

HISP Academy Trust is a newly formed Multi Academy Trust (MAT) with one school at present but is looking to expand its cohort of schools in the coming months across the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth geographic areas. The trust seeks three new trustees with either legal, procurement or human resources experience to assist with this growth and to drive school improvement whilst undergoing organisational change. The MAT is situated in the Southampton area and board meetings take place at Thornden School, Eastleigh, Hants, SO5 32DW.

About the trust

HISP Academy Trust, based in the southeast region is a new MAT with one school. The trust currently has 1,500 pupils on roll, 190 staff members and a budget of approximately £9 million. Of the children on roll, 6.9% are eligible for additional pupil premium funding and 5.16% of children have English as an additional language.

Thornden School, the trust's foundation school, is an outstanding school and plays an important role in the community with extensive facilities. These attract local sports teams and provide a space for local music groups. With one school and looking to expand, the trust seeks to grow by taking in additional schools into the trust. The board will play the key role in deciding the strategy for sustainable growth and development of the trust. The expansion will be focused on opportunities in the local geography so that resources can be efficiently deployed and strong central services provided to trust schools. Growth is expected to begin with primary schools to deliver cross-phase benefits to staff and pupils. The trust already has teaching school and research school status and it will continue to develop these aspects into a local hub of teaching and educational leadership expertise. In parallel with expansion into further primary and secondary schools, the trust will then enable even greater school improvements to be achieved across a wider section of local communities.

Plans for the future

1. Migrate from a single academy trust to a Multi Academy Trust and establish a stable, capable and properly resourced structure which can deliver at scale and is future proof (including governance);
2. Maintain and improve the performance of the foundation academy (Thornden School) whilst undergoing change to the MAT;
Successfully expand the MAT to additional academies beyond Thornden whilst still improving performance of all academies within the trust by sharing best practice in teaching and learning with other schools in order to improve standards across the whole local system.

3. The trust is looking to expand with local schools of similar ethos in first instance, ensuring that challenges are not too large at first. This will involve consolidating and integrating each new school before making the next addition to the trust. The trust wishes to complete a small number of expansions successfully, building strong growth capability, before taking on more challenging schools.

Trust ethos & values

The trust offers an inclusive and ambitious education in a safe environment, supporting pupils to achieve their potential, and celebrating their achievements. The trustees will help to refine this further.

Role summary

Number of positions advertised: 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.

In the interests of safeguarding, all trustee appointments would be subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service check.

Person specification

The HISP MAT was created in December 2019, building on the success of Thornden Academy. The newly formed MAT needs to establish itself including clarifying the strategic vision and progressing with initial expansion plans. Trust board meetings will take place 6 times per year near Eastleigh, Hampshire.

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

Role 1 – Trustee/Non-Executive Director

Candidates should have a keen interest in educational outcomes for young people in the local area (south Hampshire / IoW). The successful candidate will assist in the set-up of a new trust and its governance model. He/she will be a strong team player who can be part of engaging and professional governance function and able to work positively with diverse stakeholders. Applications from qualified commercial solicitors working in-house or within a legal practice would be particularly welcome.

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)

- Legal/ Compliance

Desirable

- HR
- Commercial / Procurement
- Property / Estates

Time commitment

8 hours /month minimum. Trust meetings expected to be 6 times per year.

Role 2 – Trustee/Non-Executive Director

Person specification

Ideally, candidates should have experience of the charity sector and should have a keen interest in educational outcomes for young people in the local area (south Hampshire / IoW). The successful candidate will support the set-up of a new trust and its governance. He/she should be a team player as part of engaging with a professional governance function. The successful candidate will work positively with diverse stakeholders. The trust is looking to engage widely with stakeholders as it enters a growth phase and applications individuals with this skill set would be particularly welcome.

The strategic expertise required for this role includes:

Essential

- Branding/Marketing/Communications

Desirable

- Corporate Governance

Time commitment

8 hours /month minimum. Trust meetings expected to be 6 times per year.

Role 3 – Trustee/Non-Executive

Person specification

Ideally experienced in education sector, in either governance, leadership, assessment or inspection, you must have a keen interest in educational outcomes for young people in the local area (south Hampshire / IoW). The successful candidate will drive the set-up of a new trust and its governance. You should be a team player, part of a professional governance function and able to work positively with diverse stakeholders.

The competencies required for this role include:

Essential

- Corporate governance
- General management

Desirable

- Education

Time commitment

8 hours /month minimum. Trust meetings expected to be 6 times per year.

Location of board meetings and trust website

Trust website address HISP MAT not yet formed. Current SAT is <https://www.thornden.hants.sch.uk/>

Governance structure

Governance structure weblink MAT structure not yet published. Target is 5 members, 7 Trustees, 2 LGBs of 5 (Thornden school and teaching school)

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 832 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

Academy Ambassadors is a non-profit programme which recruits senior business leaders and professionals as volunteer non-executive directors onto the boards of multi-academy trusts. If you are interested in applying for the role please send your CV and a short expression of interest detailing which role you are applying for to academyambassadors@newschoolsnetwork.org. Please note: candidates should live within reasonable travelling distance of the trust and/or have a link with the region. For more information, please call 0207 952 8556 or visit www.academyambassadors.org.

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.