

# ACES Academies Trust

**ACES Academies Trust is recruiting three new Non-Executive Directors and two Members to join the existing trust board during an exciting period of growth. ACES Academies Trust uses the mantra of Aspiration, Creativity and Excellence to create Success. This seeks to ignite the imaginations of young people, kindle ambition and fuel the creative energy of communities, so that students achieve excellence and become responsible global citizens. The trust seeks candidates that bring existing trustee experience, Audit and Risk or HR management or growth management. Board meetings are held in Huntingdon and on Zoom at present.**

## About the trust

ACES Academies Trust is currently in a phase of growth, moving from two schools to four schools in summer 2020 ahead of the next academic year.

The trust currently consists of one secondary, Hinchingsbrooke School (Ofsted rating 'Good') and one primary school, Cromwell Academy (Ofsted rating 'Requires Improvement'). Once the trust has grown to four schools, it will be operating with a budget of over £15M, employing 360 members of staff and providing an education for 2,700 pupils.

The two current schools are both based in Huntingdon and the trust provides a setting for a diverse range of pupils: 22% of the pupil cohort have special educational needs, 9% speak English as an additional language and 80% are of white British ethnicity.

## Plans for the future

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

1. Growth - most especially finding growth in the secondary sector.
2. Financial stability - the trust has a sustainable position for the next few years but little of substance to invest.
3. Succession planning - it is likely that a number of trustees will step down in the next year or two and the trust wish to enhance the level of expertise on the trust board.

In the longer term, the trust aims to develop capacity for on-line learning and use of technology; move 'Good' schools to 'Outstanding' and secure growth to enable the trust to benefit from staff working in a bigger MAT.

## Trust ethos & values

ACES stands for Aspiration, Creativity, Excellence and Success. ACES Academies Trust has creativity at its core. We wish for our students to develop the ability to apply themselves with resilience, to think creatively, to question and reason and to argue rationally, so they are equipped to take their places in the world as global citizens who show tolerance, compassion and respect.

The trust is a mutually supportive organisation, which values freedom of expression, tolerance and an appreciation of diversity.

The trust has the highest expectations of itself, the teams working across the academies and the students.

The Directors will work strategically to maintain these values and deliver the aims of the trust, focusing on enhanced outcomes for students, operational efficiency, development of staff and community engagement.

The Directors will develop and implement a structure of robust policies in accordance with the overall strategy of the Trust.

Local Governing Bodies will oversee the implementation of the strategy and policies within their Academies.

URL to full mission statement:

<https://www.acesacademies.co.uk/page/?title=Vision%2C+Aims+and+Objectives&pid=12>

## Role summary

Number of positions advertised:

5

### Roles 1-3 – Trustee/Non-Executive Director

Trustees – or non-executive directors - are both charity trustees and company directors of the academy trust. The core functions of their role are: ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding executive leaders to account for the educational and financial performance of a charitable company funded by the public purse.

The board of trustees manages the business of the academy trust and may exercise all the powers of the trust in compliance with its charitable objects, company and charity law.

Non-executive directors will be responsible for maintaining stability and the management of a dynamic structure. The role also includes contributing to financial planning for sustainability and potential growth, and holding the CEO/CFO to account.

In the interests of safeguarding and in accordance with DfE requirements, all trustee appointments will be subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service check.

### Person specification

Every trustee is expected to abide by the trust's code of conduct and the seven principles of public life set out by Lord Nolan: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

The Competency Framework for Governance (DfE) 2017 details the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for effective governance:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/583733/Competency\\_framework\\_for\\_governance\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583733/Competency_framework_for_governance_.pdf)

The strategic expertise required for this role includes:

**Essential** *(due to multiple roles, candidates may be accepted who possess one or more of the skills below)*

- Non-executive/ Trustee OR
- HR OR
- Corporate Governance OR
- Growth Management OR
- Audit and Risk

**Desirable**

- Chair
- Entrepreneur/ Founder
- Succession Planning

### **Role 1 – Chair of the HR Committee:**

The successful candidate will understand educational context and be comfortable with terms and conditions relating to the employment of teachers and support staff in schools. They will question and challenge executives based on evidence presented. Ability to chair meetings to achieve engagement and timely debate leading to resolutions and actions is required

The main duties undertaken in role are:

- to chair the HR committee
- providing effective leadership on matters relating to HR
- establishing, reviewing and maintaining a staffing structure for the trust;
- ensuring that the trust demonstrates equality, diversity and inclusion, operates within current legislation and complies with safeguarding requirement

### **Role 2&3 – Trustee:**

The successful candidates will possess a desire to support the educational context to improve outcomes for young people. Ability to question and challenge executive based on evidence presented, contribute meaningfully to meetings, and engage in debate is required. The successful candidate will understand the difference between strategic and operational board decisions.

### **Time commitment**

6 hours /month minimum.

### **Role 4&5 – 2 Members**

A member is able to alter the trust's Articles of Association and appoint (or remove) trustees/directors where necessary. They provide independent oversight to the work of the board of trustees in order to ensure suitable accountability for its decision making and strategy. At ACES Academies Trust, the members are expected to be signatories for the academy trust, to attend 1 meeting per year, and to add to the already broad skillset within the existing team of members.

### **Person specification**

The competencies required for this role include:

**Essential**

- Non-executive/ Trustee

**Desirable**

- Corporate Governance

The successful candidate will have a desire to support the educational context to improve outcomes for young people. Ability to understand the governance structure of a Multi-Academy Trust and the role of the

Board of Trustees is required. Members must be able to hold the board to account against the articles of association and the scheme of delegation.

#### Time commitment

1 hours /month minimum.

## Location of board meetings and trust website

1 Hinchingsbrooke School, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, PE29 3BN

<http://www.acesacademies.co.uk/>

## Governance structure

<https://www.acesacademies.co.uk/page/?title=Our+People&pid=9>

## Background on academy trusts

Academy schools, which are charities run independently of local authority control, now account for 74% of secondary schools and 31% 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 900 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.

“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 (2019)*

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.

## Applications

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.