



This is a draft role description and gives an indication of the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the Governance Professional role at Wadebridge School. It is based closely on the template from CST, the Confederation of School Trusts with whom we are a member.

All potential applicants to this role will come from different backgrounds and with different experience, and nobody will be an 'expert' in everything! This document will be the basis of a discussion with you prior to your contract being finalised.

The Academy Trust Handbook makes clear that trusts must appoint a Governance Professional to support the board of trustees – someone other than a trustee, headteacher or chief executive of the trust. The governance professional supports the senior leadership team and trust board to design, implement and support the highest quality governance.

Knowledge and understanding

- Education, charity and company law, the regulatory framework for trusts and the range of compliance activities required in an academy trust.
- The characteristics of effective governance, including the latest thinking on effective methodologies for board evaluation and succession planning.
- Methodologies of risk assessment, management and mitigation.
- The principles of delegation, and the roles and responsibilities of members, trustees, and senior leaders within a school trust.
- The basics (at a minimum) of funding and financial planning.

Skills and practice

- Highly effective influencing and enabling skills.
- The ability to problem-solve and anticipate issues.
- The confidence to advise the trust chair, trust board, headteacher and senior leaders, even in difficult, contentious or challenging circumstances.
- The ability to take minutes and maintain accurate records.
- Excellent planning and organising skills, making effective use of technology where appropriate.
- The ability to communicate clearly and effectively with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

Values and behaviours

- Understanding of the importance of maintaining independence and the demonstrable ability to do so.
- A commitment to 'doing the right thing' – even in the most challenging of circumstances.
- The ability to be flexible and open-minded and provide accurate, honest and constructive advice and guidance.
- Willingness to learn and develop professional knowledge and promote learning in others.
- Ability to recognise when external support and advice is required and where to obtain it.



Responsibilities

Professional advisory role

- Serve as the first point of contact for any business relating to the board, committees and members.
- Advise the board on the legal and regulatory framework for governance, including charity and company law, the Academy Trust Handbook and the trust's articles of association and funding agreements.
- Advise trustees, members and committee chairs on terms of reference, policy and procedural matters, statutory guidance, and best practice in governance, before, during and after meetings.
- Promote awareness amongst trustees and senior executive leadership of assurance frameworks and other integrated processes of organisational control and risk management.
- Identify governance priorities and related risks, anticipate and drawing the chair's attention to matters that may arise and propose recommended actions.

Board composition, appointments and effectiveness

- Ensure that the board and committees are properly constituted with appropriate terms of Reference.
- Work closely with the board chair and members to ensure an appropriate mix of skills on the board.
- Support the board chair in trustee recruitment.
- Managing new appointments and oversight of the re-appointment and retirement of board members in accordance with the articles of association.
- Advise and support the Chair in ensuring a thorough induction programme for new trustees, including arranging sessions with senior leaders, providing quality induction materials, ensuring they have access to appropriate documents, including the Academy Trust Governance Code and any internal codes of conduct.
- Identify and support the trust board in sourcing training where required.
- Support the board chair with succession planning, developing and implementing regular collective evaluation activities to assess board effectiveness and inform next steps.

Compliance and good governance

- Leads on identifying, recording, managing and disclosing conflicts of interests and potential related party transactions.
- Support the school's Business Manager and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR) in maintaining the trust's strategic risk register and risk management arrangements in conjunction with the chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk committee.
- Lead on regular communication with members to ensure they have effective oversight of the board's decisions, activities and impact.

Clerking and administrative support

- Advise on the annual programme of work for the board, supporting the efficient flow of information and decisions, including preparation of agendas and distribution of board reports.
- Take minutes of board meetings and ensure follow through on action points and matters arising from previous meetings.



- Maintain up to date records for the board and committees and ensure that papers and minutes are well organised and readily accessible.
- Maintain the GovernorHub platform.
- Ensure that trustee and member information published on the Get Information About Schools, Companies House, and the trust's own website is accurate.