



Trust Board Director Application Pack



The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

A charitable company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales under company no. 13306248. Registered office: Alexander House, 160 Pennywell Road, Bristol BS5 0TX

Welcome Letter from the Trust Board Chair

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining our Trust Board of Directors. This is an exciting time to join us if you wish to use your skills and expertise to support pupils in your local Catholic schools and communities in a pro bono role!

This is an exciting time to join us. The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust (DCET) opened on 1 March 2022 with six primary schools as one of the first Catholic multi-academy trust's (MATs) in Clifton Diocese. Since then, the DCET has grown to oversee thirteen Catholic primary schools based in Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset, Somerset, and Wiltshire with a combined total of circa 2300 pupils and 250 staff. However, the Bishop's growth plan means it is expected to expand to a mix of 25+ primary and secondary schools, pupils from nursery through to 18 years, over the next two years. More details about the Trust, its vision, values, and schools can be found via: [The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust](#)

The Trust seeks a diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience to support the Trust Board in fulfilling its mission, vision, values and Catholic ethos for the benefit of all pupils and communities served by the Trust, as well as enable compliance with its statutory duties as a charitable company accountable to the Department for Education as the regulator of academies. Executive level expertise in one or more of the following areas is required to complement the existing directors' skill sets (listed in no particular order):

- Leadership of a complex multi £m organisation operating on multiple sites
- Environmental, Social and Corporate/Charity Governance
- Growth, Project, Change and Risk Management
- Accountancy and/or Financial Management
- Executive Primary Education Leadership and Safeguarding
- IT, Digital Transformation and Data Protection
- Communications, Marketing and PR
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Health and Wellbeing

As a Catholic Trust it is imperative that the Trust Board Directors are committed to protecting the Catholic identity and requirements placed on faith-based schools. It is for this reason that the Bishop of Clifton Diocese appoints all directors. Whilst ideally foundation directors should be practising Catholics, the Bishop is prepared to accept non-Catholics who are committed to preserving the Catholic ethos.

The time commitment, on average, equates to 1-2 days per month to include formal meeting preparation and attendance, ongoing professional development, strategic planning, executive recruitment and performance management, engagement with stakeholders including accompanied visits to get to know the schools.

More details about the Trust and governance arrangements can be found via: [Governance \(thedcet.com\)](#).

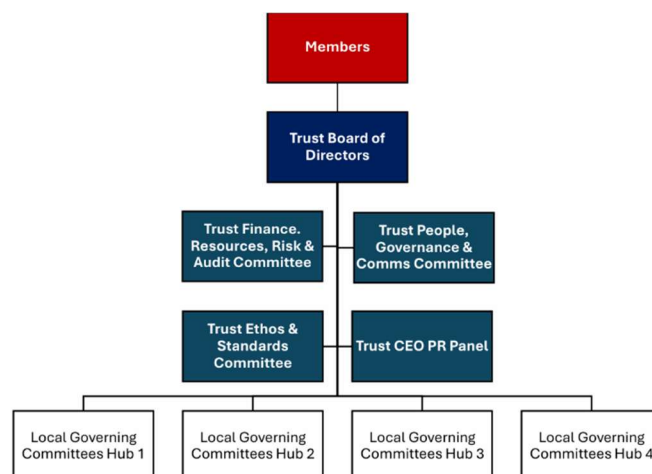


Diagram A - the Trust's governance structure.

In summary, the Trust Board's Scheme of Delegated Authority clarifies the different roles and responsibilities of the committees it has established. There are two types of committees in MATs. Trust committees have a trust wide remit e.g. finance, staffing, audit, estates and their membership must be composed by a majority of directors. Local Governing Committees usually have a single school oversight role, but could oversee more than one school, and their membership is composed of local governors. Their delegated remit is focused on holding the headteacher to account for the quality of standards and pupil outcomes, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), wellbeing and spiritual development, attendance, safeguarding, health and safety, community engagement.

Academy trusts are publicly funded organisation so everyone involved in governance is expected to demonstrate a commitment to the Nolan principles and personal attributes detailed in 'A Competency Framework for Governance' published by the Department for Education: [Governance handbook and competency framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook-and-competency-framework-for-governance)

More details about the roles and responsibilities of a director, including statutory duties, can be found in the DfE publication called 'Academy Trust Governance Structures and Roles': [Governance structures and roles - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-governance-structures-and-roles)

If you wish to find out more about the regulatory framework the Trust operates within, please refer to Part 8 of the Academy Trust Handbook which summarises the requirements set by the Department for Education in its capacity as the regulator: [Academy Trust Handbook - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-handbook-guidance)

The Trust Board is currently being supported by an internal Head of Governance and Trust Governance Manager who can provide bespoke onboarding and induction support. As part of the Trust's investment in you, all directors are provided with access to ongoing continuous professional development via training available in-house, Clifton Diocese and Somerset Governor Services. Plus, corporate membership of the Confederation of School Trusts, the professional body which represents around two thirds of all academy trusts in England.

N.B. The Trust is committed to diversity and inclusion and safeguarding to promote the welfare of children

and young people. All successful applicants will be appointed subject to satisfactory completion of all recruitment processes. This includes obtaining an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate and Section 128 clearance and the receipt of satisfactory references.

Finally, whilst this is an unpaid volunteer role, it offers many personal and professional rewards, such as boardroom experience, and the opportunity to use your skills and expertise to support pupils in your local Catholic schools and communities.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

CChristie

Catherine Christie
Chair of Directors



How to Apply:

If you would like an informal conversation before applying, please contact the Head of Governance via office@theDcet.com and/or Bill McEntee, Diocesan Governance Officer via bill.mcentee@cliftondiocese.com or 0117 902 5599.

To apply please complete full all four of the following forms via the Clifton Diocese website (we cannot accept a CV):

Nomination form: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-5>

Eligibility Declaration: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-6>

Skills Audit: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-7>

DBS Self Declaration: <https://schools.cliftondiocese.com/form-4>

The Diocesan privacy notice can be found via its website: [Privacy Notice | Clifton Diocese](#)

About the Role

Role title:	Director
Location of schools:	Somerset, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, BANES, Wiltshire
Term of office:	Four years
Contract:	Pro bono (unpaid voluntary) with reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses
Time Commitment:	An average of 3 days per month (formal board/committee meetings plus ongoing CPD, accompanied school visits, annual strategy event and governance conference.)

Trust Board Director Role Description and Person Specification

Objects of the Multi Academy Trust

The Trust's core purpose is described as the Objects in its Articles of Association. They are as follows:

4(a) The Company's objects ("the Objects") are specifically restricted to the advancement of the Catholic religion in the Diocese by such means as the Diocesan Bishop may think fit and proper by, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing of Catholic schools in the United Kingdom conducted in accordance with the principles, and subject to the regulations and discipline of the Catholic Church.

4(b) Subject to the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, during the period that the objects in 4(a) are being fulfilled and form the majority of the activities of the Company, the advancement of education by the establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing of schools which are not Catholic in the United Kingdom.

Specific duties of Directors of a Catholic Trust:

To contribute to the work of the Board of Directors in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people across the Trust. As a Foundation Director you are also there to support any Bishop's directives and his overall diocesan vision.

Legal Duties:

Under charity law, Trust Directors have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Trust, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for which it has been set up.

Duty of Compliance – Directors must:

- Preserve and develop the Catholic character of the academies within the Trust in accordance with the Articles of Association, Church Supplementary Agreement and the Scheme of Delegation; comply with the provisions of Canon Law, the teachings of the Catholic Church and such determinations made by the Bishop, his Trustees, or the Department of Schools and Colleges on their behalf.
- Ensure that the Trust complies with charity law and with the requirements of the Education Funding Agency as regulator; in particular ensure that the charity prepares reports on what it has achieved and annual

returns and accounts as required by law.

- Ensure that the Trust does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in the Articles of Association, Church Supplementary Agreement, Scheme of Delegation, funding agreement or the Academies Financial Handbook and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and object set out there.
- Act with integrity and avoid putting yourself in a position where your duty to the Trust conflicts with your personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body.

Duty of Care – Directors must:

- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as Directors, using their personal skills, knowledge and experience as needed to ensure that the Trust is well run and efficient.
- Ensure that robust and compliant systems are in place to ensure the safeguarding of all students, staff and volunteers within the Trust.
- Seek external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the Trust or where the Directors may be in breach of their duties.
- Use the Trust's funds and assets reasonably and responsibly and only in furtherance of its aims and objectives.
- Avoid undertaking activities that may place the Trust's funds, assets or reputation at undue risk.
- Take particular care when investing the Trust's funds or borrowing funds.

Strategic Direction:

Directors must ensure that the Trust has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction that will enable the Trust to fulfil its objects and is focused on achieving these. Directors must work in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer and other senior staff to ensure that:

- The Trust has a clear vision, set of Catholic values and strategy and that there is a common understanding of these by Directors, staff and those sitting on Academy Committees or Local Governing Bodies.
- Operational plans and budgets support the vision and strategy.
- The views of stakeholders (parents, pupils, local communities and staff) are regularly sought and considered through the development of effective links within the Trust's community.
- There is regular review of the external environment for changes that might affect the Trust.
- There is regular review of the need for the Trust and for the services it provides or could provide, and regular review of strategic plans and priorities.

Performance of the Trust:

Directors are collectively responsible for the performance of the Trust, for its impact upon stakeholders and for its corporate behaviour:

- To ensure that the Trust measures its impact and progress towards its strategic objectives and to regularly consider reports its performance.
- To ensure that there are appropriate policies in place to ensure that the aims and objects are met in line with the requirements of the Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation.
- To ensure that the Trust's Catholic values are understood and put into practice by Directors, Academy Representatives/Governors and staff.
- To ensure that there are complaints systems in place for stakeholders.
- To ensure that there are processes for members, Directors, Academy Representatives/Governors, staff and other stakeholders to report activity which might compromise the effectiveness of the Trust.
- To recruit a Chief Executive Officer in partnership with the Bishop's representative and to hold them to account for the management and administration of the Trust.

- To ensure that the Chief Executive Officer receives regular, constructive feedback on their performance in managing the Trust and in meeting their annual and longer-term objectives.

Compliance:

Directors must ensure that the Trust complies with all legal and regulatory requirements:

- To ensure, with professional advice as appropriate, that the Trust complies with all constitutional, legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.
- To understand and comply with the constitution and rules that govern the Trust as outlined in the Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation.

Management of Resources:

Directors must be custodians of the Trust's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking care over their security, and how they are used:

- To ensure that the Trust's financial obligations are met and that there are adequate financial controls in place to ensure all money due is received and properly applied, and that all assets and liabilities are recorded.
- To act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the Trust and always in the interests of it, the Diocese and the Catholic Church.
- To ensure that Directors take professional advice when needed and record the advice received.
- To be accountable for the solvency of the Trust.
- To ensure that the Trust acts in accordance with employment law and that it exercises a duty of care to its employees.
- To ensure that intangible assets such as organisation knowledge and expertise, intellectual property, the Trust's good name and reputation are recognised, used and safeguarded.
- To review the condition and use of assets owned by the Trust.
- To ensure that the major risks to the Trust are regularly identified and reviewed and that systems are in place to mitigate or minimise these risks.

Good Governance:

Directors must ensure that the Trust's governance is of the highest possible standard:

- To ensure that the Trust has a governance structure that is appropriate to its size and complexity, stage of development, meets the requirements of the Articles of Association, Church supplementary Agreement and Scheme of Delegation and reflects the diversity of its stakeholders.
- To ensure that there are effective mechanisms for individual academies within the Trust to be both supported and held to account by the governance structure.
- To ensure that decisions are made with a view to promoting the education and wellbeing of learners.
- To ensure that decisions taken by the Board of Directors are recorded in writing by means of minutes.
- To ensure that the Board's delegated authority to Directors, Chief Executive Officer, Academy Representatives/Governors and staff is recorded and that reporting procedures from such back to the Board are recorded in writing and complied with.
- To ensure that the responsibilities delegated to the Chief Executive Officer are clearly expressed in the Scheme of Delegation and understood and directions given to them come from the Board as a whole or other properly authorised route.
- To ensure the Board regularly reviews the Trust's governance structure and its own performance to an agreed programme.
- To ensure that major decisions and policies are made by the Directors acting collectively.

- To ensure that the Board has within its membership the skills it requires to govern the Trust well.
- To ensure that the Board has access to, and considers, relevant external professional advice and expertise.
- To ensure that there are systematic, open and fair procedures for the recruitment of Directors and of the Chief Executive Officer.
- To ensure that all members of the Board receive appropriate induction on their appointment and that they continue to receive appropriate advice, information and training (both individually and collectively).
- To ensure that Directors have a Code of Conduct and comply with it and that there are mechanisms for the removal of Directors who do not abide by the Director's Code of Conduct.

Person Specification

The Board of Directors considers the following as key skills and attributes for membership of the Board:

Personal Qualities:

- Commitment to the Catholic ethos and values of the Trust.
- Commitment to the education and welfare of children and young people.
- Commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.
- Independence of thought and sound judgment.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Commitment to seeking and taking account of the views of stakeholders, e.g. parents and pupils.
- Respect for the work and views of other Directors and staff.
- Willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a Director.
- Willingness to make and stand by collective decisions, even if they offered an alternative view during discussions.

Aptitude and Skills:

- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Directorship of a Catholic Trust.
- Ability to challenge current thinking, the method of governance and management of the Trust in a constructive manner and in its best interests.
- Ability to evaluate and interpret management information and other data/evidence.
- Ability to play a strategic role to successfully effect change and meet the objectives of the Trust.
- Eagerness to reflect and learn, even in the role of Director.
- Willingness to act as an ambassador for and publicly support the Trust.

Knowledge and Experience:

Executive level expertise in one or more of the following areas is required to complement the existing directors' 5 skill sets (listed in no particular order):

- Leadership of a complex multi £m organisation operating on multiple sites
- Environmental, Social and Corporate/Charity Governance
- Growth, Project, Change and Risk Management
- Accountancy and/or Financial Management
- Executive Primary Education Leadership and Safeguarding
- IT, Digital Transformation and Data Protection
- Communications, Marketing and PR
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Health and Wellbeing

Other Requirements:

- Willingness to attend meetings of the Board and other meetings as required.
- Willingness to participate in the evaluation of the Board's work.
- Willingness to attend on a regular basis appropriate training provided by the Diocese or other appropriate body.

The Board of Directors has a Code of Conduct underpinned by the seven principles of public life as identified by the Nolan Committee: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Conclusion

Whilst the role of a director bears a high level of accountability, it is a rewarding role in that it contributes to development of the pupils and students they serve and supports the overall mission of the Church.