

Job Description and Person Specification

Role

Director of Governance

Shared Services Team

Grade: PO4

Reporting to: Catholic Executive Officer

Saint John Southworth Catholic Academy Trust is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We will consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

Job Description

Corporate Responsibilities

- To contribute to a working environment underpinned by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching
- To ensure probity, propriety and adherence to the Nolan Principles both in personal conduct and throughout the Trust
- To comply with policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and to report any such suspicions, no matter how small, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in the case of concerns about a member of staff, the Headteacher
- To comply with all other policies, procedures, working practices and regulations, in particular, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Data Protection and Financial Regulations in line with our Scheme of Delegation
- To be accountable to and carry out any reasonable request from the Line Manager

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- To oversee all aspects of governance effectiveness and compliance within the Trust, ensure governance adheres to good practice and meets all statutory and regulatory requirements and provide strategic leadership of services that supports governance across the Trust
- To work with executives, strategic and operational leads to ensure support for governance is compliant, effective and contributes towards strategic priorities being met
- To act as the lead adviser on issues relating to the governance of schools and the Trust
- To develop and implement the Trust's strategy for effective governance support services
- To design and monitor the governance support structure in line with organisational growth
- To ensure effective communications are maintained with directors, local governing bodies, governance professionals and stakeholders such as the Department for Education (DfE) and the Diocese of Westminster (DoW)
- To line manage the Governance Support Team and quality assure governance advice given by others, ensuring that it is informed by an intelligent assessment of risk
- To act as the main point of contact for queries relating to governance within the Trust
- To provide advice and guidance to those governing on:
 - Complex, technical issues that relate to governing structures, procedures and the legal framework that underpins them
 - Risk informed assessments of options for support and interventions to strengthen governance
 - High level issue resolution
 - Evidence-based best practice, policy and thought leadership in school governance
- To clerk meetings of the Board and its committees, ensuring these enable the successful delivery of strategic objectives
- To convene, co-ordinate and clerk panels where policies or DfE guidance stipulate director involvement

- To keep the Board focused on its core strategic priorities, their strategic leadership responsibilities and their duty to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct and ethics
- To set the cycle of the Board and its committees' meetings and prepare focused agendas
- To satisfy all aspects of meeting compliance as stipulated in the Trust's articles of association and in accordance with arrangements agreed by the Board
- To develop governing structures, particularly in relation to committee structures and the scheme of delegation and routines across schools and monitor effectiveness
- To develop, review and maintain governance documents, such as articles of association, schemes of delegation, terms of reference, role descriptions, a skills matrix and a code of conduct
- To oversee a strategy and protocol for recruiting governors and directors that ensures the Board and its committees are properly constituted, inclusive, diverse and meet the needs of the organisation
- To lead on the strategy and planning of governance induction and continuing professional development (CPD) including facilitating an annual skills audit of directors and signposting them to relevant training opportunities
- To develop and oversee systems for Board self-evaluation and review, including the commissioning of external reviews
- To maintain appropriate records of Board membership, along with any terms of reference
- To monitor directors' terms of office and co-ordinate re-application to the DoW, if appropriate
- To maintain a policy register and advise on the policy review and approval cycle
- To ensure copies of statutory policies and other statutory documents such as the scheme of delegation and register of interests are published as agreed and in line with statutory requirements
- To ensure that governance-specific risks are included in the Trust's risk register
- To support production of the annual report and governance statement published with the Trust's annual accounts
- To manage the flow of information between the Board and its committees, maintaining an up-to-date record of academy committee business
- To maintain the Trust's online governance portal or equivalent

Professional Development

- To be committed to their own professional development
- To establish and participate in training opportunities, meetings and networks to support and maintain excellent skills, techniques and knowledge
- To seek feedback and act on it to improve performance within and beyond formal coaching and appraisal opportunities
- To participate in regular in-service training (INSET) as part of CPD

Fluency Duty

In line with Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, the Government has created a duty to ensure that all Public Authority staff working in customer facing roles can speak fluent English to an appropriate standard. For this role, the post holder is required to meet the advanced fluency level. The post holder should demonstrate they can:

- Express themselves fluently and spontaneously at length effortlessly
- Explain difficult concepts simply without hindering the natural smooth flow of language
- Take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English in the Trust

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff to share this commitment. All successful staff will undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check with Children's Barred List.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. The amendments to the ROA 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975, (amended 2013 and 2020)) provides that when applying for certain jobs, certain spent convictions and cautions are protected and they do not need to be disclosed to employers. If they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the [Ministry of Justice website](#) and further information about filtering offences can be found in [DBS filtering guide](#).

The Trust is committed to making any necessary reasonable adjustments to the job role and the working environment that would enable access to employment opportunities for disabled job applicants or continued employment for any employee who develops a disabling condition.

Date: June 2025

This job description is illustrative of the responsibility of the post and not necessarily a comprehensive list of tasks.

Post holders are expected to undertake work in line with the level and pay band of the post determined by the Line Manager.

This job description will be reviewed with the post holder in relation to need or on an annual basis through appraisal and whole-Trust review of strategy and effectiveness.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Person Specification

	Essential Requirements	Desirable Requirements	How Identified
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good honours degree • Minimum of five GCSE (A-C/ 4+) including English and Maths or equivalent e.g., Adult Literacy/Numeracy at level 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 4 Certificate in Academy Governance or equivalent or willingness to work towards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience in a governance support role within a school or educational setting • Demonstrable administrative and secretarial experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of multi-academy trusts • Awareness of Catholic academy trusts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application • Interview
Knowledge, Skills and Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive knowledge of the education sector • Extensive knowledge of governance law, structures, policy and practice in all types of state school • Awareness of current issues and thought leadership relating to the governance of schools and academy trusts • Understanding of charity law and governance in other sectors • High level communication and IT • High level strategic planning • Decision-making based on intelligent assessment of risk and benefits • Commercial acumen • Interpersonal/relationship building/stakeholder engagement skills 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application • Interview • References

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and line management: planning and coordinating the work of others 		
Character and Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children • Excellent record of attendance and punctuality • Ability to relate to and communicate with a wide range of stakeholders (staff, contractors, customers, etc.) with a calm and courteous manner • Have self-motivation and personal drive to complete tasks to the required timescales and quality standards • Commitment to continuous self-development including undertaking qualifications in key areas 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application • Interview
Personal Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally entitled to work in the UK • Ability to perform all duties and tasks with reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 • Flexibility to support out of hours activity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References • Interview