Role Description
Trustee/Governor/Director of The Crypt School

INTRODUCTION

The Crypt School as an Academy Trust is a Company Limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The Trustees (who are also Directors of the Academy Trust and the School's Governors) are the people responsible under the Academy Trust's articles of association for controlling the School's overall strategic management, development and administration. They have responsibility for directing its affairs, and for ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the Trust's charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public.

The Trustees are selected from a wide range of backgrounds and our aim is to achieve a balanced board with a core of individuals with educational, legal, compliance, finance, human resources, property management, business and community backgrounds. All share a genuine commitment to the future of our school.

TRUSTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees work collectively as a group ('the Board') and are accountable to the wider community (the 'stakeholders') for the delivery of the best possible educational, pastoral and support service. The Board has the following core functions:

- **Strategic leadership** – setting and championing the school's strategy, and establishing and fostering its culture
- **Accountability and assurance** – the Board has robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the School, including educational provision and pupil welfare. Trustees oversee and ensure appropriate use of funding and effective financial performance and ensure the estate is safe and well-maintained
- **Strategic engagement** – ensuring that the voices and views of stakeholders (including pupils, parents, staff and the community) support effective decision-making.
- Trustees must also comply with their legal duties as charity trustees (these are often described as the duties of **compliance, care and prudence**) and company directors. Trustees are responsible for ensuring compliance with the trust's charitable objects and funding agreement, and regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements.

The day-to-day management of the School is delegated to the Head, Finance Director and members of the senior management team, and the Trustees monitor performance in the light of an agreed framework.

The following sections set out in more detail the functions and duties of Trustees.

1 Legal

The Trustees are also the Directors of the Academy Trust and must fully understand their duties as company directors and charity trustees. The duties of company directors are described in sections 170 to 181 of the Companies Act 2006. The role and duties of charity trustees are described by the Charity Commission in their guidance *CC3: The essential trustee: what you need to know.*

The Board of Trustees has wide responsibilities under statute, regulations and the funding agreement. Principally, it is responsible for ensuring that the Trust's funds are used only in accordance with the law, its articles of association, its funding agreement and the Academy Handbook. The Board of Trustees has wide discretion over its use of the Trust's funds, which it must discharge reasonably and in a way that commands broad public support. It is responsible for the proper use of those funds, including regularity and propriety, and for ensuring value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Board of Trustees must understand their statutory duties as company directors as set out in the Companies Act 2006. These comprise the duties to:

- act within their powers;
- promote the success of the company;
- exercise independent judgement;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- declare an interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

2 Governance

As a governance body, the Trustees are responsible for the:

- Review of their governance, including a consideration of the composition of the board in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact;
- Election of a chair, deputy chair, and chairs of committees;
- Co-opting individuals with particular expertise or qualifications as additional members of committees;
- Appointment (and removal) of a governance professional and company secretary;
- Annual review of the scheme of delegation;
- Changes to the board structure;
- Approval of the terms of reference of the committees;
- Compliance with Ofsted and Department for Education provisions, including those relating to transparency of governance;
- Monitoring of the risk register to ensure Trustees and management are taking action where necessary;
- Appointment and removal of Trustees is reserved for the Members of the Trust. Only the Chair of the Trust Board is also a Member.

3 Strategy

Trustees participate in the planning and setting of the School's strategic direction to determine:

- the vision and ethos of the School;
- clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the School;
- that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- the School's budget;
- the School's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
- the approval of other School policies, ensuring these are consistent with the School Strategy and key objectives;
- the future development of the School estate;
- the School's admission policy.

4 Management Accountability

Trustees hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the School's performance. This includes:

- agreeing the outcomes from the School's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school improvement plans;
- considering all relevant data and feedback provided by School and school leaders and external sources on all aspects of School performance; ensuring plans are in place and implemented where action to improve is required;
- asking challenging questions of school leaders and ensuring these questions are correctly responded to;
- ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits and understanding what if any remedial action is required ensuring implementation;
- ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the School is operating effectively according to those policies;
- acting as link Trustee for specific school responsibilities, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the Board on progress;
- listening to and reporting to the School's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community.

5 Resources

Trustees ensure the School staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including:

- adequate staff to carry out the School's objectives;
- the necessary expertise;
- external advice where necessary;
- effective appraisal;
- CPD (Continuing Professional Development);
- suitable premises for pupils, teaching and support staff.

6 Finance

Trustees are responsible for the control and monitoring of financial affairs, ensuring compliance with the Funding Agreement, Academy Trust Handbook and Company and Charity regulations by:

- appointing an appropriately qualified person as the School's Finance Director;
- ensuring that all investment decisions are in the best interests of the School;
- ensuring good financial management and effective internal controls including setting up a process for independent checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks;
- reviewing information on financial performance at least six times a year and ensuring plans are in place and implemented if financial performance is off course;
- approving a balanced budget;
- approving the annual report and accounts, ensuring they are audited by a statutory auditor and incorporate accounting policies approved by the Board of Trustees;
- establishing the School's reserve policy;
- ensuring the Academy Trust is sufficiently insured, including Trustees' indemnity insurance.

7 Employment

When required Trustees may be asked to serve on panels of Trustees to:

- appoint the Head and participate in the panel for the appointment of other senior leaders;
- appraise the Head;
- set the Head's pay and approve/disapprove the pay recommendations for other staff;
- hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
- hear appeals and complaints;
- approve the structure for salaries and allowances;
- set the pay policy and ensure that it is adhered to on all occasions;
- discuss employment issues that could result in legal proceedings.

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8 Meetings and in-school commitments

Trustees are expected to:

- attend all/most of the full Board meetings. At present, there are six or seven Full Board meetings per year. These are normally held at 4pm on a Monday and last around 2.5 hours;
- participate in at least one committee (and typically two committees) of the Board, attending all/most of the meetings. Meetings normally last around 0.5 to 2 hours and each committee typically has 2 or 3 meetings per year (Resources, Staff & Pay has 5);
- Trustees will be expected to read all papers in advance of the full Board and committee meetings (typically 0.5-2 hours per meeting). These will normally be sent out around one week before the meeting;
- become the 'link' Trustee for a subject or theme area. This typically involves a minimum of one annual visit to school;

- attend some of the open school events through the year such as prize-giving, concerts, plays, carol service etc. in order to show support and be part of school life;
- serve on panels as required for statutory procedures e.g. to hear disciplinary appeals, complaints or exclusions appeals;
- fulfil other Trustee/Governor roles from time to time, e.g. undertaking Governor reviews, conducting exit interviews;
- otherwise support the Clerk in carrying out governance requirements. Prompt responses to those requests are essential to the smooth running of the Board. If Trustees find that other work pressures are preventing active participation, this must be discussed with the Chair. In such circumstances, it may be possible to step back from day-to-day school life whilst remaining a Trustee for a limited period; but this must be agreed with the Chair first.

9 Curriculum Oversight

Trustees have responsibility for:

- setting the admissions policies;
- monitoring performance against academic targets ensuring remedial action is taken when required;
- endorsing the aims and objectives of the School;
- overview of changes to the curriculum;
- approving changes to the structure of the school day;
- ensuring and monitoring compliance with statutory requirements and Ofsted standards.

10 Pastoral Oversight and Safeguarding, Admissions and Estates

Trustees have responsibility for setting and overseeing:

- arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Safeguarding policies, procedures and training;
- equal opportunities policy and objectives;
- School policies on behaviour, sanctions and exclusions of pupils;
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision;
- Admissions and appeals policies and procedures
- attendance policies;
- complaints procedures;
- anti-bullying policies;
- school uniform policy;
- Health and Safety policy and arrangements
- Provision of suitable accommodation and the safety and security of the premises;
- provision of First Aid;
- any issues affecting a pupil that could result in legal proceedings;
- liaison with the social services/police, where required.

Reports on the above topics are produced by the Head and other senior staff on a regular cycle for the meetings of Trustees and of the committees. The Trust Board has a strategic

leadership responsibility for the School's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education,* ensuring policies, procedures and training in school are effective and comply with the law at all times.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Trustees should act at all times in accordance with the Nolan principles and the Trust Board's Code of Conduct (see Appendix). -Each Trustee has an important role in supporting and encouraging the Head, although prime responsibility for developing the partnership rests with the Chair of Trustees. As the employers of all the staff, it is important for the Trustees to meet staff wherever possible, and groups of pupils, when the opportunities are offered. Regular attendance at meetings and major functions is important, and Trustees need to be prepared to devote the time and energy that is necessary to carry out their role and to develop their understanding of the School. They should arrange their visits in advance via the Head.

Individual Trustees should express their personal views within meetings; but once a decision has been reached, they are bound by collective decision-making. They need to take care to avoid breaches of confidentiality and to avoid undermining the Head, since their relationship can only flourish if it is based upon mutual respect and collaboration. They should only speak on behalf of the Board if they have been specifically authorised to do so - a function that normally falls to the Chair, or Vice Chair. Conflicts of interest must be declared in advance.

Qualities of integrity, impartiality and objectivity are important. The Board, under the leadership of the Chair, should be as transparent and open as possible, with all Trustees conscious of their responsibilities towards the school communities and of the clear distinction between the roles of Trustees and of paid employees, as well as any potential conflicts of interest.

Trustees must be aware that in school or outside they should not undertake any action that brings the School into disrepute. On all occasions Trustees must present the School in the best possible light. Trustees are responsible in every way for ensuring that the School's performance is of the highest possible standard.

TRAINING

Full induction training is provided for newly appointed Trustees. This includes a handbook of essential documents, meeting the Head, Chair and Clerk to the Board, compulsory safeguarding training and attendance at an externally run training course for new governors/trustees. All Trustees must complete safeguarding and cybersecurity training within three months of appointment and update it regularly thereafter. Failure to complete this training within the required timescale will trigger a recommendation to Members that the individual be removed from the Board.

At least two Trustees on the Board at any one time must have current safer recruitment training. For those to whom this applies, the training must be completed within six months of appointment and regularly updated thereafter.

Trustees are encouraged to attend other training courses and seminars to reinforce their awareness of their varied duties and responsibilities, and access to high-quality on-line training is provided throughout your term. The Company Secretary/Clerk to the Trustees will circulate lists of courses on a regular basis and ensure that Trustees attend appropriate training.

EXPENSES

The role of Trustee is unpaid. Reasonable expenses may be reimbursed in accordance with the School's Trustee Expenses Scheme (on the School website).

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The Crypt School values diversity in its governance and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. Trustees will be appointed following a safer recruitment process. **Candidates should complete the application form and self-disclosure form (available on the website) and return both to the Clerk to the Board, Mrs Nicola Donlon (clerk@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk) by Monday 30 November 2026.**

The School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. The School will carry out an online search as part of its due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to interview with a panel including current Trustees and the Headmaster, at which relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Gaps in application details or any other concerns will be investigated at interview.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, Trustees and volunteers to share this commitment. **The position of Governor/Academy Trustee is subject to an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service with children's barred list check, Section 128 direction (prohibition from management) and other safeguarding and right to work checks before appointment.** Please read our Safeguarding Policy and Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure, which can be found on our school website**.**

Trustees are appointed for a term of four years and may seek re-appointment at the end of that term. The Trust is required to publish on its website the following information about its Trustees serving at any point over the past 12 months: full name, date of appointment, term of office, date stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them, relevant business and pecuniary interests, including governance roles in other educational institutions, and attendance record at board and committee meetings. The names and appointments of Trustees are also published on Companies House and the Department for Education service *Get Information About Schools*.

APPENDIX: THE TRUST BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

As Governors / Trustees, we will focus on our strategic functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

We will apply the highest standards and will:

1. act within our powers
2. promote the success of the trust
3. exercise independent judgement
4. exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
5. avoid conflicts of interest
6. not accept benefits from third parties
7. declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

As individuals on the Board, we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
3. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. We shall fully cooperate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as disclosure and barring or right to work checks.
5. Although appointed through different routes, we will all be guided by our overriding responsibility to work collectively for the benefit of the school as a whole.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school/s and local community.
8. We understand that the board is a corporate body, which means that no trustee/governor may act on their own without proper authority from the full board, and that we all carry equal responsibility for decisions made. We will express our individual views in meetings, and stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (Appendix 1) or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.

13. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media) and understand that we should not take any action, in or out of school, that would bring the school into disrepute.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school to meet staff and pupils. When doing so we will make arrangements with the Headteacher in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (e.g. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/ communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential documents and personal data are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.

2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Adopted by The Crypt School Academy Trust Board on 18 May 2026

Appendix 1: The Nolan Principles of Public Life

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.