



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 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 and guidance on the role of a charity trustee is available on the Charity Commission’s website. ‘The Essential Trustee: what you need to know’ and ‘Charity Trustee Welcome Pack’ and is also provided to Trustees on appointment.

Academy Trustees are also requested to review the ‘Competency Framework for Governance’ and ‘Governance Handbook’ provided as guidance by the Department for Education and the Academies Financial Handbook, provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

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.

The duties of Company Directors are fully described in sections 170 – 181 of the Companies Act 2006

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Trustees should be able to demonstrate:

- a) An interest in education and in providing learning and development opportunities.
- b) Commitment to raising standards and seeking the highest quality provision for learners.
- c) Commitment to the trust and its Objects
- d) A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the business of the trust.
- e) Strategic vision.
- f) An understanding of the role, in particular the distinction between governance and management.
- g) The ability and willingness to ask probing questions and to participate in robust debate.

- h) The ability to communicate effectively, to express ideas clearly and listen to others.
- i) The ability to work as a member of a team and to stand by the collective decisions of the board of trustees.
- j) The ability to act as a critical friend and to challenge and probe.
- k) A willingness to undertake appropriate training to develop an understanding of the schools, the trust and the role of a trustee.
- l) Commitment to the principles of equality and diversity.
- m) 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.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees hold responsibilities as follows:

- 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.

Specifically in relation to the following areas:

Governance

- a) Review of their governance including consideration of composition of the Board in terms of Skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact;
- b) Election of the Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees and appointment of the Chairs of Committees;
- c) Co-opting individuals with particular expertise or qualifications as additional members of committees;
- d) Appointment and removal of a Clerk and Company Secretary;
- e) Annual Review of the Scheme of Delegation;
- f) Changes to the Board structure;
- g) Approval of the Terms of reference of the Committees;
- h) Compliance with requirements as outlined by the DfE, ESFA and Ofsted;
- i) Monitoring of the Risk Register to ensure actions are taken where necessary;

Strategy

To participate in the planning and setting of the Trust strategic direction to determine the following:

- a) The vision and ethos of the Trust;
- b) Clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the constituent Academies;
- c) That all students, including those with special education needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- d) The Academies budget;
- e) The Trust staffing structure
- f) Effective appraisal and opportunities for staff continuing professional development
- g) The approval of Trust wide policies and Admissions Policies (where appropriate) in particular those relating to HR matters, H&S, Safeguarding & Child Protection , Complaints and Financial Policies;

- h) Approving the Academies Term dates and any changes to the school day;
- i) Trust property and Estates related matters

Management Accountability

To hold members of the Trusts Executive Team to account by:

- a) Monitoring the Academies performance and compliance with Ofsted standards, through review of Key Performance indicators and reports received from the activities of the Local School Boards;
- b) Ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place for effective arrangements for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Students.
- c) Asking challenging questions and ensuring these questions are responded to;
- d) Receiving results of Audit activities and understanding any remedial actions required and ensuring implementation.

Finance

Control and financial monitoring ensuring compliance with the Funding Agreement, Academy Handbook and Company and Charity regulations by:

- a) Ensuring good financial management and effective internal financial controls and management of risks;
- b) Regularly reviewing information on financial performance and ensuring any required plans are in place and implemented;
- c) Approving a balanced budget;
- d) Approving the annual report and accounts and ensuring they are audited by a statutory auditor and incorporate accounting policies approved by the Board of Trustees
- e) Ensuring the Trust is sufficiently insured including Trustees' indemnity insurance.

ELIGIBILITY

- a) Trustees will be asked to confirm their eligibility for appointment as a trustee and review this eligibility annually. Trustees hold responsibility to disclose to the Clerk, any information that may lead to their disqualification.
- 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 (SGS AT holds six formal 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.

PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIPS

- a) Chair of the board of trustees
- b) Other trustees and Members of SGSAT
- c) Relevant Committees i.e. Local School Board

- d) Chief Executive
- e) Deputy Chief Executive, School Improvement and Standards
- f) Chief Finance Officer
- g) Head Teachers
- h) Clerk to the trust