



David Ross Education Trust

Broadening Horizons

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE

CANDIDATE PACK

Spring 2026



WELCOME FROM THE SPONSOR AND CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Thank you for your interest in joining DRET as a trustee.

This is an exciting time to join DRET.

It is my belief that British education needs to be broader in the experiences and opportunities that it provides for young people. The 21st-century workplace needs open-minded and creative thinkers who are able to address the challenges of our times.

This is why a David Ross Education Trust education is compellingly different. As a leading multi-academy trust, we are committed to giving every student attending one of our schools a world-class education. An education that creates academically gifted, confident, well-rounded young people in the classroom, in the workplace and in their communities.

We pride ourselves on our academic rigour, driven by talented, dedicated and inspiring teachers who help our students to fulfil their true potential. We believe in opening our students' eyes to the world around them. We do this through the only academy-wide enrichment programme of its kind within the state education sector. A programme that gives our students access to the kinds of life-changing experiences normally only available at fee-paying schools.

Our promise to every student at one of our schools is clear; we will help them to become their confident, all-round best.

David Ross

Sponsor and Chair of Trustees

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The David Ross Education Trust (DRET) is a network of unique and diverse academies across the country, committed to delivering a world-class, knowledge-rich education that empowers pupils to reach their fullest potential. Spanning North Yorkshire, East Riding, the Midlands, and London, our network of 36 academies serves over 14,600 pupils and employs 2,300 dedicated staff.

Our family of schools includes 24 primaries, 10 Secondaries, an all-through school in London's Olympic Park, and a special school in Lincolnshire supporting pupils aged 2–19 with a broad range of special educational needs. As one of only 11 system leaders nationwide, we are recognised for our unwavering commitment to educational excellence, our innovative curriculum, and ability to drive sustained school improvement at scale.

At the heart of our mission is a deep belief in the transformative power of education. We are committed to ensuring that every child – regardless of their background – has access to an exceptional academic experience enriched by extensive co-curricular opportunities. From small rural primaries to large urban secondaries, our academies benefit from the strength of a collaborative, values-driven community, in which expertise is shared, best practices are embedded, and each school retains its distinctive character.

We now seek trustees to join our board. Trustees play an essential role in the governance of the Trust in holding the executive to account.

The opportunity to join our board is a chance to contribute to our direction of travel at the highest

level and the wider national conversation on how the multi-academy trust sector is continuing to change and grow. We welcome applications from those with a considerable sense of commitment to our vision and values.

We are committed to being representative of the communities that we serve and would therefore particularly welcome interest from those who would further strengthen the diversity of our board.

Successful candidates will be of exceptional calibre, combining intellectual acumen, moral purpose, a collaborative approach and relevant qualifications and experience in public, private or charitable organisations.

We are seeking to appoint up to 4 new Trustees. In particular, we are recruiting to fill near term vacancies in chair of Risk and audit Committee and chair of Finance and Resources Committee and so are seeking suitably qualified and experienced individuals in finance and risk/audit. We also want to recruit two further trustees as part of our longer-term succession planning in other critical roles, HR and remuneration and secondary school transformation.



OUR MISSION, OUR VISION, OUR VALUES

Our mission, vision and values are instrumental to everything we do. We believe they represent all we have achieved so far and will continue to strive for in our future years.

Our Mission

To broaden the horizons of our pupils through the provision of a world-class education.

Our Vision

A world-class education that is ambitious, broad and knowledge-rich, and that equips our pupils to live full, rich and successful lives.

Our Values

We are unashamedly ambitious for the quality of care and all-round education of the children and young people we serve. We want to provide access to outstanding opportunities within the classroom and beyond.

We are highly aspirational and expect all of our students and staff to aim high for themselves and to support each other in those aspirations. We will provide staff with the skills and knowledge to teach well and create a culture where high performance is expected.

We are courageous in our approach, supporting and standing up for each other, thinking big and not being afraid to try new ideas and strategies in the pursuit of excellence.

We are respectful of each other regardless of age, identity and background, creating an environment of calm, scholarly endeavour in our classrooms and respecting the professional integrity of all staff across academic and business functions.



THE DRET WAY

At DRET we are committed to providing a world-class education that combines the best of the independent and state sectors. While our academies reflect the diverse communities they serve, they are united by a shared ethos and a relentless ambition for excellence. Our approach ensures that every pupil, regardless of background, has access to exceptional teaching, enrichment, and opportunities that prepare them to thrive in an ever-changing world

Our Approach

The DRET Way is built upon a set of core principles that shape every academy within the Trust. At the heart of our approach is **academic excellence**, with a rigorous, knowledge-rich curriculum delivered by expert educators who inspire and challenge pupils to achieve their full potential. **Our house system** fosters a culture of teamwork, leadership, and a strong sense of belonging, ensuring that every student feels part of a supportive community.

Beyond the classroom, we are committed to **extensive co-curricular opportunities**, enriching pupils' experiences through sport, music, and the arts. An **early and relentless focus on literacy** underpins all learning, ensuring that every child

develops the foundational skills necessary for lifelong success. We maintain **high expectations** through a clear uniform code that instils personal responsibility and pride in every student.

While each of our schools retains its **local leadership** and unique identity, they all benefit from the collective strength, expertise, and ambition of the Trust. Academy Scrutiny Committees and each Principal within the DRET family are encouraged to exercise their autonomy within the Trust's wider framework.

Through these shared commitments, we are raising aspirations, transforming outcomes, and broadening the horizons of every child in our care.

Outstanding Opportunities

A DRET education extends far beyond the classroom, ensuring that pupils have access to the same opportunities traditionally found in leading independent schools. Our enrichment programme is designed to inspire, challenge, and equip students with the skills needed for success in life.

Through partnerships with outstanding organisations and individuals, we provide:

- Elite coaching and specialist tutoring across sport, music, and the arts.

- Flagship competitions and national events, fostering ambition and resilience.
- A diverse range of cultural, leadership, and adventure opportunities that shape well-rounded individuals.

These experiences not only enhance academic success but also develop character, confidence, and leadership skills – ensuring that our pupils stand out in higher education and the workplace.

THE DRET WAY

A World-Class Education

Every DRET academy is on a clear pathway to excellence. Our approach ensures that all schools benefit from shared expertise, best practices, and structured support to achieve the highest standards.

To deliver this vision, we are:

- Implementing a standardised school transformation model, ensuring every academy is on the path to outstanding.

- Embedding a challenging, knowledge-rich curriculum taught by inspiring educators.
- Using data-driven insights to enhance teaching and student outcomes.
- Investing in teacher training and leadership development, ensuring our staff are among the best in the profession.

We believe that every child, regardless of background, deserves a world-class education, and we are committed to making this a reality in every DRET school.

Continued Development

Our commitment to excellence extends to our educators. As a Teaching School Hub, DRET plays a vital role in teacher and leadership development, supporting schools across North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. Through the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications, we ensure that every teacher receives the training and support needed to excel

in the classroom.

By working in partnership with Lincolnshire Research School and designated Curriculum Hubs, we make it easier for schools to access cutting-edge educational expertise, ensuring that every child benefits from exceptional teaching.



OUR TEAM

The Trust is powered by a team of over 2,300 dedicated staff, all committed to transforming the life chances of young people across our network. While the Trust provides the strategic framework and operational foundations, our success is driven by the collective efforts and achievements of those who work within it. This shared commitment is guided by the vision of our Trust Board and supported by a highly skilled Executive Team that ensures best practice and innovation are embedded across all aspects of our work.

How we are Governed

DRET's Board of Trustees are responsible for driving the strategic direction of the Trust forward and are ultimately accountable for the organisation. Led by the Chair of Trustees, David Ross, the DRET Board comprises eight independent volunteers chosen for their expertise and experience gained in a diverse range of industries in both the private and public sectors.

There are currently five Members. As a charitable

organisation, DRET must have Members in place who act as the guardians of the Trust's governance. The Members sit at the top of the Trust's governance structure and hold the Board of Trustees to account for the effective governance of the Trust. Though the Trust's key organisational decisions are made by Trustees, Members are essential to the integrity of the Trust's governance structure and remain informed of the Trust's performance.

Our Members and Trustees

DRET is governed by a high-calibre board of trustees with a diverse range of professional backgrounds.

The board is chaired by David Ross and currently consists of nine trustees:

- **David Ross**, Chair
- **Tracey Maloney**, Vice-Chair, Chair of Education Committee
- **Richard Emerton**, Co-Chair of Finance and Resources Committee and Chair of Remuneration and Nominations Committee
- **David Hall**, Co-Chair of Finance and Resources Committee
- **Nigel Langstaff**, Chair of Risk and Audit Committee
- **Andrew Read**
- **Jonathan Boddington**
- **Keith Cochrane**
- **Michael Elliott**

The Trust currently has five members:

- **David Ross** - Principal Sponsor, The Ross Foundation/Chair of Trustees
- **Joanne Hoareau**
- **Lady Caroline Ryder**
- **Christopher Houlding**
- **The Diocese of Peterborough** represented by Peter Cantley.

Our Executive Team

The Trust Board is supported by a high-performing Executive Board, composed of both educational and central services professionals. The members of the Executive Board are:

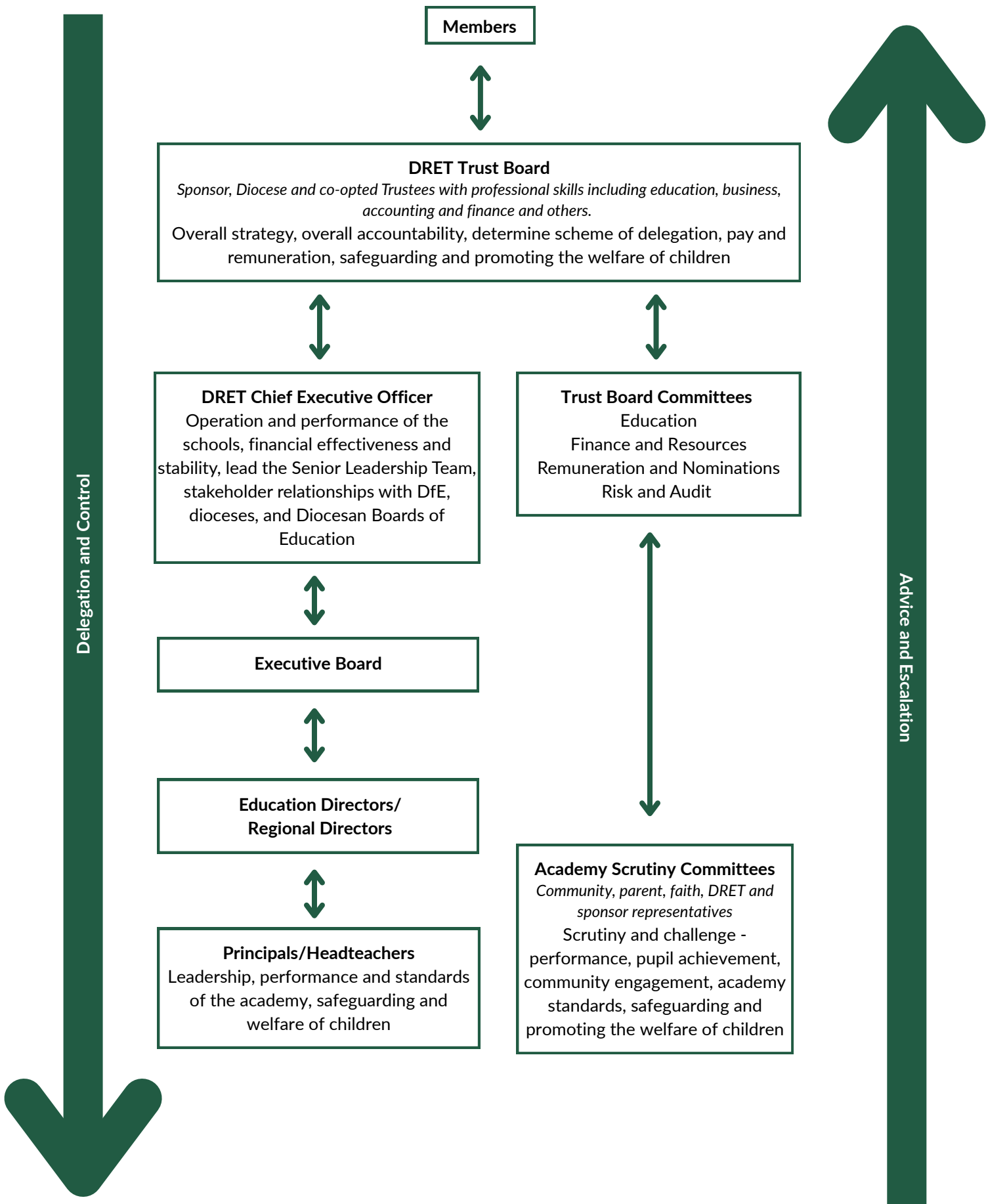
- **Simon Rose** – Chief Executive Officer
- **Aron Whiles** – Executive Director of Secondary Education
- **Kimberley Lawton** - Executive Director of Primary Education
- **Rachel Ridgill** – Director of HR
- **Jane Spencer** – Chief Finance Officer
- **Jonathan French** – Director of Operations
- **Maria Maltby** – Director of Governance

This team is further supported by specialist education leaders in both the Primary and Secondary Education Teams, as well as the Heads of Service across key operational areas, including Finance, HR, IT and Data, Estates and Capital Programmes, Primary Operations, Data Protection and Compliance, Procurement, Sports Enrichment and Music.

Together, this leadership structure ensures rigorous academic standards, operational excellence, and strategic growth, enabling DRET to continue delivering an outstanding education for every child within our academies.



DRET Governance Structure



ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Trust Board are the guardians of DRET's purpose and are ultimately accountable for the organisation.

Role Purpose

Trustees are expected to carry out duties in accordance with the accepted standards of public life as set out in the Nolan Principles and to ensure that DRET's strategy, performance and use of resources are directed towards furthering our charitable objectives.

General Responsibilities of a Trustee

- Ensure that the Trust applies its resources exclusively in pursuing our objectives.
- Contribute actively to giving strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against targets.
- Safeguarding the reputation and values of the Trust.
- Declaring any conflicts of interest whilst carrying out the duties of a trustee.
- Being collectively responsible for the actions of the organisation and other trustees.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation and the proper investment of funds.
- Keep informed about the activities of the Trust and the wider issues which affect the Trust's work.
- Be committed to demonstrating the Nolan Principles and upholding all statutory duties as a trustee.

It is important to note that all trustees will not seek to encroach upon the business of operational management or undertake activities which might conflict with their independence. Additionally, trustees will serve to ensure that they are not seen as partisans or appear as conduits of influence.

Term and Time Commitment

- All trustees are appointed for a term of four years.
- Trustees may be appointed for a second four-year term after their first term.
- The anticipated time commitment for trustees is approximately 10 - 12 days per year.
- Trustees are asked to attend Trust Board meetings of which there are 6 per year in person (normally mornings or afternoons) and join one committee which meet termly (online or in person).



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Applicants should have a strong interest in the academy sector and the wider national education sector, and a commitment to inspiring learners and changing lives.

We are committed to being representative of the communities that we serve and would therefore particularly welcome interest from those who would further strengthen the diversity of our board.

The key qualities that we are seeking are:

- The ability to operate at a strategic level and offer key insights into the development of the Trust.
- The ability to analyse information critically and provide constructive assessment of the Trust's position to help develop the Trust.
- The ability to act as a 'critical friend' and the interpersonal and strategic skills to provide an appropriate level of support and challenge.
- The ability to implement sound independent judgement and political impartiality.
- The ability to help us think in new and creative ways about how the Trust can use and share its knowledge and best practice, further developing its position in the sector.
- The ability to work effectively as a member of a team and be willing to reflect and learn.
- The ability to empathise with wider Trust staff members and demonstrate emotional intelligence towards DRET's wider community.
- The ability to celebrate the Trust in its achievements and advocate on its behalf as a compelling ambassador.
- The ability to demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities and the active promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Professional Experience

We are recruiting to fill a near term committee chair role of the Risk & Audit Committee so are seeking suitably qualified and experienced individuals in risk/audit. We also want to recruit two further trustees as part of our succession planning in other critical roles, HR and remuneration and secondary school transformation.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT AND HOW TO APPLY

Terms of Appointment

The role of trustee is not remunerated. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

How to Apply

Candidates who wish to have an informal discussion about the role and application process should contact Maria Maltby, Director of Governance via email at governance@dret.co.uk.





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