ensure they do not stray into undertaking the Academy Trustees' role, they should assure themselves that the governance of the trust is effective, that Academy Trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object(s) and that they, the Members, use their powers to step in if governance is failing.

Members should not be involved in the day-to-day business of the academy trust and must ensure they do not assume the powers of the Academy Trustees. However, they do have an important role in an academy trust, based on a number of key powers set out in the DfE's [model articles of association](#) and in company law.

Members have a general duty to exercise their powers to further the academy trust's charitable object, which in the majority of trusts is 'to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom'. It is essential are aware of the powers available to them and know when and how to use those powers effectively.

The Powers of Members

Members help to ensure that Academy Trustees are exercising effective governance by utilising a range of powers including:

- **Appointing and removing Academy Trustees**
- **Appointing and removing Members**
- **Directing Academy Trustees:** Members can by special resolution, direct Academy Trustees to take specific action where Academy Trustees are unable or unwilling to act in the best interest of the Academy Trust.
- **Amending the Academy Trust's articles of association**
- **Appointing and removing auditors**

Structure

The academy trust **must** have at least three Members, although the DfE's strong preference is for academy trusts to have at least five Members. Having more Members increases the range of perspectives represented and ensures that Members can take decisions via special resolution without requiring unanimity. Members can be individual people or corporate bodies. Employees of the academy trust must not be Members.

Independence from the trust board

As the responsibility to conduct the academy trust's business sits with the Academy Trustees, it is important Members do not overstep their powers or undermine the trust boards' discretion when exercising its responsibilities. The DfE's strong preference is therefore for at least the majority of Members to not sit on the trust board.

It is important for Members to be kept informed about academy trust business so they can be assured that the trust board is exercising effective governance. This must include providing the Members with the academy trust's audited annual report and accounts.

Person specification

We require a Member to join our already established and experienced team of Members to provide additional capacity as the Trust grows in size. We seek someone who can offer additional experience and expertise, from outside the educational setting, who can also provide additional challenge and support from a different perspective. The role does not require a huge commitment and will suit a busy professional or a retired person who wants to be contribute to the school setting.

Expectations of a Member

The role of Member is a voluntary one, requiring a high degree confidentiality but a low level of commitment.

It is expected that Members would need to set aside an average of 2- 3 hrs per year in order to fulfil the following expectations:

- Attend 1 AGM per year, every December which lasts approximately one hour.
- Attend a "catch up meeting, every July which lasts approximately one hour

These meetings can be joined virtually via Microsoft Teams

Location of Member Meetings and Trust Website

Member meetings are always held virtually via Microsoft Teams. BCAT Head offices are situated in Barton Court Grammar School.

<http://www.bartoncouracademytrust.org/>

Appointment and Term of Office

Members are appointed for a period of 4 years by the BCAT Members. New Members will be required to declare that they meet certain eligibility criteria including restrictions relating to bankruptcy and convictions for an offence.

On appointment and every 2 years thereafter, Members are required to:

- Sign a Declaration of Interests to record all business and relevant interests, financial or otherwise, which they and their spouse or partner, children, parents and any other close relatives may have;
- Undertake online training in Safeguarding, Prevent and any other course that may be required;
- Complete an enhanced DBS check (as this position will give access to children) and names will be checked against the list of people banned or with restrictions imposed on them from working in Schools with children and young people.

Background on academy trusts

Academy schools, which are charities run independently of local authority control, now account for 71% of secondary schools and 26% of primaries – and their number is growing all the time.

Many of these schools are grouped together as multi-academy trusts (MATs). There are currently 980 multi academy trusts of 2+ schools. If the schools are to fulfil their potential, the trusts need non-executives (known in charity law as trustees) to bring a wide range of skills and experience to help guide strategy, ensure their ambitions can be soundly financed and keep their schools up to the mark delivering for their pupils.

“Academy boards must be ambitious for all children and young people and infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes. Governance must be grounded in reality as defined by both high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of pupils/students, staff, parents, carers and local communities. It should be driven by inquisitive, independent minds and through conversations focused on the key strategic issues which are conducted with humility, good judgement, resilience and determination.” Source: Governance Handbook, Department for Education (2017)

Members is a voluntary, unpaid role for people who have the energy and skills to make a real contribution to shaping the future of our schools. You do not need to have any specialist knowledge of education.

What to do next.....

If you feel that the role of Member is one that you could contribute to, then please provide a CV and brief personal statement about your skills and reasons for applying. This should be emailed to clerk@bartoncourt.org for the attention of the Chair of the Trust.

If you would like to know more about the role or would like to speak to someone who is already serving as a Member, then please contact the Clerk (clerk@bartoncourt.org) who will be pleased to help you.