



academies for character and excellence

Recruitment Pack | **Governance Lead**





Welcome from Nick Hind, CEO The Academies for Character and Excellence

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining the Academies for Character and Excellence, ACE. I hope that the information provided will encourage and help you with the application process.

Our vision is for ACE to be an exceptional Multi Academy Trust. In order to achieve this, we appoint people who are positive, optimistic and able to collaborate with others to make a real, and lasting positive difference.

The Governance Professional will be a key leader within our Trust. They will have exceptional communication skills, be creative and innovative, helping us achieve our vision, aims and objectives. We wish to appoint someone who understands and is aligned to our guiding values and our core purpose.

ACE enjoys a strong reputation in the South West, and the successful applicant will join us at a time of continued growth and influence. This position will involve working with Trustees, Members, Local Advocates, Central Team and the CEO along with diocesan representatives. Excellent understanding of the roles and functions of Governance at all levels are essential.

We are a people first organisation with our young learners at the heart of all that we do. We are driven by our desire for uncompromising excellence, and to achieve this we foster a strong and supportive team culture.

I hope this letter and the introductory pack inspires you to apply for this exciting and influential position and we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Nick Hind, CEO





We work together in collaborative partnerships to achieve excellence through cultivating character, sharing talents and pursuing innovation.

Our Schools & Pre-Schools



[Click here to visit the ACE website where you can access the websites of individual schools](#)

Our Mission

Achieving excellence through cultivating character, sharing talents and pursuing innovation

Core to our offer is a better life experience for everyone in the Trust – staff, children, families and community. Pursuit of excellence remains central to the ethos and culture of all schools within the Trust. We see it as our obligation to be a self-improving organisation.

Our Values

- Community
- Collaboration
- Equity
- Uncompromising Excellence
- Integrity



Simply, our vision is to be an Exceptional Trust



Who are we?

The Academies for Character and Excellence is a charitable Trust with a mission of Achieving Excellence through Cultivating Character, Sharing Talents and Pursuing Innovation. Our Trust is an exciting and diverse mix of Church of England and Community Schools within Torbay, Devon and Somerset. We are growing a family of schools that prioritises working together in collaborative partnerships which are mutually supportive and share great practice. We truly value the distinctive character of our schools and believe they should be rooted in the communities which they serve.

Our commitment to Character Education is at the heart of our work across the Trust. We are uncompromising in our belief that every child fulfils their academic potential whilst also flourishing in and at life. Relationships are central to the way we work together and we are proud to work with colleagues who are passionate about making a positive difference to our children and families.

Our ACE Culture

Our ACE culture is defined by four guiding principles:

- Our values are valued
- Our staff are our most important resource
- Everything we do is ultimately about the children
- Simply what we want is to be the best we can be

Our commitment to you:

Community

ACE is a community of learners dedicated to achieving our common mission.

You are our most valued asset.

We will give you dedicated time to have your own talents developed through working with a wider team of professionals and experts.

Collaboration

ACE works in collaborative partnerships to achieve the extraordinary.

You are a vital part of our amazing team.

We will provide a strong supportive network of teams to help you progress and inspire you to go beyond whatever you could do on your own.



Equity

ACE recognises that each individual has the right to be appreciated for the added value they bring to the Trust.

We will give you the right opportunities to grow and flourish in all aspects of your wellbeing, no matter what role you have in the organisation.

Uncompromising Excellence

ACE is about excellence in all that we do. We can't do it for you but we can help you do it for yourself.

You will have access to membership of Trust-wide groups who ask the same question: *What if...?* Research and development is part of our core offer to you.

Integrity

We do what we say we will do. If the gloves don't fit then we don't wear them. Our mission and values are both the light that guides us and the standards against which we measure our successes.

We will make a commitment that as a valued member of staff we will not stand in front of or behind you; instead, we will stand side by side looking ahead at what opportunities are yet to come.

Your contribution to the Trust

Community

ACE is about being part of a community of learners dedicated to providing the very best for everybody.

You use your own skills, knowledge and experience to help others thrive. Your willingness to go the extra mile for others is obvious and apparent in all you do.

Collaboration

ACE is a collaborative Trust where sharing talents results in innovation and improvement which ensures we can all be great together.

You will share your time, enthusiasm, knowledge and resources with others.

You recognise that your achievements are always reliant on others, and you will celebrate successes together.



Equity

ACE is about equality, equity and inclusivity for all. Your importance to the Trust is never underestimated.

You know that equity is understanding and valuing each other as individuals, no matter what the differences are. You demonstrate this through treating everyone with dignity, respect and care.

Uncompromising Excellence

ACE is about excellence, but for us, this is a habit not a destination.

You have high standards, expectations and a drive to be the best you can be. Today's outcomes will be brilliant but tomorrow's even better.

Integrity

ACE is about an unrelenting desire to work towards achieving our mission. We don't do something if it's not the right thing to do. We are the advocates for our children and we never forget that.

You do the right things and you do them right. Your decisions and actions are aligned to our vision and values and that's what guides you.

How will we Develop your Talent?

We believe that everyone has a right to have their own talents recognised and developed. It is far more than just an organisational offer as it aligns us with our values of equity and uncompromising excellence.

Our Talent Management identification programme allows us to recognise talent at all stages. We offer a wide variety of professional development opportunities that allow individuals to reach their full potential.

We do this in a number of ways including:

- Provision of a bespoke coaching programme
- A talent management central team
- Collaborative working opportunities
- Network of teams
- In-house leadership training and development
- Opportunities to impact across the Trust
- Individual personal learning plans





Job Title:	Governance Lead
Location:	Devon, Torbay & Somerset with central offices in Totnes (Devon) and Ilminster (Somerset) (hybrid working available)
Contract:	37 hours per week – 42 weeks
Salary:	Devon Grade T £51,356 – £55,605 (Actual salary £46,089 – £49,878)
Closing Date:	9am 15th July
Start:	1st September 2026



Job Description | Governance Lead

Main purpose of this role:

As a growing Trust we recognise the critical importance of effective governance and how integral it is to the strategic growth of our Trust. This role exists to ensure governance is strategic and compliant, delivering robust accountability and oversight of both financial and educational outcomes.

The Trust Governance Lead will uphold high standards of governance, ensuring the efficient operation of the Trust Board and its committees. The postholder will advise the Chair and CEO on governance strategy, compliance and best practice.

The Trust Governance Lead will ensure that all Board decisions are implemented in accordance with the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Academy Trust Handbook, and Department for Education (DfE) governance and accountability frameworks (including those previously issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency – ESFA).

They will work collaboratively with all key stakeholders including the Board of Trustees, Trust portfolio leads, the Diocese, local chairs, local advocate clerks, Headteachers and other governance experts, the Governance Lead will act as the Trust's expert on governance and policy.

Within this role the Trust Governance Lead will be part of a team focused on providing the best quality provision for pupils in Trust schools. The Trust's reputation is strong and a strategy for growth forms part of the Trust vision, this provides opportunities for creative and innovative thinking in order to help shape the future educational landscape.

The role combines strategic leadership with operational delivery, driving continuous improvement, supporting Trust growth, and strengthening governance across all levels. This will involve leading on advocate training and supporting Headteachers and Clerks on advocate recruitment and retention along with supporting local advocate clerks through a period of change is an integral part of this role.

This exciting role provides opportunities for personal learning and growth through working with forward looking and thinking individuals at different levels. As a key member of the central team the Trust talent management procedures and protocols will support you to flourish in this role and deliver exceptional results.



Main responsibilities and tasks

1. Support to the Strategic Board of Trustees

- Provide high quality advice and guidance to the Trustees on governance, constitutional and procedural matters
- Support the Board in delivering its strategic objectives effectively.
- Offer strategic governance and policy advice to the Chair, CEO and Trustees
- Ensure decisions are made and implemented in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association, the Academy Trust Handbook and Trust procedures.

2. Statutory Compliance and Governance Assurance

- Advise the Chair, CEO and other Trustees on statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure full statutory compliance with governance, regulatory and legislative obligations, including DfE (and legacy ESFA) frameworks, Companies House and other relevant bodies.
- Act as Company Secretary, ensuring timely and accurate statutory filings.
- Maintain statutory records including GIAS and Trust website compliance.
- Support audit processes and returns with external auditors and the DfE.
- Work with the Chair and the CEO to ensure an appropriate skills mix on the Board, overseeing succession planning, recruitment and induction.
- Liaise with legal advisors to ensure ongoing compliance across all regulatory areas.
- Produce clear, high-quality governance reports for the Board, Members and wider stakeholders.

3. Local Governance

- Promote effective communication across all levels of governance within the Trust.
- Support and develop local advocate clerks, ensuring consistent standards and continuous professional development.
- Build strong working relationships with Headteachers, local Chairs and local advocates.
- Support with recruitment, onboarding and retention of local advocates within the Trust.

4. Information, Policy and Processes Management

- Quality assure governance documentation, including meeting minutes and reports
- Provide feedback, guidance and training to improve governance practice.
- Lead the development, co-ordination and review of Trust policies, ensuring clarity and compliance.
- Maintain an effective policy review register and review cycle
- Management of the Single Central Register for all governors

5. Growth and Development

- Lead governance due diligence for schools joining the Trust.
- Participate in stakeholder meetings and presentation during on-boarding.
- Implement and deliver an effective on-boarding programme for all new schools joining the Trust

6. Professional Development

- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of governance, regulation and education policy.
- Undertake professional development to enhance practice.
- Participate in performance management processes.

7. Other Responsibilities

- Undertake additional duties as required by the Chair and CEO, within the scope of the role.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of work.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Comply with the Trust's Health and Safety policies and relevant legislation.
- Use IT systems effectively to support efficient working practices.
- Uphold and model the Trust's values in all aspects of work.



Person Specification | Governance Lead

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p>QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING</p> <p>Evidenced in:</p> <p>Application form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good standard of education (e.g., GCSEs or equivalent in English and Maths) • Willingness to undertake a recognised governance qualification and CPD • Understanding of confidentiality and data protection requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICSA / CGIUKI qualifications • Law degree or legal background • Company secretarial qualifications • Diploma in Business Administration or Office Management • Membership of a professional body (eg NGA, CGIUKI)
<p>PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Evidenced in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of application • Interview/assessment • Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience supporting governing bodies, boards, or committees in an education or similar regulated environment • Substantial experience advising senior leaders and board members on governance processes and statutory requirements and compliance • Experience ensuring compliance with education legislation and regulatory frameworks • Experience managing governance cycles and ensuring statutory requirements are met • Experience leading or coordinating governance services • Experience advising on governance reviews or board effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in a multi-academy trust • Experience of working with the diocese and Christian distinctiveness • Experience line managing governance staff • Experience developing governance frameworks or policies
<p>PROFESSIONAL VALUES</p> <p>Evidenced in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of application • Interview/assessment • Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to the mission, vision and ethos of the Trust • Develop positive collaborative relationships with all stakeholders • Be open to and actively seek support and professional development • Model the highest expectations of self and others • Uphold the Christian ethos and values within our schools and Trust 	
<p>PERSONAL QUALITIES</p> <p>Evidenced in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of application • Interview/assessment • Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal values which align with Trust values • Ability to work collaboratively within a team • Open to and contribute to creative and innovative thinking • Reflective and evaluative approach to your personal performance • Display warmth, care and sensitivity when interacting with stakeholders • Ability to prioritise and manage time well • Excellent interpersonal/communication skills • Openness, sense of humour, energy, enthusiasm and an ability to inspire confidence in others 	

Employment Vetting Checks

It is a condition of employment at The Academies for Character and Excellence that every applicant who accepts the offer of a job will be subject to legally required safer recruitment checks. This will include criminal background checks, documentary evidence to confirm their identity and right to work in the UK and checks to ensure they are not prohibited from working in such a position within a school environment. The checks will be carried out at the Trust's expense.

References will be taken up, including those from previous employers.

Safeguarding Children

It is the post-holder's responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons for whom they are responsible or with whom they come into contact. The post-holder will adhere to and ensure compliance with the Safeguarding Policy Statement at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school they must report any concerns to the Safeguarding and Inclusion Lead, the Headteacher and/or DSL/DDSL.

This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

The successful applicant will be subject to:

- Enhanced DBS check
- Satisfactory references
- Other pre-employment checks in line with safer recruitment practices

How to Apply

If you decide to apply please complete our application form and return it to Rozel Ridgway at recruitment@acexcellence.co.uk by 9am on Wednesday 15th July. We may close the application deadline earlier depending upon the level of response.

Interview to be held as soon as possible.

We will ask you to bring documents with you to your interview, as this supports our pre-employment checks.

We would welcome and encourage you to speak to a member of the Central team regarding this exciting opportunity, and you can arrange this by contacting Rozel Ridgway at rozel.ridgway@acexcellence.co.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!