



Application Pack
Company Secretary & Governance Lead
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Cossington, Leicestershire
 0116 296 8171 | aquinas-cmat.org
Support Staff Scale: S1 (£40,777 - £45,091)
 Start Date: As soon as possible

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the post of Governance Lead and Company Secretary, here at the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT).

I would like to share some information with you about our organisation to help you decide if this is the right place for the next step in your career. Ours is a large, thriving educational trust of over 8,600 young people and around 1,200 members of staff across 23 schools. We came into being on 1st September 2018 to enhance, nurture and facilitate all the Catholic schools across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. In that time, we have seen the schools go from strength to strength supported by a central team which takes responsibility for leading school improvement, safeguarding, chaplaincy, educational psychology, HR, finance, estates management, IT, and a range of other services. It is this central team that you could join Governance Lead and Company Secretary.

The work of the central team is a very significant responsibility, as well as a wonderful privilege. We seek to ensure that each of our schools can bring our Trust vision into reality; that all our young people tangibly benefit from a consistently outstanding Catholic education. We believe that education is holistic, going beyond excellent examination outcomes and including the development of interpersonal skills, confidence, moral values, and a sense of social responsibility.

The size of our organisation, and our close working relationship with the two other CMATs across the Diocese of Nottingham, means that the opportunities for personal growth and development are varied and numerous. We are blessed with many outstanding practitioners in all aspects of school life and across the central team. Working with these colleagues and accessing the professional development on offer provides a distinctive and exciting opportunity for all members of staff.

I hope that this insight into our vision and the opportunities open to our staff has further interested you, and we look forward to receiving an application from you to work in our Trust.

With best wishes



Neil Lockyer
Chief Executive Officer



ST THOMAS AQUINAS

Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

OUR MISSION

To grow in knowledge, understanding and faith guided by the love and light of Christ.

OUR GUIDING PILLARS



OUR VISION

Our Trust and our schools are beacons of excellence where everyone flourishes intellectually, spiritually, morally and personally; where our Catholic faith is evident in our actions and where each person is valued and enabled to live life to the full and become the person God has called them to be.



—ST THOMAS—
AQUINAS

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Job Description

Company Secretary & Governance Lead

Job Title:	Company Secretary & Governance Lead
Accountable to:	Trust Board
Reports to:	Chair and CEO
Works with:	The Executive Team, the Trust Board, Headteachers and leadership teams, Local Governing Bodies (and Clerks), other colleagues including the Data Protection Officer (DPO) and the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service (NRCDES)
Location:	STA Trust Central Office / Hybrid. The postholder is expected to travel to meetings around the Trust area.
Salary:	S1
Contract:	Permanent, full-time

Main Purpose:

The Company Secretary & Governance Lead is the Trust's principal adviser on governance, compliance, and statutory responsibilities. As such, they are accountable to the Board for ensuring that the Trust (i.e., the Board, its committees, Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) and Academies) operates within the legal, regulatory, and canonical frameworks of a Catholic Multi Academy Trust.

The postholder acts as the statutory Company Secretary, ensuring full compliance with company law. As Governance Lead, they are also responsible for the direction, design and implementation of high standards of governance to support effective decision making, and promote the Trust's mission as a Catholic educational organisation.

Accountability and Reporting Relationships

The role reports jointly to the Chair of the Trust Board and the CEO because it serves two distinct but equally essential functions:

- supporting and enabling the Board's governance, compliance, and strategic oversight, and
- working as part of the Executive Team to ensure governance, compliance and risk management are embedded operationally across the Trust.



Specifically, the role is accountable to the **Chair of the Trust Board for:**

- ensuring independence of governance advice, safeguarding the integrity of Board processes
- providing direct access for statutory company secretarial duties,
- supporting the Chair in Board development, evaluation, and decision-making, and
- ensuring the Board receives impartial, accurate, and timely information.

It is accountable to the **Chief Executive Officer for:**

- ensuring governance is embedded across the Trust's operations,
- supporting executive compliance, risk management, and policy frameworks,
- ensuring the governance function is integrated with the Executive Team, and enabling effective communication between the Board and the Executive.
- aligning governance work with strategic and organisational priorities,

The arrangement is intended to safeguard the independence of the governance function, strengthen the relationship between the Board and the Executive, and support the Trust's mission as a Catholic educational organisation.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Governance Leadership

- Lead the design, development, implementation, and continuous improvement of the Trust's governance framework, ensuring alignment with:
 - The Academy Trust Handbook
 - Companies Act 2006
 - Charity Commission expectations
 - Department for Education (DfE) governance requirements
 - Canon Law and the expectations of the Diocese of Nottingham as directed through the NRCDES and in line with the Trust Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the Scheme of Delegation.
- Ensure governance arrangements reflect and promote the Trust's Catholic ethos.
- Provide strategic governance advice to the Board, Chair, CEO, and senior leaders
- Ensure governance is embedded across the Trust so that all staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with their responsibilities with regard to governance.

B. Company Secretary Duties

- Act as the Statutory Company Secretary for the Trust, fulfilling the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and ensuring the Trust complies with Charity Law, and that the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures are handled effectively across the Trust.

- Ensure that an Annual Meeting is held in accordance with the requirements of the MultiAcademy Trust's Articles of Association, in collaboration with the NRCDES. -
- Manage all Companies House filings, including confirmation statements and director appointments/resignations.
- Maintain statutory registers and ensure accurate, secure record-keeping.
- Oversee the preparation, circulation, and retention of agendas, papers, and minutes.

C. Board & Committee Support

- Support the Chair, Committee Chairs and CEO in designing meeting Agendas so that the Trust Board can hold the Executive Team to account for securing continual educational and operational improvement across the Trust, and effective delivery of the Strategic Plan for the Trust.
- Ensure Directors receive timely, accurate information to support effective oversight, scrutiny and decision making.
- Provide professional clerking to the Trust Board and its committees.
- Coordinate governance calendars, forward plans, and meeting cycles.
- Support Board evaluation, training, and succession planning.
- Support the Board in communicating its deliberations and decisions to key stakeholders.
- Work with the NRCDES, Chair of the Trust Board, and the Chief Executive Officer on the ongoing recruitment and development of new Foundation Directors to the Trust Board and to the Local Governing Bodies.

D. Local Governance (LGB) Support

- Lead governance strategy and support for Local Governing Bodies, including leading a dispersed team of Clerks for the academy Local Governing Bodies (LGB) determining their role and objectives, and managing their performance and on-going professional development to ensure consistency across the Trust.
- Ensure all LGBs, supported by their Clerks, use the Trust Governor online portal effectively and that information on it complies with Trust-wide Data Protection Policy.
- Oversee governor recruitment, induction, and safeguarding checks. Provide training, guidance, and resources to LGB Chairs and governors.
- Ensure consistency and compliance with the Scheme of Delegation.

E. Compliance, Risk & Policy Management

- Maintain oversight of statutory compliance across the Trust.
- Ensure that the Trust acts swiftly to comply with changes in regulatory requirements, and that these are fulfilled in a timely manner and recorded in the Trust Board minutes.
- Ensure policies are up to date, coherent, and compliant.
- Support the Audit & Risk Committee with risk management processes and manage and maintain the Trust risk register.

- Manage registers of interests, whistleblowing, data protection governance and complaints,
- acting as Complaints Coordinator for complaints about the Trust, providing advice to staff and governors, reporting on complaints to the Trust Board and ensuring the implementation of recommended changes to policy and process and any associated staff training.
- Support NRCDES to ensure all Trust Directors are not disqualified from acting under charity or company law and ensuring full due diligence in relation to third party conflict of interests.

F. Catholic Ethos & Diocesan Relationship

- Work closely with the Diocese to ensure governance reflects Catholic education principles.
- Support the appointment and formation of Foundation Directors and Governors.
- Ensure governance documentation and training uphold the Trust's Catholic character.

G. Admissions

- Oversee the Trust-wide Admissions Policy in accordance with the Diocesan model.
- Facilitate consultations on the policy in accordance with the School Admissions Code.
- Ensure the Board are kept abreast of any changes to the policy.
- Ensure Local Governing Bodies are informed of consultations and changes to the policy in a timely manner.

H. Suspensions and exclusions

- Act as principal advisor to School Exclusion panels including, supporting the development of Exclusion packs; setting up panel meetings; communicating with all stakeholders (governors, parents/carers, LA (if appropriate), external services (if appropriate)).

CORE DELIVERABLES OF THE ROLE

1. An annual schedule of business ("Forward Plan") for the Trust Board to ensure all requirements are covered, including an annual cycle of meetings of the Trust Board and its Committees including LGBs.
2. A fully compliant policy framework for the Trust implemented across the Trust
3. A Trust-wide Risk Register with a regular cycle of review.
4. Regular briefings and training for LGB Clerks.

5. Governance Symposium four times annually to guide and support governors in developing their practice.
6. Targeted support for Chairs of Governors to support them in leading their LGBs effectively.
7. Protocols for information sharing for Trust Board and LGB meetings.
8. High quality, professional papers presented on time to the Trust Board and LGB.
9. High quality minutes for all Trust Board meetings as well as their Committees including the LGBs.
10. An ongoing annual communication plan for the Trust Board
11. Knowledge and skills reviews for the Board and LGBs which inform recruitment and training, and the annual review of the Trust Board.
12. Trust Board and LGB induction training and ongoing plans for CPD.
13. Up to date Succession Plans for the Trust Board and LGB.
14. Regular briefings to Trustees and the Executive

Person specification

Head of Governance and Company Secretary

A. Training & Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
ICSA/CGI qualification (or working towards it/willing to work towards it).	Y	
A University degree (or equivalent qualification), preferably in a management, business administration or legal discipline, or at least 5 years operational role experience in a similar sized organisation	Y	
Certificate in Charity Law and Governance		Y
Commitment to ongoing professional development	Y	

B. Experience	Essential	Desirable
Significant governance experience in education, charity, public sector, or corporate settings.	Y	
Experience of managing and leading a team	Y	
Experience of advising senior leaders and Boards with authority and clarity.	Y	
Experience of organising and supporting meetings with multiple and different stakeholders		Y
Evidence of providing training and development opportunities to other staff		Y
Experience of working in a school/educational setting		Y

C. Experience	Essential	Desirable
Strong understanding of academy trust governance and company and charity law.	Y	
Knowledge of DfE and academy legislation	Y	
Knowledge of Ofsted and Catholic Schools Inspection processes		Y
Knowledge of the Schools' Admissions Code		Y
Knowledge of DfE Suspension and Exclusions guidance and processes		Y
Excellent verbal and written communication skills including minute taking	Y	
Strong ICT skills	Y	
Excellent planning and organisation skills	Y	

D. Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable
High levels of integrity, confidentiality, and professionalism	Y	
Commitment to the mission and values of Catholic education and willingness to support Catholic life in schools and central team.	Y	
Strategic thinking and sound judgement	Y	
Relationship building and stakeholder management and ability to command credibility and respect from all members of the Trust central team and school communities	Y	
Emotional resilience	Y	
Commitment to continuous improvement, including ability to self-evaluate and reflect, and to adapt to changing circumstances and new ideas	Y	
Ability to be respectful and promote equality of opportunity and diversity	Y	

E. Safeguarding	Essential	Desirable
Understanding of responsibilities of the Trust and schools in ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation	Y	
Commitment to adhere to and uphold the Trust's compliance with its policies and procedures for safeguarding	Y	

Note: The postholder must be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This job description is not exhaustive and may be amended in consultation with the postholder to meet the evolving needs of the Trust.

Trust Benefits

Why work for us?



Professional Development Opportunities

We offer a range of centralised training and networking within our Catholic Multi Academy Trust for all roles, as well as induction for staff new to us. Staff benefit from access to the Teaching School Hub, Knowledge Hub and collaborative work across our family of schools.



Opportunities for Career Progression

With 23 academies in our family and 84 academies across the Diocese, opportunities for career progression are a reality. All of our opportunities are advertised on our website and across our social media channels.



Employee Wellbeing

Well-being support for our employees, including helplines, menopause support, physiotherapy and access to a virtual GP service. Employees also have access to a variety of discounts on gym & retail. This is provided through 'Schools Advisory Service'.



Terms & Conditions

We have committed to following nationally agreed terms and conditions for pay, for both Teachers' and Support Staff.



Pension

As a teacher, you will automatically enrol into the Teachers' Pension Scheme. As Support Staff, you are enrolled into the Local Government Pensions Scheme – one of the most competitive on the market.



Cycle to work scheme

A Government backed initiative that enables you to obtain a bike and/or cycling accessories to use for riding to work whilst making tax and National Insurance savings from your Gross pay.



Perks at Work

With access to 30,000+ national & local discount, employees can save on big purchases such as electronics, home appliances, car buying and travel and on everyday items such as food, meal kits, home entertainment and learning and fitness.



THANK YOU

For the interest you have shown in working with our trust
For more details about our team and our schools you can visit:



www.aquinas-cmat.org



[@StThomasAquinasCMAT](https://www.facebook.com/StThomasAquinasCMAT)



[@stthomasaquinascmat](https://www.instagram.com/stthomasaquinascmat)



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