

Attenborough Learning Trust

Member and Trustee Role Information

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Public

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1 Introduction

Academy schools, which are charities run independently of local authority control, now account for 73% of secondary schools and 29% of primaries – and their number is growing all the time.

Many of these schools are grouped together as multi-academy trusts (MATs). There are currently 760 multi academy trusts of 3+ schools. If the schools are to fulfil their potential, the trusts need non-executives (known in charity law as trustees) to bring a wide range of skills and experience to help guide strategy, ensure their ambitions can be soundly financed and keep their schools up to the mark delivering for their pupils.

“Academy boards must be ambitious for all children and young people and infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes. Governance must be grounded in reality as defined by both high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of pupils/students, staff, parents, carers and local communities.

It should be driven by inquisitive, independent minds and through conversations focused on the key strategic issues which are conducted with humility, good judgement, resilience and determination.”

Source: Governance Handbook, Department for Education (2017).

Trusteeship is a voluntary, unpaid role for people who have the energy and skills to make a real contribution to shaping the future of our schools. You do not need to have any specialist knowledge of education.

1.1 Applications

If you are interested in applying for a role with the trust, please send your CV and a short expression of interest to the Clerk to the Trust Board, Amanda Bailey at abailey@attenboroughlearningtrust.org.uk

Any questions can be raised via our WebSite Contact Form: <[Contact Us](#)>

Please note: candidates should live within reasonable travelling distance of the trust and/or have a link with the region.

1.2 Key Dates

We strongly recommend applying as early as you can to have the best possible chance of being considered as we may change the closing date if we have received sufficient applications. Applicants should be aware of the following key dates in the recruitment process –

Deadline for applications: 30/10/2020

2 Recruitment Requirements

2.1 Recruitment Specification

The Attenborough Learning Trust (ALT) is a multi-academy trust based in central Leicester.

The trust has been operational since April 2019. They are seeking four further Non-Executive Directors (trustees) and two Members to join the new trust board at this stage to support our development and growth plans of the trust. Board meetings will ordinarily be held in the Highfields and Spinney Hill areas of Leicester, but are currently being held virtually, due to Covid-19 restrictions.

2.2 About the Trust

Attenborough Learning Trust was formed in April 2019 and is now in its second year of operation, having achieved a great deal since its inauguration. The trust was founded collaboratively, on a strong ethos and moral purpose to support others, so that young people are enabled to achieve their very best. We believe that working closely together with our staff, children and communities will have the most positive impact on the life of every pupil. The founding four schools in the trust are Green Lane Infants, Highfields Primary, Sparkenhoe Primary and Uplands Infants.

Working within an ethos of collaboration and support, we are family of four schools in Leicester; two primary and two infant schools, with a total of c1400 pupils and c 240 staff, with a revenue budget of c. 7.5 m, operating across six sites. Our outstanding workforce and commitment to community engagement is central to our success. We will continue to invest in our staff, identify and promote talent and use the skills of individuals to make us stronger.

2.3 Plans for the Future

Three key challenges for the trust over the next 12-24 months are:

1. To raise the profile of the trust as a trust of choice for Leicester schools.
2. To develop and manage a steady plan of growth through further primary phase schools in the city which are expected to join the trust at a rate of two new schools per year.
3. To build upon the strengths of the founding schools, and in line with its commitment to be outward facing in support of other schools, the trust will also explore the opportunities to enhance its school improvement offer and to sponsor schools that need improvement.

2.4 Trust Ethos & Values

The primary objective of the ALT is to deliver increased learning opportunities for children, broadening the perspective of all young people so that they and their families place no limits on their opportunities and ambitions, in order to achieve improved outcomes and life chances for all.

The schools are committed to the principles of high expectations, raising aspirations and educational standards within a partnership that serves the local communities of the schools. Collaboration, sharing the great practice, expertise and resources that are within the schools to enable all schools to deliver excellent education for all of the children in their communities.

Each school’s individual character is valued and the trust’s relationships throughout the partnership are characterised by mutual respect, openness and a commitment to the core purpose of the academy trust.

ALT’s core ambitions are to ensure that:-

- The **children** in ALT will benefit from increased learning opportunities alongside access to a wider experienced pool of specialist teaching and support staff and access to a wider range of resources resulting in improved outcomes and life chances for all.
- ALT will be orientated around **families** and the **community** with enhanced family support including sharing facilities and expertise, improved access to enrichment and support services and a broader range of community services.
- The **staff** within ALT will benefit from increased opportunities to develop and maintain their high-quality teaching practice by utilising access to greater resources and wider peer networks for sharing best practice.
- ALT **schools** will be able to improve their operational effectiveness and efficiency by sharing support and expertise.
- **Together** ALT schools will be better placed to contribute to the wider system of education across Leicester. Outward facing and forward thinking they will continuously look for opportunities to share experience, support others and develop themselves and others.

2.5 Role Summary

Having now been operational for 18 months and establishing the trust’s strategy and governance structure and procedures, the Non-Executive Directors/Trustees and Members will have an opportunity to play a key role in contributing to developing and forming the trust’s strategy and governance structure, as well as establishing the relevant committee and delegation structures needed to ensure successful management of the trust. Ultimately, they will sign-off the trust’s policies and delegated procedures under which all their schools will operate and enter into the legal agreements with the Secretary of State. All liabilities will be limited, as with all trustees of charities, and people will be expected to demonstrate the [Nolan Principles](#) of people in public office.

Number of Positions Advertised	
Members	Trustees (Non-Executive Directors)
Up to 2 Members	Up to four Trustee/Non-Executive Directors

3 Members

3.1 Role Description

The role of the Members of Attenborough Learning Trust (ALT) is to ensure the appropriate running of the trust through the appointment of the Non-Executive Directors/Trustees for the trust; and by holding the trust board to account by considering its compliance with both charity law and company law, appointing the auditors for the trust, and receiving the trust’s annual report and accounts.

Members are expected to carry out their business effectively, including induction of new Members, a commitment to the continued professional development of Members and, as the only body able to amend the articles, to consider the appropriate development of the trust board and its governance model.

Members may also be asked to act as an advocate for the trust and to support the trust board’s role of giving clear strategic direction to its academies.

The Members will need to be able to demonstrate the following:

- A commitment to the trust and its objects (articles).
- Effective communication skills.
- An ability and willingness to hold others to account for their professional practice.
- Good independent judgement.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Members within company and charitable law.

3.2 Skills and Expertise Required

The competencies required for this role include:

Member Candidates	
Essential	Desirable
Non-executive/ Trustee or Corporate Governance Education Leadership Strategic	Chair Multi academy trust experience Legal/Compliance Audit Corporate business / CEO

3.3 Person Specification

Members must display a commitment to the trust and its articles. Appropriate individuals will come from within and outside of the local community and have held leadership positions within either commercial business, third sector or public sector organisations. They will have effective communication skills, good independent judgement and an ability and willingness to hold others to account for their professional practice. Candidates are expected to show an understanding and acceptance of the duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Members within company and charitable law.

3.4 Time Commitments

Members are expected to attend a minimum of 3 meetings per year, one per school term, each lasting approximately 2 hours. There may be requirements to attend additional ad-hoc meetings.

3.5 Location of Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held in the Highfields and Spinney Hill areas of Leicester.

Most meetings will be face-to-face, however there is scope that some meetings may be virtual/remote.

4 Trustees / Non-Executive Directors

4.1 Role Description

The board of Attenborough Learning Trust (ALT) and therefore the Non- Executive Directors/Trustees are the statutory governing body of all schools within the trust and are responsible for three core functions:- setting the direction of the trust, holding the executive to account and ensuring financial probity.

The trust board manages the company by delegating authority: through the staffing structure of the organisation; by appointing board committees (committees) and local governing boards (LGBs) with specific delegation of governance functions; and by adopting policies and procedures which set out how staff, LGBs and board committee's function. The role of the Non- Executive Directors/Trustees as a trust board, is therefore one of scrutiny, challenge and support, guiding the executive in the running of the trust.

In general terms, the role of the trustees includes:

- Setting the general direction of the trust, its aims and aspirations;
- Ensuring the highest standards of educational provision, wellbeing and outcomes across all academies within the trust, and that the executive of the trust and all academies are held to account to deliver outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Establishing, and monitoring the effectiveness of the trust's governance structure, including committees, LGBs and the scheme of delegation, and making the necessary changes based on such reviews of performance and effectiveness.
- Setting, monitoring, and scrutinising appropriate targets for the trust and its academies.
- Setting, agreeing, monitoring and scrutinising annual budgets and remaining well briefed on the trust's financial state.
- Reviewing the trust's internal controls and fostering an audit regime and culture to ensure that these identify the risks and opportunities to enable the trust to be sustainable and relevant for all of the stakeholders.
- Agreeing annually a trust improvement and development plan and monitoring and scrutinising the progress of the agreed plans.
- Ensuring that the curriculum is appropriate, broad, balanced, and relevant, and agreeing any significant changes to the curriculum offered.
- Appointing the CEO for the trust and taking part in the appointment of trust leadership and senior school staff and agreeing staffing numbers across the trust.
- Appointing the Governors of academies within the trust.
- Being advocates and ambassadors for the trust;
- Managing the performance of the CEO and ensuring that the Head-teachers have appropriate, challenging and regular performance management reviews.
- Lead or participate in relevant central board committees.
- Being the arbiter in disputes or complaints from staff, pupils, or parents.
- Approving trust policies and any significant policy changes.

- Ensuring that capacity is built within governance and executive leadership and that effective succession planning is established.
- Carrying out their business effectively, including induction of new Non- Executive Directors/Trustees and a commitment to the continued professional development of the trust board.

4.2 Role Attributes

All non-executive directors should have the skills and attributes to:

- Constantly focus on what’s best for the trust and the pupils by challenging in a constructive manner, and visualising strategy from both the trust and academies within it.
- To be able and willing to hold others to account for their professional practice.
- Understand the financial and the business elements of leading a MAT, as well as the legal aspects of the role and how the trust works.
- Act selflessly, with a strong moral purpose, integrity, and honesty, and as an advocate for the MAT’s values, ethos, and philosophy, adhering to the Nolan 7 principles of public life
- Take risks and consider dynamic and innovative options.
- Understand and be able to analyse performance data.
- Work as part of a team and share responsibility and accountability, as well as undertaking frequent self-evaluation to remain effective.
- Adopt an entrepreneurial mind-set to see and make the most of opportunities that are outside the day-to-day practices of the trust.
- Be innovative, creative, and open-minded by engaging in future thinking and “horizon scanning”.
- Demonstrate a willingness and capacity to devote the necessary time and effort to trust business.
- Communicate effectively.

4.3 Skills and Expertise Required

The competencies required for this role include:

Trustee Candidates	
Essential	Desirable
At least one from: HR Legal/Compliance Multi-site Estates, Property or Health & Safety Communications, Branding or Marketing	Multi academy trust experience Trustee/Non-executive Director Chairing experience Turnaround

4.4 Person Specification

The trust is interested in candidates from commercial, third sector or public sector businesses as well as those who have connections with the local community. Candidates must be able to demonstrate their experience in one of more of the above skills/disciplines. The appropriate individuals will be expected to maintain focus on what's best for the whole trust and all its pupils. Suitable candidates will have experience of developing strategy across an organisation and challenging management in a constructive manner. Candidates must be able and willing to hold others to account for their professional practice, to understand and analyse performance data and to take appropriate risks and consider dynamic and innovative options.

4.5 Time Commitments

Trust board meetings are expected to be once each half-term (i.e. 6 per year). If the trustee is also part of a central sub-committee; this is envisaged to require up to a further six meetings per year.

The new board members will be expected to advise on the effective and efficient running of the trust.

There may be requirements to attend additional ad-hoc meetings.

4.6 Location of Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held in the Highfields and Spinney Hill areas of Leicester.

Most meetings will be face-to-face, however there is scope that some meetings maybe virtual/remote.