



Northern Ambition Academies Trust

Crewe Road, Airedale, Castleford WF10 3JU – Tel: 01977 664555 – Fax: 01977 664556

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the voluntary role of Trustee/Non-Executive Director within Northern Ambition Academies Trust.

Northern Ambition Academies Trust currently comprises four schools located within a one-mile radius in Castleford, West Yorkshire: one secondary school - Airedale Academy – and three primary phase schools - Airedale Infants School, Airedale Junior School and Oyster Park Primary School. As a MAT we have been established since 2014, but we are now looking to build capacity for the next stage of our development by adding to local governors to the Academy Councils of our schools.

Children are at the centre of what we do: specifically encouraging children from some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country to dream big and then give them the tools to achieve those dreams. That's a bold ambition. But here at Northern Ambition Academies Trust we believe in dreaming big too

Our vision is of a world where all children and young people are given the opportunity to thrive, succeed and aspire. As a Trust:

- We believe that every child, whatever their background or circumstances, should be given the opportunity to flourish, succeed and dream.
- We believe that our schools have a duty to contribute to the improvement of our local communities and wider society.
- We believe that all schools within our Trust, irrespective of their starting points, bring something valuable to contribute to our success and the achievement of our collective goals.
- We believe in the importance of working together in the best interests of the children in our communities.

Our mission is for every child to leave our schools equipped with the essential skills they need to contribute effectively to society and to become well-rounded, confident, happy adults. To do this we believe in the following values and try to keep these at the heart of what we do:

Ambition

- We aim high and don't put limits on ourselves or other people;
- We are relentless in assessing our performance and seeking to continuously improve;
- We make the most of the opportunities offered to us to help us achieve our goals.

Bravery

- We try new things and see mistakes as an opportunity to learn;
- We don't shy away from tough decisions or difficult situations;
- We don't give up if things are hard.

Respect

- We think about the impact of our actions on others in the choices we make;
- We value what makes us different and believe everyone has something to contribute;
- We encourage honest, open debate and listen to constructive feedback about how to make things better.

Charitable organisations like ours cannot function without the time and support of a dedicated group of volunteers who help the executive team of the Trust ensure that the organisation runs effectively and

achieves its core purpose. Our trustees are a key part of the Trust: they define strategy, make important decisions about the operation of our organisation and hold our executive staff to account for the company's performance and the impact we have on the lives of the children within our schools.

As well as the benefits to our organisation of having skilled people supporting us in our corporate governance, being a trustee is a rewarding and enjoyable role. Trustees come from all walks of life and being a trustee can help you meet new people, change things for the better, learn new skills or use your existing skills in a new context. It could be a way to build your CV, gain experience of strategy and management, to contribute something positive to society, or as a way to find out more about the not-for-profit sector before making a career change.

Being a trustee can expose you to new experiences and new groups of people. It can also present you with new challenges. You are part of a team as a trustee and will have the opportunity to add your unique skills and experience while learning from others too. Learning is a key part of the role, and our Trust firmly believes in ensuring that trustees are given access to appropriate training opportunities which will help them undertake their role more effectively.

For more information about Northern Ambition Academies Trust visit:
www.northernambition.org.uk

For more information about the schools visit:
www.airedaleacademy.com
www.airedaleinfants.com
www.airedalejuniorschool.co.uk
www.oysterparkprimary.co.uk

For a copy of the schools' most recent Ofsted reports visit:
Airedale Academy: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/136613>

Airedale Infants: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108228>

Airedale Juniors: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108227>

Oyster Park Primary: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/141144>

For an overview of the local area visit:
<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/about-the-council/about-wakefield>

I hope that the information included in this pack will encourage you to make an application to join the Trust as a Trustee. If you have further questions or would like an informal chat about the role, please contact Anastasia Byard, Company Secretary, on 01977 664555 or email abyard@northernambition.org.uk.

On behalf of the Trust, governors, staff and students, I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Hall
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Northern Ambition Academies Trust

Post title	Trustee
Reporting to	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Time commitment	Six Trust Board meetings per year, plus membership of at least one Board sub-committee and contribution to ad hoc panels/committees (e.g. complaints committee) as required.

PURPOSE OF THE POST

To ensure the effective operation of the Trust and each academy. Trustees have legal duties as company directors and charity trustees, and provide ongoing challenge and support to the executive team.

Responsible for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effective operation of the Trust and each academy. • Setting the strategic direction of the organisation. • Providing ongoing challenge and support to the Executive Team.
Liaising with	Chief Executive, Executive Headteacher, Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Partnerships, other teachers and non-teaching support staff across the Trust, other trustees, local governors, local authority staff, school improvement professionals, parents/carers, pupils.
Characteristics of the post	<p>The ability to regularly attend meetings of the Trust Board which generally take place in the late afternoon/evening, and to participate in at least one of the Trust's sub-committees.</p> <p>Trustees must be able to meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence of entitlement to work in the U.K. • Provide at least one, but preferably two, personal or business references regarding their suitability for the role • Obtain an appropriate DBS check at the relevant level • Obtain a clear section 128 check • Not be barred from acting as a company director or charity trustee <p>Trustees must be prepared to abide by the Trust's Code of Conduct for Trustees.</p>

MAIN (CORE) RESPONSIBILITIES

General responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set or change the aims, objectives and strategy of the Trust in accordance with the Articles and monitor performance against these aims and objectives • Ensure the Articles of the Company (subject to the Members', Secretary of State for Education's and Charity Commission's approval) are fit for purpose
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- Approve a scheme of delegation which sets out those matters delegated to committees or individuals with the Trust and those which are reserved to the Board
- Ensure high standards of corporate governance are maintained
- Ensure clarity of roles and accountability between the Board, its sub-committees and their chairs, the CEO, Executive Headteachers/Headteachers, Principals/Headteachers, COO/CFO and Heads of School
- Establish and oversee the strategic direction of each academy, ensuring that this aligns with the overall direction of the Trust
- Determine the educational targets for each academy within the Trust, monitor the quality of the educational standards and performance and challenge any areas of underperformance
- Establish such standards, policies, procedures and controls as are to be adopted by all schools in the Trust and determine on which matters schools have local autonomy
- Set the Trust's risk management strategy, review the risks facing the Trust and seek assurance that these risks are being mitigated or eliminated
- Challenge and monitor the financial performance and efficient and effective use of resources across the Trust, including approval of academy budgets and determination of centrally-procured goods and services
- Authorise major investment, expansion or other material changes within the Trust
- Produce the company's annual accounts and annual directors' report
- Employ staff who work within the Trust and its schools
- Appoint the CEO, Chief Operating Officer/Director of Finance and Executive Headteachers/Principals within the Trust, having considered the recommendations of the CEO regarding these appointments (where appropriate)
- Scrutinise and challenge key decisions made by the executive officers of the Trust to ensure that they have been made in line with Trust strategy and principles
- Undertake the performance management of the CEO by establishing an appropriate committee for this purpose and seeking expert advice
- Ensure compliance with all the relevant legislation, mandatory guidance, contractual and statutory duties including (but not limited to) that relating to health and safety
- Ensure appropriate plans are in place for the recruitment, training and succession planning of Trustees, committee and Academy Council members
- Appoint and remove members from Board sub-committees, including academy councils
- Ensure regular effective communication with sub-committees of the Board, including academy councils
- Annually review its own effectiveness and that of the governance structures across the Trust to ensure that they are fit for purpose
- Consult with stakeholders on the strategy and operation of the Trust as appropriate, via relevant mechanisms such as Academy Councils and the Academy Council Forum

Duties as company directors	<p>Under the Companies Act 2006, the Trustees, as company directors, have a number of statutory duties that they must adhere to when acting on behalf of the company. These include duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to act within their powers; • to exercise independent judgment; • to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence; • to avoid conflicts of interest; • not to accept benefits from third parties; • to declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements with the company; and • to promote the success* of the company for the benefits of its purposes. <p>* success for a charitable company means (in basic terms) achieving its objectives.</p> <p>The Companies Act 2006 provides guidance on the factors that must be taken into account when directors decide whether decision and actions they are taking will promote the success of the company. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the likely consequences of any decision in the long term (as well as the short term); • the interests of the company's employees; • the need to maintain business relationships with suppliers, customers and others; and • the impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment.
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REQUIREMENTS OF THE ROLE (Taken from the DfE Governor Competency Framework)

Qualifications/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to undertake training appropriate to the role
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people • Understands the importance of building strong working relationships within the board and with executive leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils/students, the local community and employers. • Understands the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support • Understands the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of school governance, or willing to develop an understanding of the education sector • Experience in one of the following areas and willingness to utilise this for the benefit of the Board: HR, Finance, Corporate Governance, Risk Management, School Improvement, Legal, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, IT, Strategic Leadership, Quality Improvement Processes, Performance Management, Learning and Development, Safeguarding, Charities, Marketing/PR, Community Activism.
Competencies and other skills required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to devote the required time and energy to the role

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people. • Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and others in order to create highly effective governance. • Independent minded; able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the Board. • Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and understanding the value of meaningful questioning. • Prepared to challenge the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement. • Prepared to listen to and work in partnership with others. • Self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole board effectiveness. • Able to challenge conventional wisdom. • Open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving. • Prepared to abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life.
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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRUSTEES

As a member of the Board of Trustees, trustees must always have the wellbeing of the children and the reputation of the Trust at heart; trustees must do all they can to be an ambassador for the Trust, publically supporting its aims, values and ethos and never saying or doing anything publically which would embarrass the Trust, its academies, its governors, pupils or staff.

For the Trust Board to carry out its role effectively, trustees must be:

- prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- willing to commit the necessary time to preparing for and participating in activities and meetings;
- clear about the difference between their role and that of the Trust's executive staff;
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The Trust Board is a corporate body which means:

- No trustee can act on his/her own without proper authority from the Board;
- All trustees carry equal responsibility for decisions made; and
- The overriding concern of all trustees must be the welfare of the Trust and its academies as a whole.

Trustees are not appointed to the Board to represent a specific interest group – they are appointed based on their skills and what they can contribute to the Trust. It is essential that, while trustees should be aware of and bring to the discussion the views of stakeholders, they understand that they are not acting as representatives of any particular stakeholder group or organisation.

GENERAL

- We understand the purpose of the Trust Board as set out above.

- We will uphold and champion the Trust's guiding values of bravery, ambition and respect in our role within the Trust.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life:
 - **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
 - **Integrity**
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
 - **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
 - **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
 - **Openness**
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
 - **Honesty**
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
 - **Leadership**
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Trust Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust Board meetings.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and others.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our Trust and its academies. Our actions will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.

COMMITMENT

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including serving on at least one of the Trust's sub-committees and participating in working groups or ad hoc committees where required.
- We will not go beyond our duties or act outside of the powers of authority conveyed on us through the Scheme of Delegation, and acknowledge that, were we to do so, we could be held liable to the Trust and/or third parties.
- We will make efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend provide apologies in advance.

- We will get to know the Trust and its academies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Our visits to the academies will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust Board and agreed with the Principal.
- We will review our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training on a regular basis.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the CEO and other executive officers of the Trust.

RELATIONSHIPS

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other trustees, governors and executive officers.
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other trustees or governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the CEO, Executive Headteacher, Principal/Head of School, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies, and the communities we serve.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Trust business arise outside any Trust Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust Board vote.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the Trust's business in the Register of Business Interests, which will be published on the Trust's website.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and they (or their nominee) will investigate; the Trust will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any trustee shall be raised with the Trust Board, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of Trustees, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension or removal from the Trust Board.

Date completed

March 2017