



# **Clerk to the Board (Governance Professional)**

**April 2026**



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## Welcome from our Vice Chair of the Board

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Clerk to the Board. I am writing to you as Chair of the Board to outline why this role is so vital to the smooth and effective running of our Trust, and why we believe it represents an exciting opportunity for the right person.

The post of Clerk to the Board has arisen following the resignation of our current Director of Governance. This moment marks an important transition for the Trust. Strong governance is essential to ensuring that our Board operates effectively, lawfully, and in a manner that is faithful to our Trust values and Vision. The Clerk to the Board plays a central role in enabling this, providing expert administrative and procedural support that allows the Board to focus on strategic leadership, accountability, and the long-term flourishing of our schools.

The Clerk is integral to the smooth running of Board and committee meetings, the maintenance of accurate records, and the assurance that governance processes meet both statutory requirements and best practice. Just as importantly, the role supports the culture and effectiveness of the Board, helping to ensure clarity, good decision-making, and continuity during a period of change.

As a Catholic Trust, our work is rooted in our shared commitment to Catholic education and the formation of young people in faith, hope, and love. We are therefore seeking someone who not only brings strong organisational skills and attention to detail, but who also understands and is committed to the values and purpose of Catholic education. The successful candidate will work closely with Board members as we reflect on our next steps and continue to strengthen governance in service of our mission.

This is an exciting opportunity for someone who is dedicated, professional, and motivated to make a meaningful contribution at Board level. You will be joining the Trust at a significant point in its journey, with the chance to help shape and support its future direction.

We look forward to learning more about your experience, skills, and aspirations, and to welcoming a Clerk to the Board who will be a trusted and valued partner in the work of the Trust.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Clarkson  
Vice Chair to the Board



## The current Trust Schools are:

- Dean Gibson R.C Primary School, Kendal
- Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maryport
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Carnforth
- Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Dalton
- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Barrow-in-Furness
- St Bernard's Catholic High School, Barrow-in-Furness
- St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Penrith
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Carlisle
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Wigton
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Windermere
- St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Workington
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Lancaster
- St Joseph's Catholic High School, Workington
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ulverston
- St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School, Carlisle
- St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Barrow

## Our Trust Values



**LOVING  
TOGETHER**



**LEARNING  
TOGETHER**



**EXCELLENCE  
TOGETHER**



## Introduction

The Governance Professional (often known as the Clerk to the Board) plays a pivotal role in the effective and lawful operation of an academy trust. This is a key appointment that underpins strong governance, supports strategic leadership, and ensures that the Board and its committees are able to carry out their duties with confidence and clarity.

The **Academy Trust Handbook** is clear that every trust must have access to a suitably skilled and knowledgeable governance professional. The Handbook recognises this role as essential to effective governance, stating that the Governance Professional is responsible for advising the Board on its duties and responsibilities, supporting compliance with the Trust's legal and regulatory framework, and ensuring that governance processes are robust and well-managed. This independence and professional expertise enable Directors (Trustees) to focus on strategic oversight while being assured that decisions are taken in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

In an academy trust, governance is fundamental to securing high standards of education, robust accountability, and sound stewardship of public funds. The Governance Professional is central to this work, providing independent advice on governance, constitutional and regulatory matters, and ensuring that decision-making processes are well-organised, transparent, and compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Working closely with the Chair, Board members, and Executive leaders, the Governance Professional supports the smooth running of Board and committees, the timely flow of information, and the accurate recording and follow-up of decisions. The role also helps to ensure that governance arrangements reflect best practice, enabling Directors to focus on strategic direction, educational outcomes, and the long-term sustainability of the Trust.

The appointment of a dedicated Clerk to the Board represents an opportunity to strengthen governance capacity and provide continuity and assurance. The Trust has a part time Governance and Compliance Administrator who provides administration support for Governance across the Trust and directly employs one of the clerks who covers several school LGBs. The Clerk to the Board will line manage these posts.

For a Catholic academy trust, the Governance Professional also contributes to ensuring that governance is firmly rooted in the Trust's mission and values. This includes supporting the Board in upholding the distinctive ethos of Catholic education, working in partnership with the Diocese, and ensuring that governance decisions reflect the Trust's moral and spiritual purpose.

This role will suit someone who is highly organised, discreet, and confident in working at senior level, with a strong understanding of governance or a willingness to develop expertise in this area. Above all, it offers an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the life of the Trust by enabling effective governance in service of children, families, and communities.



## Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	Clerk to the Board
<b>Contract</b>	Permanent, Full Year, between 15 and 20 hours per week subject to discussion. Flexible working available
<b>Salary Range</b>	Grade 15, SCP 36-37, £47,181 - £48,226 per annum (£19,127.43 - £19,551.08 pro rata, based on 15 hours per week)
<b>Reporting To</b>	Chair of the Board
<b>Location</b>	Board meetings take place in Carlisle.
<b>Start Date</b>	As soon as possible

### PURPOSE OF ROLE

To provide strategic leadership for governance across the Trust, ensuring effective, compliant, and high-performing governance at Board and Member level. The role ensures governance adheres to statutory and regulatory requirements, reflects good practice, and supports effective decision-making.

The role also acts as **Clerk to the Board of Directors** and principal professional governance adviser.

This person would operate as a senior professional adviser to:

- the Board of Directors
- the Chair
- the CEO and the Executive Team

This role would provide authoritative advice on:

- Statutory and regulatory compliance
- Constitutional matters, Memorandum of Understanding. Articles and schemes of delegation
- Governance implications of Diocesan arrangements,
- Board effectiveness, assurance and decision-making discipline



This is achieved by:

- Ensuring the Board understands its mission
- Ensuring that the Board is reflecting the Trust Vision Statement and Values
- Supporting the efficient and effective operation of the Trust Board and its committees
- Ensuring governance at all levels is carrying out its functions
- Leading to the development of the Trust's governance framework and driving improvements to its systems, processes and structures
- Managing and coordinating the delivery and ongoing improvement of governance support across the Trust
- Acting as the Clerk for the Board of Directors and attending the Board meetings in person

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Values and Behaviours

- Maintains independence and demonstrates sound professional judgement
- Acts with integrity and courage, doing the right thing in challenging circumstances
- Provides accurate, honest, and constructive advice
- Builds professional relationships
- Commits to continuous professional development and promotes learning in others
- Recognises when external legal or professional advice is required and secures it
- Support conflict resolution
- Challenge Directors as appropriate
- Line Manage the Governance and Compliance Administrator and one of the Trust's Clerk to Governors

### Professional Advisory Role

- Serve as the first point of contact for all Board and committee business

### Advises the Board on

- Charity and company law
- Academy Trust Handbook
- Articles of association and funding agreements

**Advises Directors and Committee Chairs on:**

- Terms of reference
- Statutory guidance
- Policy and procedural matters
- Governance best practice

**Promotes understanding of assurance frameworks, internal control, and risk management**

- Identify governance risks and priorities, advising the Chair proactively
- Source and manage external legal or specialist governance advice where required
- Serve as the first point of contact for all Board and committee business
- Ensure that governance-specific risks are included in the Trust's risk register
- Ensure copies of statutory policies and other statutory documents such as the scheme of delegation and register of interests are published as agreed and in line with statutory requirements
- To support production of the annual report and governance statement published with the Trust's annual accounts

**Board Composition, Appointments & Effectiveness**

- Ensure the Board and committees are properly constituted with clear terms of reference
- Work with the Chair and Diocese to ensure an appropriate skills mix, diversity, and balance on the Board
- Manage appointments, reappointments, and retirements in line with the Articles
- Design and deliver Director induction programmes
- Lead regular Board and individual effectiveness reviews
- Ensure the Register of Business Interests is up to date

**Clerking & Board Administration**

- Plan and manage the annual Board and committee cycle with support from the Governance and Compliance Administrator
- Plan and administer Board, committee meetings
- Prepare agendas and coordinate high-quality papers with support of administrative colleagues
- Minute Board meetings and track actions
- Maintain accurate governance records and document management systems
- Manage Governance Information on the Trust website
- Publish Director attendance and details annually

**Ensure compliance with:**

- Get Information About Schools
- Companies' House



## Person Specification

### Qualifications & Professional Membership

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience	E		A
Recognised governance qualification or working towards one (e.g. ICSA/CGI, NGA, equivalent)	E		A
Strong working knowledge of charity and company governance	E		A/I/R
Chartered Governance Professional (CGI)		D	A/I/R

### Legal, audit, risk, or compliance-related qualification Knowledge & Experience

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Significant experience of clerking and advising Boards or equivalent senior governing bodies	E		A/I/R
Strong knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity law and company law</li> <li>• Academy Trust Handbook</li> <li>• Articles of association and funding agreements</li> </ul>	E		A/I/R
Experience of advising chairs, Directors, and senior leaders at strategic level	E		A/I/R
Experience of succession planning, and Director induction	E		A/I/R
Experience of managing conflicts of interest and related party transactions	E		A/I/R
Experience of risk management and assurance frameworks	E		A/I/R
Experience working in a multi-academy trust or regulated public sector environment		D	A/I/R
Experience of supporting Catholic Boards / Governors		D	A/I/R
Experience of external audit, regulatory inspection, or assurance processes		D	A/I/R
Knowledge of Catholic Trusts		D	A/I/R



### Skills & Abilities

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Ability to provide independent, authoritative, and balanced professional advice	E		A/I/R
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including high-quality minute-taking	E		A/I/R
Strong time management and IT skills	E		A/I/R
Strong analytical and judgement skills, particularly in complex or sensitive situations	E		A/I/R
Ability to influence senior stakeholders with diplomacy and confidence	E		A/I/R
Ability to prioritise, manage competing deadlines, and work under pressure	E		A/I/R
High level of discretion and integrity	E		A/I/R
Ability to lead and develop governance staff	E		A/I/R
Commitment to professional development and Governance update routes	E		A/I/R
Experience of developing governance frameworks and driving continuous improvement		D	A/I/R

### Values & Personal Attributes

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Support the Board in promoting Catholic Values and Vision and the Trust Vision	E		A/I/R
Demonstrable commitment to the Seven Principles of Public Life	E		A/I/R
Strong sense of integrity, independence, and professional courage	E		A/I/R
Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusive governance	E		A/I/R
Willingness to challenge constructively and support robust decision-making	E		A/I/R
Commitment to continuous professional development	E		A/I/R

### Confidential References and Reports

Positive recommendation from all referees, including current employer.	E
A further supportive professional reference.	E

The Trust reserves the right in exceptional cases to seek additional references from other former employees where this seems appropriate.



## Application Form and Supporting Statement

- Please fully complete the application form via MyNewTerm.
- Include a supporting statement, no longer than 1300 words.

In compliance with Safer Recruitment Guidelines, CVs will not be accepted.

The supporting statement should be clear, concise and related to the specific post.

### Closing Date:

Applications must be received via MyNewTerm by 12 noon on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Shortlisting will take place on the afternoon of Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Interviews are expected to take place on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026 (date to be confirmed).

### Safer Recruitment

Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust adheres to the statutory guidelines provided in the Department for Education document “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and therefore, prospective candidates applying for posts at the Trust must complete the information requested fully. Successful candidates who are provisionally offered a post with the Trust will not be able to start work until two satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, health check and other pre-employment checks, including safeguarding checks are in place. Attendance at a mandatory safeguarding training session will also be a pre-requisite on starting work.

Please note that in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, an online search will be carried out as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates.

### Candidate Privacy Notice

A copy of our candidate privacy notice can be viewed on our website.

### Safeguarding

The Mater Christi Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. The Trust complies with the statutory legislative requirements and guidance that seeks to protect children including ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance’.

In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants. Safer Recruitment Job descriptions and person specifications make reference to safeguarding and child protection and all posts are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS).

All advertisements include our safeguarding statement and commitment.



All applicants are scrutinised to verify identity and are asked to provide evidence of academic or vocational qualifications. Professional references are requested using our standard proforma for short-listed candidates.

As a minimum, references should be from the two most recent employers and a Parish Priest, if applicable.

References are checked against previous employment history and gaps in employment. Our standard reference proforma makes reference to suitability to work with children and young people. Professional references must be obtained from professional email addresses.

The application form requires applicants to complete a disclosure of any criminal convictions.

### **Shortlisting**

Only those candidates meeting the criteria outlined in the person specification will be shortlisted. Shortlisted candidates will take part in an in-depth interview and selection process.

Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their employment history on their application form.

Candidates are subject to DBS checks and will be reminded of their responsibility to disclose criminal convictions that if they have not already done so on the application.

Proof of right to work in the UK must also be provided at interview. On appointment an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) will be required for all appointed posts and other pre-employment compliance checks will also be carried out.

A fitness to work declaration will be required following appointment.

Inclusion on the Single Central Record (SCR), barred list checks and prohibition from teaching checks will also be carried out.

For leadership positions, section 128 checks will be performed. All staff will receive a comprehensive induction programme covering all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We recognise the value of, and seek to achieve, a diverse workforce. We take positive steps to create an employment culture in which people feel confident of being treated with fairness.