

Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust

About Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust

Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust is being formed through a partnership between Hereford Diocese and Lichfield Diocese who are working with a group of 8 like-minded schools who wish to come together to formalise a new academies trust for the benefit of their pupils, staff, and their communities.

We have received a Department for Education Trust Establishment Grant to establish a new Multi Academy Trust.

We believe that to enable schools to flourish in a changing educational landscape, it is essential to participate in the change and reformation of the education system in ways that leave schools with strong structures, strong support, and good collaboration.

This MAT has been approved by the DfE as an option for any schools in Lichfield or Hereford Diocese within the Shropshire area.

This trust is open to all maintained Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Church of England schools across Lichfield Diocese or Hereford Diocese and Single Academy Trusts, along with any Shropshire LA or Telford and Wrekin LA maintained community schools who feel the vision and values of the MAT align with their own.

What is a Director and what do they do?

The trustees of the academy trust are both charity trustees and company directors. The [Academy Trust Handbook](#) refers to them as trustees. However, in some academy trusts, such as church academies, those on the board are known instead as '**directors**'. In church academies, the term 'trustees' is reserved for those on the board of the separate trust owning the land.

As the trust begins its development with the first group of schools joining the MAT, Members are seeking to build an effective and diverse board of Directors with the right skills, expertise, behaviours, and capacity. Together with the interim CEO the Directors will shape the vision and values of the trust, to deliver an excellent education for current and future pupils.

As a director, your key governance responsibilities will be to provide:

- **Strategic leadership:** Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- **Accountability and assurance:** has robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the academy trust, including the provision of education, pupil welfare, overseeing and ensuring appropriate use of funding and effective financial performance and keeping their estate safe and well-maintained
- **Strategic engagement:** the board has strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders. The board involves parents, schools and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement.

Directors must also ensure that the religious character of the church academies within the trust is preserved and developed as part of ensuring the charitable objects of the academy trust deed are met.

Directors are expected to attend up to 6 full meetings per academic year (reading any documents provided with the agenda and preparing questions beforehand is an essential part of the role) along with any required training to support you in this role. On average commitment to the role would require 2-3 hours per week.

To find out more about the role of a Director please click [here](#).

Who are we seeking to recruit?

To build an effective and diverse range of skills expertise and behaviours, Members of the Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust would warmly welcome a conversation and applications from potential Directors who could bring experience in the following areas:

Finance: The ideal recruit will be able to confidently use budget monitoring reports from the Chief Finance Officer and ask relevant questions to provide assurance that financial procedures are compliant and the budget is being managed effectively. You will be committed to reviewing funding allocations under various budget headings to understand how spending impacts on pupil outcomes.

Legal: Directors with these skills, will bring legal, compliance and risk management expertise. Legal expertise from directors will strongly support the collective accountability and responsibility the trust has for regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements. They will ideally bring expertise in corporate, charity or a third-sector role, and will be confident in operating at a strategic level.

Estates management and Health and Safety: Those who are accustomed to managing buildings and estates in a strategic capacity to effectively maintain buildings would be ideal candidates for this role. You will be confident with how to challenge and support systems and processes to ensure the health and safety of people in each academy in the trust.

Human Resources: Our schools have fantastic, skilled and committed staff teams. We want to nurture and develop that talent, whilst fulfilling our legal obligations and duties around the management of the whole staff team. We are looking for someone who can advise the board through their wider knowledge in HR.

Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust is committed to championing equality, diversity, and inclusion through the strategic and business plans and the daily life of each academy. We encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. We strive to ensure that our board of Directors represents the communities we serve, as well as wider society.

What are the benefits of becoming a Director?



What difference will you make?

Becoming an academy trustee gives you the chance to work to improve young people's life chances and you are able to...

- Use your lived experience and skills to bring a new perspective to the table, therefore enriching a governing board.
- Hold executive teams to account, which allows pupils to receive the education they need to thrive within a school environment.
- Ensure that voices from many different groups and communities are represented, and that voices from groups which may often struggle to be heard within education are involved in the conversation.
- Make sure a difference is being made in and for your local community.
- Build professional networks and gain new skills, allowing you to bring even more to the board

Find out more and register your interest

Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust would welcome applications from individuals who are local to the Shropshire region and can attend meetings in person, although committees are held in a hybrid style, meaning some remote attendance is possible.

If you are interested in finding out more please complete an expression of interest form enclosed with this letter and return via email to education@lichfield.anglican.org .

If you would like further information, please contact the Director of Education for Lichfield Diocese, Mark Davis on 07581 305943 or email mark.davis@lichfield.anglican.org

Useful information – academy trust governance

The following documents provide useful information and reading to any potential Director:

Academy Trust Handbook: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-trust-handbook>

Academy trust governance guide – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/-governance-in-academy-trusts>

Church of England Hope for a Flourishing Schools System:
<https://www.cefel.org.uk/flourishingsystem/>