



WESTCOUNTRY SCHOOLS TRUST JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Governance Officer
Location:	Across the Trust (based at Morley Meadow School currently)
Grade/salary:	Plymouth grade F £32,654 - £35,235
Hours:	37 hours a week, Monday - Friday 52 weeks/all year round
Reports to:	Governance and Compliance Lead
Responsible for:	All aspects of Local Governance and supporting WeST central Governance and Compliance functions
Key relationships:	WeST CC Chairs, Trust Executive Team, senior school leaders and all Trust stakeholders

Job Purpose

The Governance Officer supports the effective operation of the trust and works to uphold and promote its vision and values. The postholder will:

- Independently coordinate and support WeST Community Councils (WeST CCs) activities, support governor recruitment, training, and governor panels for WeST's schools, including ensuring a smooth process of agenda-setting and WeST CC meeting management throughout the academic year.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to the WeST CCs and chairs, and deliver high-quality governor recruitment, training and board evaluation to sustain the strategic development of schools' WeST CC's.
- Guarantee high-quality governor panels for exclusions, suspensions, complaints and any other matters through the organisation of panel paperwork, governor participation and clerking of hearings, ensuring compliance with all statutory regulations.

WeST CCs play a critical role in ensuring schools are connected to and responsive to their local communities. They contribute to the Trust's understanding of a school's effectiveness, support local accountability, and help ensure the delivery of the WeST education priorities; as part of this work the postholder will:

- Strengthen local connections and improve governance effectiveness across a group of schools.
- You will be responsible for all compliance with statutory requirements and guidance pertinent to WeST CCs including directives from WeST regarding website and policy procedural matters.
- This post will report into the Governance and Compliance Lead and will work with governance and compliance team and a wide range stakeholders to provide assurance and ensure effective delivery.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. At all times demonstrate and uphold WeST's core values, ensuring that behaviour, actions and decisions align with the principles that guide our work.

Delivering effective local governance

2. To undertake all aspects of a clerking service (scheduling, agendas, papers, attendance, formal minutes, correspondence) for all WeST CCs and related meetings within the scheme of delegation across WeST CC schools, in line with the overall WeST schools' approach.
3. Ensure statutory information about governance is collated and supplied in a timely manner for publication on academy websites.
4. To provide procedural and legislative expertise to Chairs of WeST CCs, Principals and other appropriate staff with all aspects of WeST CC reporting and management with limited, high-level input from line management and external sources.
5. To actively manage two-way information flow between the Trust board and the WeST CC and act as an expert facilitator to support the work of the volunteer members.
6. Be responsible for internal reporting on WeST CC effectiveness and governor engagement, helping to evidence the impact of governance at a local level.

Development of local governance

7. Undertake recruitment of new governors in line with the overall WeST CC schools approach, and undertake all aspects of governor appointment, record-keeping and membership monitoring for WeST CCs.
8. Manage induction and training, online and in-person for WeST CC members.
9. Ensure a high-quality and consistent induction process is delivered for all new WeST CC members and especially for Chairs as part of the Governance Team.
10. Facilitate ongoing development and coaching for WeST CC members to strengthen leadership capacity within WeST CCs and lead on this where appropriate.
11. Facilitate collaboration and develop greater joint working between WeST CCs including exchange of good governance practice and ideas.
12. Facilitate and support the monitoring and effectiveness of WeST CC delivery, identifying and prioritising areas to be resolved/improved.
13. Identify underperforming WeST CCs and work with relevant stakeholders to put in place targeted support and interventions.
14. Work with other relevant colleagues to co-ordinate the development and maintenance of key governance stakeholder relationships and community links for our schools.
15. Develop strong and purposeful relationships with multiple stakeholders including the Chairs of WeST CCs, Headteachers, Headteachers' PA's, WeST core team and key stakeholders to ensure effective collaboration and timely support.
16. Support WeST CCs to understand and contribute to the civic and community role of their schools, including signposting and facilitating local partnerships where appropriate.
17. Promote the professionalism of the WeST CC governance team and enable it to provide an exemplary service to its schools.
18. Proactively gather feedback and insights from WeST CCs to help inform Trust decision-making, including identifying common themes, local priorities, and areas of concern.
19. Support a clear and timely feedback loop between the Trust and WeST CCs, ensuring communication is two-way and purposeful.
20. Actively collaborate with governance team and central colleagues to share practice, support wider Trust governance activity, and contribute to a cohesive governance service.

Governor panel delivery

21. Coordinate and advise on all exclusions, suspension and complaint panels for schools in the allocated cluster/region, including logistics, securing panellists, clerking panel hearings, writing accurate minutes and drafting comprehensive decision letters and making arrangements for Independent Review Panels where necessary.
22. Procure additional clerking cover for panels when necessary.
23. Ensure governors and trustees are fully trained and prepared for panels, developing and updating best practice guidelines for WeST.

Other

24. Attend Governance Team meetings, Chairs Forums and other central team meetings as necessary
25. Undertake any other reasonable additional duties relating to governance of the WeST CC schools as requested by the Governance and Compliance Lead.
26. Engage in relevant training and development as appropriate.
27. Champion the use of digital tools (e.g. M365, online survey platforms, and governance portals) to support efficient administration and communication.
28. Uphold and demonstrate commitment to the Trust's values in all work with governors, staff, and community stakeholders.
29. Promote and maintain the highest standards of safeguarding and child protection at all times.
30. Demonstrate a proactive approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the role.
31. Act in accordance with, and actively promote, all Trust policies, including Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Equality & Diversity.
32. Participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD relevant to the role and to engage in Performance Development Reviews (PDRs).
33. Prepare and contribute to Trust wide development by sharing best practice and delivering/receiving professional feedback.
34. Retain confidentiality and maintain data and/or files in accordance with Trust policies for data governance, as appropriate for the role.

This job description provides a general reflection of the main duties and responsibilities of the post at the date of production. You may be expected to take on other reasonable activities deemed to be within the character of the post to assist in efficient service delivery. The duties may change over time as requirements and circumstances evolve without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

E = Essential, D = Desirable

Method of Assessment The table indicates the possible method/s by which the skills/knowledge/level of competence in each area will be assessed.	Essential or Desirable	Application Form	Interview (or other selection activity)
VALUES-BASED BEHAVIOURS - It is important to us that your values align with ours:			
Compassion:			
Recognising need in others and acting with positive intention to promote well-being and improve outcomes	E		X
Aspiration:			
Works to high expectations, modelling the delivery of high-quality outcomes	E		X
Showing passion, persistence and resilience in seeking creative solutions to strive for continuous improvement and excellence	E		X
Integrity:			
Acting always in the interests of children and young people,	E		X
Acting with a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles	E		X
Communicating with transparency and respect, creating a working environment based on trust and honesty	E		X
Collaboration:			
Creating a shared vision and working effectively across boundaries in an equitable and inclusive way to skilfully influence and engage others	E		X
QUALIFICATIONS:			
Sound educational background including 5 GCSEs Maths and English (9 to 5) or equivalent.	E	X	
Professional L3 governance qualifications	D	X	
EXPERIENCE:			
Demonstrative experience in a similar role within the education sector	E	X	X
Demonstrative experience of delivering to deadlines and achieving set targets to a high standard	E	X	X
Demonstrative experience of prioritising workload effectively to gain maximum productivity	E	X	X
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:			
Ability to take accurate and professional minutes of meetings.	E		X
Excellent planning and organisational skills, demonstrating the ability to work accurately and methodically, whilst always maintaining strong attention to detail.	E		X
Ability to work independently using own initiative.	E	X	
Ability to plan and manage own workload in line with Trust priorities	E		X
Ability to produce engaging oral and written communication	E	X	X

Method of Assessment The table indicates the possible method/s by which the skills/knowledge/level of competence in each area will be assessed.	Essential or Desirable	Application Form	Interview (or other selection activity)
Strong IT Skills including Microsoft Office suite and dedicated software such as GovernorHub	E	X	
Ability to advise, recommend and influence a correct course of action. Confidence to challenge when necessary	E		X
Ability to provide and seek relevant advice to and from various sources	E		X
Ability to maintain accurate and efficient records	E	X	
A strong understanding of what good governance should look like, within a school setting	D	X	X
Evidence of commitment to continuous professional development.	E	X	
FURTHER REQUIREMENTS:			
Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships with multiple stakeholders	E		X
Commitment to professional development to maintain knowledge and improve practice	E	X	X