

Job Description: Head of Governance & Trust Secretary

Job Purpose

Responsible for ensuring high standards of governance across New College Durham Academies Trust (NCDAT), including administration and support of the Trust Board and its subcommittees, including the individual Academy Committees.

Responsible for the coordination and accurate record keeping of the Trust Board and related subcommittees, providing regular information and training to Chairs and other members as required. Responsible for ensuring compliance with, and providing advice on, legal and statutory requirements, good corporate governance policies and procedures, and constitutional matters as needed.

Grade: Grade 9

Base: NCDAT Offices, North Durham Academy

Responsible to: Chair of Trust Board

Main Responsibilities

Management of Governance

Ensure that the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees operate at all times within the legal framework and specifically comply with the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Advise the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees on the proper exercise of its powers with reference to relevant legislation, rules and regulations and obligations and on the application of the education acts, charity law, company law and other laws and guidance affecting its work.

Liaise with the Chair, Committee Chairs and Chief Executive Officer (and Senior Leaders) as required to ensure the effective conduct of Trust governance business.

Monitor changes to the legislative framework and advise on action as appropriate. Offer advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures and self-evaluation.

Provide professional advice and assist the Chief Executive Officer in areas of company law, company secretarial practice and governance.

Provide administrative support for the Chair and Committee Chairs outside meetings as required, including acting as correspondent for the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees.

Meeting administration

Advise on the annual calendar of meetings and schedule of business. Plan the forward programme of meetings of the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees, identifying the main items to be taken at those meetings.

In conjunction with the Chair, Committee Chairs and Chief Executive Officer, prepare in advance draft agendas for approval, for meetings of the Trust Board and its subcommittees based upon the previous minutes and the agreed work plan.

Liaise with those members of staff preparing reports and manage the collation, printing and despatch of written reports to meet the requirements of meeting agendas.

Attend meetings of the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees, including Academy Committees, give advice on procedure, ensure all meetings are quorate and prepare draft minutes of proceedings for appropriate approval.

Clerk any statutory appeal committees / panels the Academy Trust Board or its subcommittees are required to convene and ensure that appropriate advice is given to those who are involved in these appeal procedures.

Membership of the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees

Ensure the effective administration of membership of Trustees, Members and Governors including recruitment, appointment, election (if relevant), safeguarding and suitability checks and maintaining accurate and complete records, declarations and registers. Advise the Academy Trust Board on succession planning of all roles.

Manage the evaluation of the performance of the Governing Body including annual governance self-assessment, appraisal of the Chair, Committee Chairs and meeting evaluations. Advise the Academy Trust Board on best practice in this area.

Ensure Members, Trustees and Governors have an appropriate programme of training including effective induction to their roles and ongoing development.

Other Duties

Maintain and regularly review the Standing Orders, the Committee Terms of Reference and the Code of Conduct for Members, Trustees and Governors.

Maintain and regularly review all policies relevant to the Trust's governance and ensure these are effectively communicated and relevant actions taken. Ensure that statutory policies are in place and are revised when necessary.

Provide support for Trustees and Governors in the governance inspection process (e.g. Ofsted)

Ensure copies of statutory policies and other school documents approved by the Academy Trust Board and its subcommittees are retained and published as agreed, for example, on the website.

Ensure that the governance pages of the Trust and Academies' websites and Companies House are up to date and accurate.

Develop and maintain the Member, Trustee and Governors' area on the website with access to key governance material, including meeting papers and minutes of meetings.

Take reasonable care of own health and safety and that of others and inform relevant staff of any concerns

Operate at all times within the policies and procedures of the Trust.

Notwithstanding the detail in this job description, the jobholder will undertake such work as may be determined by the Chair of the Trust Board from time to time, up to or at a level consistent with the main responsibilities of the job.

New College Durham Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and young people. We have a robust Safeguarding Policy and all staff will receive training relevant to their role at induction and throughout employment with the Trust. We expect all staff to share this commitment. This post is subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records check for work with children.

Person Specification: Head of Governance & Trust Secretary

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
Qualifications and training	<p>Degree and/or professional qualification, e.g., law, accountancy, audit, business management</p> <p>Commitment to undertake continuous and relevant professional development in support of the role</p>		Application form/Interview
Experience	<p>Substantial experience of working in a Company Secretarial or similar senior capacity with exposure to board level interaction</p> <p>Extensive and relevant recent experience of note/minute taking at Board Level</p>	Recent experience of working with a school or similar organisation in supporting governance roles.	Application form, References
Professional Skills & Knowledge	<p>Knowledge of formal conduct of committee business, including legal and financial framework</p> <p>Familiarity with the provisions of the following documents in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum and Articles of Association; • Code of Conduct for Directors and Local Governing Body Members; • Committee Terms of Reference; 		Application form, Interview/Assessment, References

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Orders; • Register of Interests and Conflicts of Interest Policy; • Governor Induction • Master and Supplemental Funding Agreements; • Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures; • Academy Trust and Governance Handbooks published by the funding body. <p>An excellent standard of verbal and written communication skills.</p> <p>Proficient ICT skills and knowledge and experience of Microsoft Office.</p> <p>Ability to rapidly develop confidence and trust with Governors and staff throughout the organisation</p> <p>Ability to deal professionally with staff and students in person, by phone or by correspondence</p> <p>Understands and acts on responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of students</p>		
Personal attributes	<p>Demonstrates independent thinking and advice</p> <p>Demonstrates the highest standards of professional integrity</p>		<p>Application form, Interview/Assessment, References</p>

	<p>Ability and confidence to operate independently of the senior management team and to provide advice which is unbiased and impartial.</p> <p>Demonstrates the ability to work with high accuracy and meticulous attention to detail in a constantly changing environment.</p> <p>Able to support the conduct of a meeting, take and produce minutes to the standard expected, follow and advise upon agreed policies and procedures</p> <p>Motivated to achieve the highest standard of governance for New College Durham Academies Trust</p> <p>A high level of personal effectiveness including good organisational, planning and prioritisation skills and ability to meet deadlines in a challenging environment</p> <p>Possess drive, enthusiasm and a commitment to provide an excellent service to governors</p> <p>Personal resilience including ability to work effectively under pressure and responding positively to change</p> <p>Suitability to work with children</p> <p>Flexibility to attend meetings outside of normal working hours</p> <p>Car driver or access to mobility support</p>		
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