



Airedale Academies Trust

Crewe Road, Airedale, Castleford WF10 3JU – Tel: 01977 664555 – Fax: 01977 664556

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the voluntary role of Local Governor on one of the Academy Councils within Airedale Academies Trust.

Airedale Academies Trust currently comprises four schools located within a one-mile radius in Castleford, West Yorkshire: one secondary school - Airedale Academy – and three primary phase schools - Airedale Infants School, Airedale Junior School and Oyster Park Primary School. As a MAT we have been established since 2014, but we are now looking to build capacity for the next stage of our development by adding to local governors to the Academy Councils of our schools.

Children are at the centre of what we do: specifically encouraging children from some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country to dream big and then give them the tools to achieve those dreams. That's a bold ambition. But here at Airedale Academies Trust we believe in dreaming big too

Our vision is of a world where all children and young people are given the opportunity to thrive, succeed and aspire. As a Trust:

- We believe that every child, whatever their background or circumstances, should be given the opportunity to flourish, succeed and dream.
- We believe that our schools have a duty to contribute to the improvement of our local communities and wider society.
- We believe that all schools within our Trust, irrespective of their starting points, bring something valuable to contribute to our success and the achievement of our collective goals.
- We believe in the importance of working together in the best interests of the children in our communities.

Our mission is for every child to leave our schools equipped with the essential skills they need to contribute effectively to society and to become well-rounded, confident, happy adults. To do this we believe in the following values and try to keep these at the heart of what we do:

Ambition

- We aim high and don't put limits on ourselves or other people;
- We are relentless in assessing our performance and seeking to continuously improve;
- We make the most of the opportunities offered to us to help us achieve our goals.

Bravery

- We try new things and see mistakes as an opportunity to learn;
- We don't shy away from tough decisions or difficult situations;
- We don't give up if things are hard.

Respect

- We think about the impact of our actions on others in the choices we make;
- We value what makes us different and believe everyone has something to contribute;
- We encourage honest, open debate and listen to constructive feedback about how to make things better.

Charitable organisations like ours cannot function without the time and support of a dedicated group of volunteers who help the executive team of the Trust ensure that the organisation runs effectively and achieves its core purpose. Local governors and Academy Councils are a key part of the Trust: they

scrutinise and monitor the effectiveness of our schools, holding staff to account for the company's performance and the impact we have on the lives of the children. The act as a body of people with local knowledge and understanding, and act as a 'critical friend' in challenging and questioning decisions made by the management of the school to ensure that all angles have been considered and that they are in the best interests of the school and its community

As well as the benefits to our organisation of having skilled people supporting us in our corporate governance, being a local governor is a rewarding and enjoyable role. Governors come from all walks of life and being a local governor can help you meet new people, change things for the better, learn new skills or use your existing skills in a new context. It could be a way to build your CV, gain experience of management, to contribute something positive to society, or as a way to find out more about the not-for-profit sector before making a career change.

Being a governor can expose you to new experiences and new groups of people. It can also present you with new challenges. You are part of a team and will have the opportunity to add your unique skills and experience while learning from others too. Learning is a key part of the role, and our Trust firmly believes in ensuring that governors are given access to appropriate training opportunities which will help them undertake their role more effectively.

For more information about Airedale Academies Trust visit:
www.airedaleacademy.com/aat

For more information about the schools visit:
www.airedaleacademy.com
www.airedaleinfants.com
www.airedalejuniorschool.co.uk
www.oysterparkprimary.co.uk

For a copy of the schools' most recent Ofsted reports visit:
Airedale Academy: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/136613>

Airedale Infants: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108228>

Airedale Juniors: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108227>

Oyster Park Primary: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/136051>

For an overview of the local area visit:
<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/about-the-council/about-wakefield>

I hope that the information included in this pack will encourage you to make an application to join the Board as a Local Governor. If you have further questions or would like an informal chat about the role, please contact Anastasia Byard, Company Secretary, on 01977 664555 or email abyard@airedaleacademy.com.

On behalf of the Trust, governors, staff and students, I look forward to receiving your application and, hopefully, meeting you to talk about the role, its requirements and how you might be able to contribute to making a difference to the lives of the children in our schools.

Yours sincerely,

Les Shaw
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Airedale Academies Trust

Post title	Local Governor
Reporting to	Chair of the Academy Council
Time commitment	Up to six Academy Council meetings per year, plus contribution to ad hoc panels/committees (e.g. complaints committee) as required.

PURPOSE OF THE POST

To participate as a full member of the Academy Council, undertaking the local monitoring and scrutiny of the academy's performance and compliance, supporting and challenging the leadership and providing advice on proposals directly affecting the school.

Responsible for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the translation of the Trust's vision and mission into their own school. Monitoring the Academy's compliance with all policies and procedures established by the Trust Board. Supporting and strengthening their academy's leadership through robust challenge. Developing links with the local community and stakeholders of the school.
Liaising with	Executive Headteacher, Head of School, other teachers and non-teaching support staff across the Trust, trustees, other local governors, local authority staff, school improvement professionals, parents/carers, pupils.
Characteristics of the post	<p>The ability to regularly attend meetings of the Academy Council and to participate in working parties and ad hoc committees as required.</p> <p>Local governors must be able to meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain an appropriate DBS check at the relevant level Obtain a clear section 128 check Provide at least one, but preferably two, business or personal references <p>Local governors must be prepared to abide by the Trust's Code of Conduct for Local Governors.</p>

MAIN (CORE) RESPONSIBILITIES

General responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Executive Headteacher/Head of School to develop a specific vision, mission and identity for the academy which is consistent with the Trust's general vision, mission and values. Ensure that the guiding principles, culture and objectives of the Trust are faithfully upheld, revisited and reinforced within their own academy.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is local adaptation/adoption of central policies and functions on behalf of the Trust Board. • Monitor compliance in the academy with Trust policies and procedures, ensuring local processes are in place where these are the responsibility of the individual academy, and ensuring that such policies and procedures are adequate for safety, health and compliance. • Recommend to the Trust Board any developments or amendments to policies and procedures. • Be familiar with academy performance and the challenges facing the academy through regular visits and reviews of data. • With the Executive Headteacher, hold the Head of School to account for the educational performance, wellbeing and progress of pupils in the academy and the impact on outcomes of the resources expended by the academy. • Develop an understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for development and use these to challenge the Head of School's assessment of the priorities/judgements in the academy's Self Evaluation and School Development Plan. • Monitor the implementation of the academy's Development Plan and its impact. • Monitor and review progress towards completion of action plans e.g. H&S action plan. • Scrutinise the annual budget set by the academy leadership before it is submitted to the Trust Board for approval. • Engage with and ensure effective relationships between the academy and its pupils, parents, staff and the local community, ensuring that the Academy's leadership is responsive to local context and issues. • Support the Head of School to set/uphold high standards of discipline and conduct for students and staff alike. • Act as a critical friend and consultative body for the Executive Headteacher/Head of School in relation to delegated local decisions • Raise any areas of concern with the Trust Board via the agreed mechanisms. • Identify risks to the success of the Trust at academy level, reporting these to the Risk and Audit Committee for consideration, and challenging the Head of School on their response to these risks. • Undertake investigations and reviews into aspects of academy life (e.g. use of Pupil Premium, Health and Safety, provision for SEND students, safeguarding) as requested by the Trust Board to provide local intelligence on matters affecting the whole Trust. • Sit on discipline, exclusion, recruitment, pay, complaints and other similar panels (including appeals panels) for their own or other Trust schools as requested • Regularly self-evaluate the operation of the Academy Council and report back to the Trust Board on strengths, areas for development and effectiveness.
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REQUIREMENTS OF THE ROLE (Taken from the DfE Governor Competency Framework)	
Qualifications/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to undertake training appropriate to the role

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people • Understands the importance of building strong working relationships within the Academy Council and with school leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils, the local community and employers. • Understands the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support • Understands the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of school governance, or willing to develop an understanding of the education sector
Competencies and other skills required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to devote the required time and energy to the role • Ambitious to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people. • Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and others in order to create highly effective governance. • Independent minded; able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the Academy Council. • Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and understanding the value of meaningful questioning. • Prepared to challenge the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement. • Prepared to listen to and work in partnership with others. • Self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole Academy Council effectiveness. • Able to challenge conventional wisdom. • Open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving. • Prepared to abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNORS

As a member of the Academy Council, governors must always have the wellbeing of the children and the reputation of the academy and Airedale Academies Trust at heart; governors must do all they can to be an ambassador for the academy and Trust, publically supporting its aims, values and ethos and never saying or doing anything publically which would embarrass the academy, Trust, Academy Council or staff.

For Academy Councils to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- willing to commit the necessary time to preparing for and participating in activities and meetings;
- clear about the difference between their role and that of the academy's executive staff;
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

As a sub-committee of the Board, the Academy Council is a corporate body which means:

- No governor can act on his/her own without proper authority from the Academy Council;
- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made; and
- The overriding concern of all governors must be the welfare of the academy as a whole.

General

- We understand the purpose of the Academy Council as set out above.
- We will uphold and champion the Trust's guiding values of bravery, ambition and respect in our role within the Trust.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life:
 - **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
 - **Integrity**
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
 - **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
 - **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
 - **Openness**
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
 - **Honesty**
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
 - **Leadership**
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Trustees or Academy Council have given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Academy Council when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Academy Council or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Academy Council meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and others.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy. Our actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.

- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Academy Council and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups where required.
- We will not go beyond our duties or act outside of the powers of authority conveyed on us through the Scheme of Delegation, and acknowledge that, were we to do so, we could be held liable to the Trust and/or third parties.
- We will make efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend provide apologies in advance.
- We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Our visits to the academy will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Trustees and agreed with the Principal.
- We will review our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training on a regular basis.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Executive Headteacher/Principal and Head of School.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Principal/Head of School, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community which we serve.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside an Academy Council meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Academy Council vote.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the Academy Council's business in the Register of Business Interests, which will be published on the Academy's website.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and they (or their nominee) will investigate; the Trust will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised with the Trust Board, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority

of Trustees, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension or removal from the Academy Council.

Date completed	March 2017
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TRUST GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

