

Governance Manager

Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title:	Governance Manager
Salary:	£41,771 - £48, 226 FTE per annum
Contract:	42 weeks per year (term time plus additional weeks)
Location:	Hybrid working across Trust schools in West Berkshire, with some home working
Hours:	Flexible, including attendance at evening governance meetings
Reports to:	Executive Head (with a close working relationship with the Chair of Trustees)

Overview

The Governance Manager plays a pivotal role in ensuring the highest standards of governance across Equinox Learning Trust. Working closely with the Chair of Trustees, Executive Head, Trustees, Members and Local Governing Bodies, the postholder will provide expert governance leadership, advice and support to ensure the Trust operates effectively, compliantly and in accordance with statutory requirements and governance best practice.

The Governance Manager will act as the Trust's lead governance professional, overseeing all aspects of governance administration, regulatory compliance, board and committee effectiveness, trustee development and governance assurance. The postholder will ensure that governance arrangements support the strategic objectives of the Trust and enable effective decision-making at all levels.

The role requires a highly organised, proactive and professional individual who can build strong relationships with senior leaders and governors whilst maintaining independence, discretion and objectivity.

Key Responsibilities

Governance Leadership and Development:

- ❶ Act as the Trust's lead governance professional and trusted adviser on governance matters
- ❷ Provide advice and guidance to Trustees, Members, Governors and senior leaders on governance requirements, constitutional matters and regulatory compliance.
- ❸ Lead the annual review and continuous development of the Trust's governance framework, including the Scheme of Delegation, governance structure, committee arrangements and terms of reference.
- ❹ Develop and maintain governance systems, processes and procedures that support effective decision-making and reflect best practice.
- ❺ Lead the annual governance workplan and governance calendar in collaboration with the Chair of Trustees, Executive Head and governance leaders.
- ❻ Support governance self-evaluation and continuous improvement activities.
- ❼ Undertake governance skills audits and support succession planning for Trustees, Members and Governors.
- ❽ Lead trustee, governor and member recruitment processes as required.

Board and Committee Effectiveness:

- ❶ Provide high-quality governance support to the Board of Trustees, its committees and Local Governing Bodies
- ❷ Ensure governance meetings are effectively planned, organised and administered

- ❶ Work with Chairs and senior leaders to develop agendas that support strategic oversight and effective decision-making
- ❷ Coordinate the preparation and timely distribution of high-quality board and committee papers
- ❸ Produce accurate, concise and professional minutes that clearly evidence discussion, challenge, decision-making and agreed actions
- ❹ Maintain action trackers and monitor completion of governance actions
- ❺ Ensure all governance meetings are quorate and conducted in accordance with governance requirements and procedures
- ❻ Support governor panels, including exclusions, disciplinary, grievance and complaints panels, as required.

Compliance, Regulation and Assurance:

- ❶ Ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, Articles of Association, Companies Act requirements and other relevant legislation and guidance.
- ❷ Maintain oversight of governance compliance requirements and advise leaders and governors of any changes in legislation, regulation or best practice.
- ❸ Act as the Trust's company secretariat lead, ensuring statutory filings and governance records are maintained accurately and within required timescales.
- ❹ Maintain registers including the Register of Interests and records relating to Trustees, Members and Governors.
- ❺ Ensure governance information published on Trust and school websites remains accurate and compliant.
- ❻ Support the preparation of governance-related information for auditors, regulators and external reviews.
- ❼ Coordinate annual declarations, eligibility checks and governance compliance requirements.
- ❽ Maintain the Trust's policy framework including ensuring policies are updated in a timely manner in accordance with legislation and key changes are communicated to schools.
- ❾ Support governance aspects of Ofsted inspections, external reviews and other significant events.

Induction, Training and Stakeholder Engagement:

- ❶ Coordinate induction programmes for new Trustees, Members and Governors.
- ❷ Maintain oversight of governance training and development requirements.
- ❸ Support Chairs and governance leaders in identifying development opportunities to strengthen governance effectiveness.
- ❹ Build strong working relationships across all levels of governance and leadership within the Trust.
- ❺ Promote effective communication and information flow between Members, Trustees, committees, Local Governing Bodies and Trust leaders.

Governance Information and Reporting:

- ❶ Prepare governance reports, briefing papers and governance updates for Trustees, Members and senior leaders
- ❷ Analyse governance, compliance and assurance information to support effective decision-making.
- ❸ Monitor governance performance against agreed objectives and report on progress where required.
- ❹ Maintain governance records and documentation to a high professional standard.

General Responsibilities:

- ❶ Develop effective working relationships with Trustees, Members, Governors, Headteachers and senior leaders to foster a culture of support, accountability and constructive challenge.
- ❷ Continually identify opportunities to strengthen governance effectiveness across the Trust.
- ❸ Undertake relevant professional development and maintain up-to-date knowledge of governance requirements and best practice.

- 🕒 Attend Board, committee and governance meetings, including those held outside normal working hours.
- 🕒 Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level and responsibilities of the post.

Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential

- 🕒 GCSE English and Mathematics (Grade C/4 or above) or equivalent.
- 🕒 Evidence of continued professional development.
- 🕒 Right to work in the UK.

Desirable

- 🕒 Degree-level qualification or equivalent experience
- 🕒 Governance qualification through the Chartered Governance Institute, National Governance Association or equivalent professional body.

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- 🕒 Experience of supporting boards, committees, governing bodies or senior decision-making forums.
- 🕒 Experience of governance administration and meeting management.
- 🕒 Experience of producing high-quality minutes and governance records.
- 🕒 Experience of managing complex processes and multiple deadlines.
- 🕒 Experience of maintaining accurate records and ensuring compliance with policies and procedures.
- 🕒 Experience of building effective relationships with senior stakeholders.

Desirable

- 🕒 Experience within an Academy Trust, school, charity, public sector or regulated environment.
- 🕒 Knowledge of Academy Trust governance arrangements.
- 🕒 Knowledge of the Academy Trust Handbook.
- 🕒 Knowledge of charity and company governance requirements.
- 🕒 Experience of trustee or governor recruitment and development.
- 🕒 Experience of governance reviews, board evaluations or governance improvement projects.

Skills and Abilities

Essential

- 🕒 Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- 🕒 Ability to provide professional advice and guidance with confidence and credibility.
- 🕒 Strong organisational and planning skills with excellent attention to detail.
- 🕒 Ability to interpret legislation, policy and guidance and apply this appropriately.
- 🕒 Ability to analyse complex information and present it clearly and concisely.
- 🕒 Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build productive relationships at all levels.
- 🕒 Ability to work independently and use initiative.
- 🕒 Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise sound judgement.
- 🕒 Ability to prioritise effectively and manage competing demands.
- 🕒 Strong IT skills, including Microsoft Office applications.

Desirable

- 🕒 Ability to analyse governance, compliance or organisational performance information.
- 🕒 Experience of governance management software.

Personal Attributes

Essential

- ❶ Commitment to the vision, values and ethos of Equinox Learning Trust.
- ❶ Professional, resilient and highly organised.
- ❶ Diplomatic and politically aware.
- ❶ Adaptable and solution-focused.
- ❶ Committed to continuous improvement and professional development.
- ❶ Able to demonstrate integrity, discretion and sound judgement.
- ❶ Committed to supporting effective governance and improved outcomes for children and young people.

Safeguarding

Equinox Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, satisfactory references and all other relevant pre-employment checks.