



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEE ROLE DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

BACKGROUND

South Gloucestershire and Stroud Academy Trust (SGSAT) is a company limited by guarantee and is constituted as a non-profit charitable trust. SGSAT is sponsored by South Gloucestershire and Stroud College. As SGSAT has been established as a multi-academy trust it is capable of having more than one academy within the trust.

Academy Schools are state funded schools in England which are directly funded by central government (specifically the Department for Education) and independent of direct control by the local authority. The majority of academies are secondary schools, but some primary schools also have academy status.

Academies are self-governing, however, they must meet the same National Curriculum core subject requirements as other state schools and are subject to inspection by Ofsted.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees are subject to the duties and responsibilities of charitable trustees and company directors as well as any other conditions that the Secretary of State agrees with them. Trustees must advance education, for the public benefit and to take ultimate responsibility for the Trust's resources; the employment of staff, land and building matters and academy finances and funds. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement and the Academies Financial handbook.

The board of trustees should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b) Holding the Executive Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of each school in the trust and of the trust overall and assuring value for money.

TRUSTEES' DUTIES

As trustees of a charity, academy trustees must comply with the following duties:

- compliance – ensuring that the charity's resources are used for the charitable purpose and that the charity complies with the law and its governing document i.e. the articles of association.
- care – reasonable care should be taken in their work by ensuring that the academy trust is managed efficiently and effectively. It also means considering the need for professional advice on matters where there may be material risk to the charity.

- prudence – acting responsibly, making sure that the academy trust’s assets are protected and used for the benefit of the charity. Trustees must make sure that the academy trust is solvent and keeps appropriate financial records.

More information on the role of a charity trustee is available on the Charity Commission’s website.

Academy trustees also have statutory duties as company directors under the Companies Act, which comprise the duties to:

- act within their powers;
- promote the success of the company;
- exercise independent judgment;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Trustees should be able to demonstrate:

- An interest in education and in providing learning and development opportunities.
- Commitment to raising standards and seeking the highest quality provision for learners.
- Commitment to the trust and its Objects
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the business of the trust.
- Strategic vision.
- An understanding of the role, in particular the distinction between governance and management.
- The ability and willingness to ask probing questions and to participate in robust debate.
- The ability to communicate effectively, to express ideas clearly and listen to others.
- The ability to work as a member of a team and to stand by the collective decisions of the board of trustees.
- The ability to act as a critical friend to the schools and to challenge and probe.
- A willingness to undertake appropriate training to develop an understanding of the schools, the trust and the role of a trustee.
- Commitment to the principles of equality and diversity.
- An interest in voluntary service to the community. (The role of a trustee is voluntary and unpaid, although external training and related travel will be paid for).

- n) Adherence to the seven principles of public life laid down by the Nolan Committee. These are Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

ELIGIBILITY

- a) Trustees will be asked to confirm their eligibility for appointment as a trustee.
b) Appointments will be subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates.

TIME COMMITMENT

- a) To make all endeavours to attend all meetings of the board of trustees (at least three meetings in every school year) and any Committees of which s/he is a member, and preparation time for such meetings.
b) Available to attend appropriate induction and training and development events.
c) A trustee's term of office is four years.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- a) To pupils, parents and the wider school and local community.
b) To the government, funding bodies and public for the use of public funds.
c) To the Academies within the trust as their legal employer.

PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a) Chair of the board of trustees
b) Other trustees and Members of SGSAT
c) Relevant Committees i.e. Local Governing Body
d) Chief Executive
e) Chief Finance Officer
f) Executive Head
g) Head Teachers
h) Clerk to the trust