



# BEST

BEDFORDSHIRE  
SCHOOLS TRUST

## BEST Board of Trustees Application Pack





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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Bedfordshire Schools Trust and thank you for expressing an interest in our current vacancy.

We have collated this application pack to provide you with all the information you should need to enable you to apply for this role.

However, if you would like any further information or would like to make a visit to our trust or any of our academies, please contact:

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO...

Dear Prospective Trustee,

Thank you so much for your interest in joining the Board of Trustees at Bedfordshire Schools Trust. It really does mean a great deal to us.

BEST is a trust built on a genuine belief in what education can do for children and communities. Since 2016, we have grown into one of the largest trusts in Bedfordshire — **11 academies, five nurseries, over 8,000 children and more than 1,000 members of staff** — but our size has never been what defines us. What defines us is a simple, shared conviction: that every decision we make, and every pound we spend, must put children first.

That belief runs through everything — the way our academies work together, the way we support our staff, and the way we govern. **Our mission, to grow the BEST in everyone**, applies just as much to the adults in our community as to the children we serve. We set high expectations across the board: our ambition is for outcomes in every academy to be above the national average, and we are proud that every one of our schools currently holds at least a Good or Expected Ofsted judgement – with many performing well above this standard.

Trustees are central to that. They bring independence, expertise, and perspective that strengthens everything the executive team does. It is a role that asks a lot — you will be expected to engage seriously, ask searching questions, and give your time generously — but the rewards, personal and professional, are real.

We are looking for people who **care deeply about the communities our schools serve** and who have a genuine passion for ensuring that every young person gets the best possible start in life. Relevant expertise in finance, education or community engagement is always welcome, but what matters most is that you share our values and are ready to give your time and commitment to this work.

I hope this pack gives you a real sense of who we are. Please do get in touch if you would like to talk it through before applying — we would love to hear from you.

Dr Alan Lee

Chief Executive Officer & National Leader of Education



Bedfordshire Schools Trust

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Dear Prospective Trustee,

Thank you for considering trusteeship at Bedfordshire Schools Trust. I am genuinely pleased you are exploring this opportunity, and I hope this pack gives you a real feel for the trust and the role.

The Board exists to ensure that BEST stays true to its purpose — providing excellent, community-rooted education for children across Bedfordshire. We set the strategic direction, oversee the finances, and provide independent support and challenge to Alan and his executive team. It is a role that carries real responsibility, and we take that seriously — but it is also a role that brings enormous satisfaction, particularly as you see the difference a well-governed trust can make to the children and communities it serves.

**BEST is a trust I am proud to chair.** Our academies and nurseries serve families across a wide part of Bedfordshire, and the people who work within them — staff, governors, and executives alike — are deeply committed to the children in their care. **High expectations are not just an aspiration here — they are a commitment.** We believe every child is capable of achieving above the national average, and our schools are held to account for delivering that. We have strong leadership, a clear sense of direction, and a Board that works well together, with a healthy mix of professional backgrounds, perspectives, and honest, constructive challenge.

We are now looking to strengthen the Board with people who understand the communities our schools serve and who care passionately about **giving young people the best possible start in life.** Previous experience of operating in a governance or non-executive capacity — in any sector — is welcomed, but above all it is your connection to our purpose and your willingness to give your time that matters most.

Trusteeship is a voluntary role, but it is one of the most rewarding things I have done. I hope you feel the same way.

With warm wishes,

Ilona Bond

Chair of the Board of Trustees

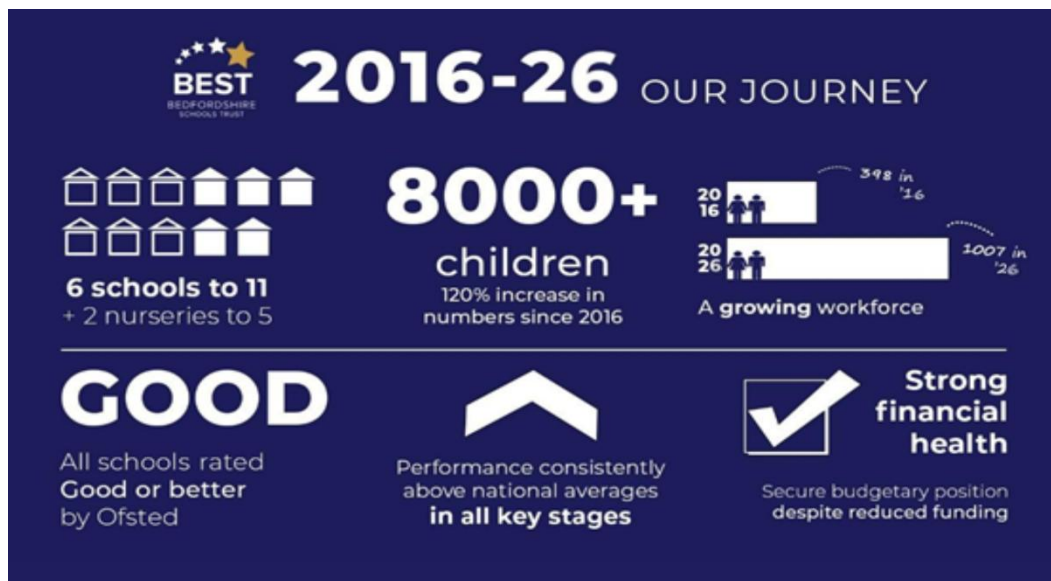
Bedfordshire Schools Trust



# ABOUT BEST

The Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) is a multi-academy trust providing exceptional education across a community of 11 schools and five nurseries.

Since forming in 2016, we have grown significantly into one of the largest trusts in the county. We now educate 8,000 children across the area, from nursery age to advanced level study, and have over 1,000 members of staff.



It is our aim to grow the BEST in everyone, and everything we do is driven by our values.

We will:

- Always put children first
- Collaborate to support and compete to challenge
- Provide community-based provision
- Have the courage to be compassionate

Our aims can only be achieved if we recruit, retain and develop the highest quality workforce – and we want those we employ to be valued in the workplace.

The last 10 years of BEST have been a real success story – and we are looking forward to an exciting future.



# OUR SCHOOLS AND NURSERIES

The 11 schools that make up the BEST family are:

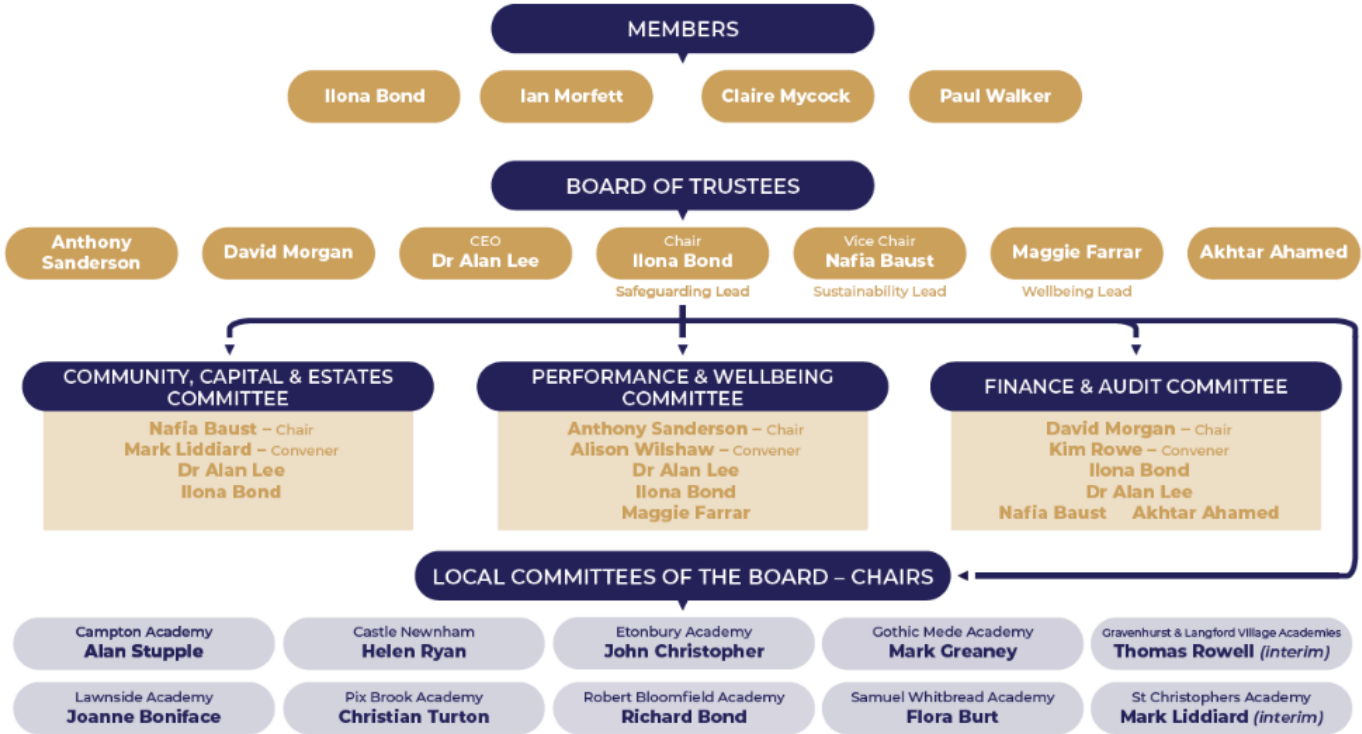
- Campton Academy, Campton
- Castle Newnham, Bedford
- Etonbury Academy, Arlesey
- Gothic Mede Academy, Arlesey
- Gravenhurst Academy, Upper Gravenhurst
- Langford Village Academy, Langford
- Lawnside Academy, Biggleswade
- Pix Brook Academy, Stotfold
- Robert Bloomfield Academy, Shefford
- Samuel Whitbread Academy, Clifton
- St Christophers Academy, Dunstable

We also have five nurseries:

- BEST Nursery (Arlesey)
- BEST Nursery (Langford)
- BEST Nursery (Shefford)
- School-based nursery provision at Gothic Mede Academy
- School-based nursery provision at St Christophers Academy



# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



# HOW TO APPLY

We use an application form, rather than asking for CVs, for most vacancies. This ensures all applicants present their information in the same standardised format and tell us only what we need to know.

Apply online (\*) via the MyNewTerm website at <https://mynewterm.com/> before the closing date.

**Closing date:** Friday 26 June 2026

**Interview date:** Tuesday 7 July 2026

BEST is an equal opportunities employer and we are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All offers of employment will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks and references, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

Strictly no agencies.

**We look forward to receiving your application.**



# JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Trustee (BEST Board of Trustees)</b>
<b>Based at</b>	<b>BEST House, Shefford</b>
<b>Salary/Grade Range</b>	<b>n/a - Voluntary</b>
<b>Responsible to</b>	<b>Chair of Trustees</b>
<b>Start Date</b>	<b>September 2026</b>

## Purpose of Role

To:

1. Provide strategic leadership and direction for BEST, ensuring the trust fulfils its charitable objects and always puts children first
2. Hold the executive leadership team to account for educational outcomes, financial performance and operational effectiveness across all BEST academies and nurseries
3. Ensure the trust complies with its Articles of Association, funding agreements, Academy Trust Handbook and all DfE requirements
4. Safeguard the good name, values and long-term sustainability of the trust, acting always in the best interests of pupils, staff and the communities BEST serves

## Objectives of Role

To ensure:

- the trust complies with its Articles of Association, funding agreements and Department for Education (DfE) requirements
- the trust upholds its Mission, Vision and Values
- the trust applies its resources effectively and in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook and any DfE or Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements



## Key Responsibilities

Trustees are accountable to BEST Members for:

- contributing actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy and defining goals including trust growth strategy
- safeguarding the good name and values of the trust
- representing the trust at functions and meetings as appropriate
- declaring any conflicts of interest whilst carrying out the duties of a trustee
- collective responsibility for the actions of the trust and other trustees
- abiding by the trust's code of conduct
- appointing and supporting the CEO of the trust and monitoring performance
- using specific knowledge and experience to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions
- attending half-termly board meetings and reading meeting documentation in advance
- attending extraordinary meetings of the board as appropriate
- attending committee meetings of the board of which you are a member
- participating in other tasks as they arise from time to time

## Role-Specific Responsibilities

As a trustee you will be appointed to one or more of the Board's standing committees, where your particular expertise and interests will be of most value. Our current committees focus on financial performance, audit, educational standards and pupil wellbeing, and community, capital and estates. Across these committees, trustees contribute to work that includes:

- reviewing educational performance data and holding the executive to account for pupil outcomes, with an ambition for all BEST pupils to achieve above the national average
- providing independent assurance that BEST's financial systems, controls and risks are sound and properly managed



- scrutinising BEST's financial planning, budgeting and reserves position, and gaining assurance over the effectiveness of financial controls and procurement
- contributing to the Board's understanding of teaching quality, curriculum, inclusion and school improvement
- ensuring the voices and needs of local communities are reflected in strategic decision-making
- overseeing BEST's growth plans, capital investment and estates development
- strengthening BEST's relationships with parents, carers, community partners and local stakeholders

No trustee is expected to be expert in all of these areas — the strength of the Board lies in the diversity of experience around the table. What every trustee brings is curiosity, commitment, and a shared determination to do the best for the children and communities we serve.

### Term of Office

Trustees are appointed for a term of four years. After the term is complete, the trustee can either step down or be re-elected.

### Expenses

While the role is voluntary, travel expenses may be claimed in accordance with the BEST Travel and Subsistence Policy.

*Please note, while every effort has been made to explain the duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.*



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

Trustee (BEST Board of Trustees)

Attribute	Essential	Desirable
<b>Commitment and Values</b>		
Commitment to BEST's mission, vision and values	✓	
Genuine passion for ensuring young people get the best possible start in life	✓	
Personal integrity and a willingness to act in the best interests of children, staff and the wider community	✓	
A commitment to high educational outcomes for every child, regardless of background or circumstance	✓	
Knowledge of and connection to the communities BEST serves across Bedfordshire		✓
Experience of working with or alongside schools, nurseries or education settings		✓
<b>Strategic Thinking</b>		
Ability to think strategically and contribute to high-level decision-making	✓	
Willingness to take tough decisions and maintain high expectations	✓	
Good independent judgement and the ability to weigh evidence carefully	✓	
Experience of contributing to organisational strategy in a professional or voluntary capacity		✓



Attribute	Essential	Desirable
<b>Governance and Accountability</b>		
Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship	✓	
Willingness to scrutinise performance, ask searching questions and hold others to account constructively	✓	
Ability to maintain appropriate boundaries between strategic and operational matters	✓	
Willingness to prepare thoroughly, engage actively and lead debate on the issues that matter most to BEST and the children we serve		✓
Previous experience of governance or non-executive leadership in any sector		✓
Experience of serving as a school governor, trustee or board member		✓
<b>Professional Skills</b>		
Strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills	✓	
Ability to analyse and interpret data, financial information or written reports	✓	
Competent in the use of IT and able to engage with digital governance platforms	✓	
Professional expertise in one or more of: finance, audit, education, school improvement, community engagement, HR, law or estates		✓
Experience of organisational growth, partnership development or change at a strategic level		✓



Attribute	Essential	Desirable
Qualified accountant or equivalent financial qualification (particularly relevant for Finance/Audit Trustee role)		✓
<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
Collaborative team player who respects and values different perspectives	✓	
Calm, considered and solutions-focused	✓	
Reliable, well-prepared and able to commit the time the role requires	✓	
<b>Safeguarding</b>		
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people	✓	
Willingness to undertake an enhanced DBS check prior to appointment	✓	
Knowledge of relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance		✓

*We are committed to the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare and all appointments are subject to enhanced DBS clearance.*

