



# Recruitment Pack for Board Trustees

September 2021



## **‘Together we can’**

### **Welcome**

Welcome from Helen Coulson – Chair of the Trust

Do you believe that a great education can enhance life chances for young people?

If so, would you like to be part of the ELT and support the work of the Trust in providing educational excellence, values and life skills to those in our care? We are seeking Trustees who share our vision and values and have the skills, experience and time to provide strategic leadership and governance oversight to the work of the Trust.

Trustees work as part of a small group bringing a diversity of skills to our leadership and governance to support both Christian and Community schools within our Trust. We hope that you will see the opportunity to become a Trustee as a stimulating and exciting opportunity to use your professional skills to enrich the lives of children and young people.

The information in this pack can only provide an outline of the Trust’s work, but if what you read stimulates your interest and you would like to find out more about the Trust and how you can support our work, please get in touch. We would be delighted to arrange for you to visit our schools and understand more about the role of our Trustees and how you might contribute.

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Helen Coulson

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Enlighten Learning Trust



## About Enlighten Learning Trust

### Statement of Purpose

At the Enlighten Learning Trust we believe that education can bring about systemic social change within contemporary society. We aim to realise that potential by building and supporting a network of great schools that not only provide excellent education but redress the inequalities of access and opportunity that exist, that inspire and foster aspiration, and that nurture the enjoyment of learning, creative expression, and practical application.

Our Christian ethos is expressed in this aim through our pursuit of a shared understanding of one another and our world, our commitment to social change for the common good, and our mutual enjoyment of our shared endeavours, which we believe express the transcendent life of God. While we understand our ethos as explicitly Christian, we recognise that it can be shared with and taken from different standpoints. We welcome it being shared by those with no faith background or those of other faiths, without any assumption that it affects the integrity of their convictions or beliefs.

The Enlighten Learning Trust also seeks to help improve the education system as a whole through developing innovations in education and community engagement and through providing services to assist in school support and change management. We will always focus on the long-term personal fulfilment of our students, teaching staff and workforce, and the broader transformation of society.

### Philosophy

The name Enlighten reflects our philosophy of education. The enlightenment movement of the 17th and 18th centuries featured an appetite for challenging the accepted thinking of the time, embracing a scientific approach, yet underpinning it with a fundamental belief in God's hand in the creation of the world. We therefore embrace the role schools play not only in developing a body of knowledge and skills with which to flourish in the world, but also in questioning the deeper reasons for our existence and how this affects the role we can play in society.

Central to every school is the concept that each member (child and adult) will be given the opportunity to flourish in the broadest sense – rich learning, character development, deep thinking, teamwork, excellent outcomes and mature reflection. We believe that each individual is equal and unique, that they are highly valued and must know this in their daily experience at school. In ELT schools our children will be enlightened about the world and their part in it and be superbly equipped to contribute to their community within and beyond the school gates.

All the schools in the Trust will have different contexts and communities that they serve, along with differing histories and backgrounds. What unites us is the ambition to support each other in our endeavour to transform the life chances of every child in our schools, regardless of their



background, so the schools in the Trust are truly uplifting places, and therefore we believe that ‘together we can’.

## History

The Enlighten Learning Trust (ELT) was born from the Esher Learning Trust in Autumn 2020, which was founded in March 2014. The Trust currently comprises Esher High School and St Andrew’s Primary School, Cobham.

The re-naming of the Trust was undertaken to provide a break from the original founding school. We want to be clear that there is equality among the constituent schools and that we are a family of schools who have mutual goals.

## Values, Vision and Behaviours

### Values

We value every child equally, and recognise that they have one, unique opportunity to learn, develop and mature in our care.

- Every child can succeed and contribute positively to their community, both now and in the future, regardless of their background.
- We work together with integrity and Trust, sharing the experiences we have and learning from each other for the good of the children in our care.
- We will proactively develop staff potential across all schools in the Trust, investing in colleagues and supporting a common journey of improvement.
- In each school we will provide an aspirational environment that is colourful & creative where we foster curiosity, guide excellence, grow children of good character and nurture a love of life.

### Vision

Every school in the Trust will flourish whilst ensuring a strong ethos of support and collaboration. This is based on the unshakeable belief that children learn through all aspects of their daily lives and that their values and knowledge, experiences and habits are as important as their academic qualifications.

- We are growing a family of schools based in the Surrey area in which all children succeed and are championed by those who deliver a truly excellent education.
- Each of our schools represents a unique context that we support and celebrate, and we take joint responsibility for the success of all the children in our schools.

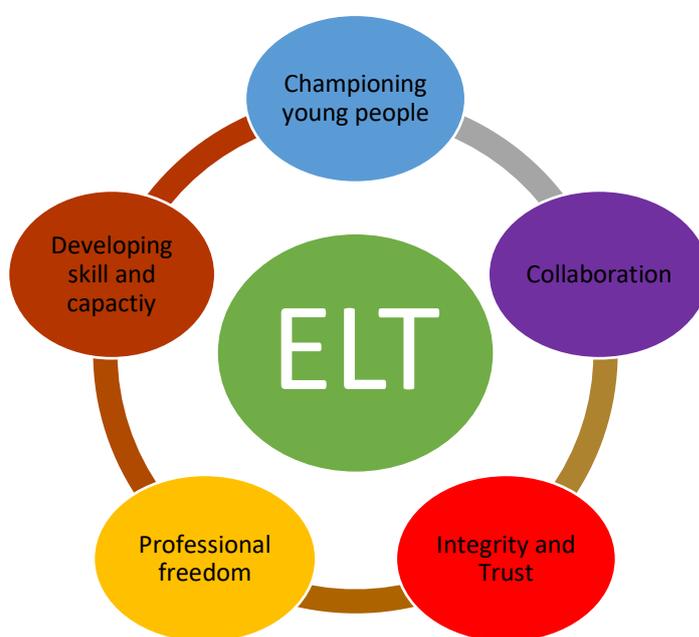


- Every school will offer something to others. All our staff will be highly trained and supported, work together to their students' benefit and develop high levels of expertise.
- Our culture will be rooted in bible truths yet represent the broad spread of beliefs in schools of all settings. We are outward facing and forward thinking, rooted in the best educational research and working with outside partners to the benefit of the children.

### Behaviours

- Championing young people rather than institutions.
- Collaborating rather than competing where it delivers positive impacts on learning.
- Acting with the highest levels of integrity and engendering Trust.
- Encouraging professional freedoms within consistent boundaries.
- Continually developing the skills and capacities of our people and our organisation.

As a Church of England MAT, the Trust has good links with the Diocese of Guildford. Members are responsible for the appointment of Trustees and ensure that all Trustee appointments are skills-based, linked to the skills audit carried out by Trustees. We are committed to supporting the Diocesan vision for supporting schools through an Academy Hub model and we are liaising with the Director of Education to explore opportunities to engage with others.





## Plans for the future

ELT's Growth Plan, which has the support of both the Diocese and Regional Schools Commissioner, sets out the Trust's objective to grow to around 10 schools by 2025.

The key challenges for the board over the next 12-24 months are:

<b>Academy Performance and Standards</b>	Raise Attainment and improve progression.
<b>Academy Effectiveness</b>	Support excellent standards of teaching and learning. Implement a CPD programme for our Academies to ensure that our staff have the right skills to further raise standards, deliver good teaching and learning, and disseminate good practice to ensure rapid improvement.
<b>Growth</b>	Develop a network of schools across primary and secondary phases who work together to champion children.
<b>Central Services</b>	Grow and build a strong infrastructure in the MAT to support the drive for every ELT academy to be an exceptional school. Ensure that the Trust has business arrangements that are efficient and effective to enable it to deliver on its commitments to grow, prosper and deliver value for money across all of our operations.

There is a small but dedicated central team who work together to evaluate individual school needs. We strive to work with schools to create a bespoke programme of engagement. We are looking to build on and share strengths and offer support where needed.



## Joining the Board of Trustees

### 1. Role and responsibilities of Trustees

The Board of Trustees are accountable to the Department for Education (DfE) for the strategic leadership of the Trust and for providing accountability, oversight and assurance for its educational and financial performance. Trustees are responsible to the Diocesan Board of Education for the promotion of the Trust's distinctive Church of England character. The Members of the Trust (in effect, its shareholders) are appointed by the DBE and appoint the majority of the Trust's Trustees. Members also have responsibility for oversight of governance and Trustees are accountable to the members for the impact of governance activities.

The Board of Trustees requires a range of skills to discharge their responsibilities well. Board meetings can cover topics ranging from the Trust's business and educational strategy; pupil achievement and progress; quality of teaching and learning; school leadership, staffing and resources; buildings and financial investment; and Christian distinctiveness. Trustees must ensure the effective and efficient use of all resources and will evaluate performance indicators and financial information covering all aspects of school and Trust performance.

The Board's ultimate accountability is to the pupils, parents and wider community and Trustees have a duty to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with the highest standards of corporate governance.

In performing these duties, Trustees are expected to follow a code of conduct which has regard to the highest standards of behaviour in public life as set out in the Nolan Principles – leadership, selflessness, objectivity, openness, integrity, honesty and accountability. The Charities Commission publication 'The Essential Trustee' also establishes a common set of recommended standards of good governance practice which are relevant for charity Trustees.

Trustees are required to meet the eligibility conditions and satisfactorily to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on appointment. Trustees' activities are covered by Risk Protection Insurance purchased from the DfE.

ELT is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Department for Education. A chart showing how the Trust fits into diocesan academy governance structures is attached at Appendix A. Details of the Trust's governance and profiles of the current Trustees are available on ELT website.

A role description covering the main aspects of the role of an academy Trust director is attached at Appendix B.



## 2. Recruitment of new Trustees

In the light of the Trust's growth plan and recent and forthcoming director retirements, Trustees have carried out a skills audit and are seeking to make up to 4 new appointments. Working together, members and Trustees have set up a panel to oversee the appointment process and would welcome applications from those with strong educational, commercial and strategic skills including, but not limited to:

- Finance/Audit
- Legal/Compliance
- Strategic leadership/growth management
- HR

**Role 1:** The Trust is looking for a professional with considerable experience in the finance/ audit sector, to provide support/challenge and ensure that efficient and effective financial and audit processes are maintained. The individual should have experience in the analysis and scrutiny of financial information.

**Role 2:** The Trust is looking for someone with significant senior experience in the legal field who will be able to support and challenge the executive team as they further develop their approaches to Trust compliance.

**Role 3:** The Trust is looking for someone with experience of strategic planning, and leading and managing organisational growth and change.

**Role 4:** The Trust is looking for someone with strategic HR expertise is sought to support growth and change and provide specialist guidance to inform HR strategy, policies and processes.

Applicants need to be able fully to support the Trust's mission and values.

## 3. Time commitment

The Board of Trustees meets 6 times a year during the daytime.

According to their skills, experience and interests, Trustees may also take on a specific role on behalf of the Board, for example for governance or property related matters. To ensure good connectivity and communication between the Trust's schools and the Board, some Trustees attend local governing committee meetings or other school events.



Over the course of a year, Trustees might expect to commit up to 15 hours a month to their role, whereas the position of Chair of the Trust is likely to require twice as much time.

Trustees are expected to take up induction and training opportunities to enable them to fulfil their role effectively. The role is not remunerated; travelling expenses are paid.

#### 4. How to apply

If you are interested in applying, please get in touch to arrange an informal conversation or a visit to a Trust school. Please contact Alison Morgan in the first instance via email [amorgan@esherlearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:amorgan@esherlearningtrust.co.uk)

Alternatively, if you would just prefer to apply, please send:

- an application form (available to download from the Trust website, [Enlighten Learning Trust - Trustee Recruitment \(enlightenl.education\)](https://enlightenl.education))
- a covering letter explaining why you're interested in applying and what you feel you could contribute to the work of the Trust

to Alison Morgan: [amorgan@esherlearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:amorgan@esherlearningtrust.co.uk)

We will also be seeking to identify those who might be interested in taking on the following specific roles which might be available in the future as part of our succession planning, so please indicate if you would be interested in taking on any of the following roles in due course:

- Chair of the Trust
- Chair of the Education Committee
- Chair of the Resources Committee

#### 5. Recruitment Process

Informal conversations or visits with Trust staff and/or Trustees
Submit application
Interview with a panel of Members and Trustees. This will take place ideally in person, or if not possible, via Teams

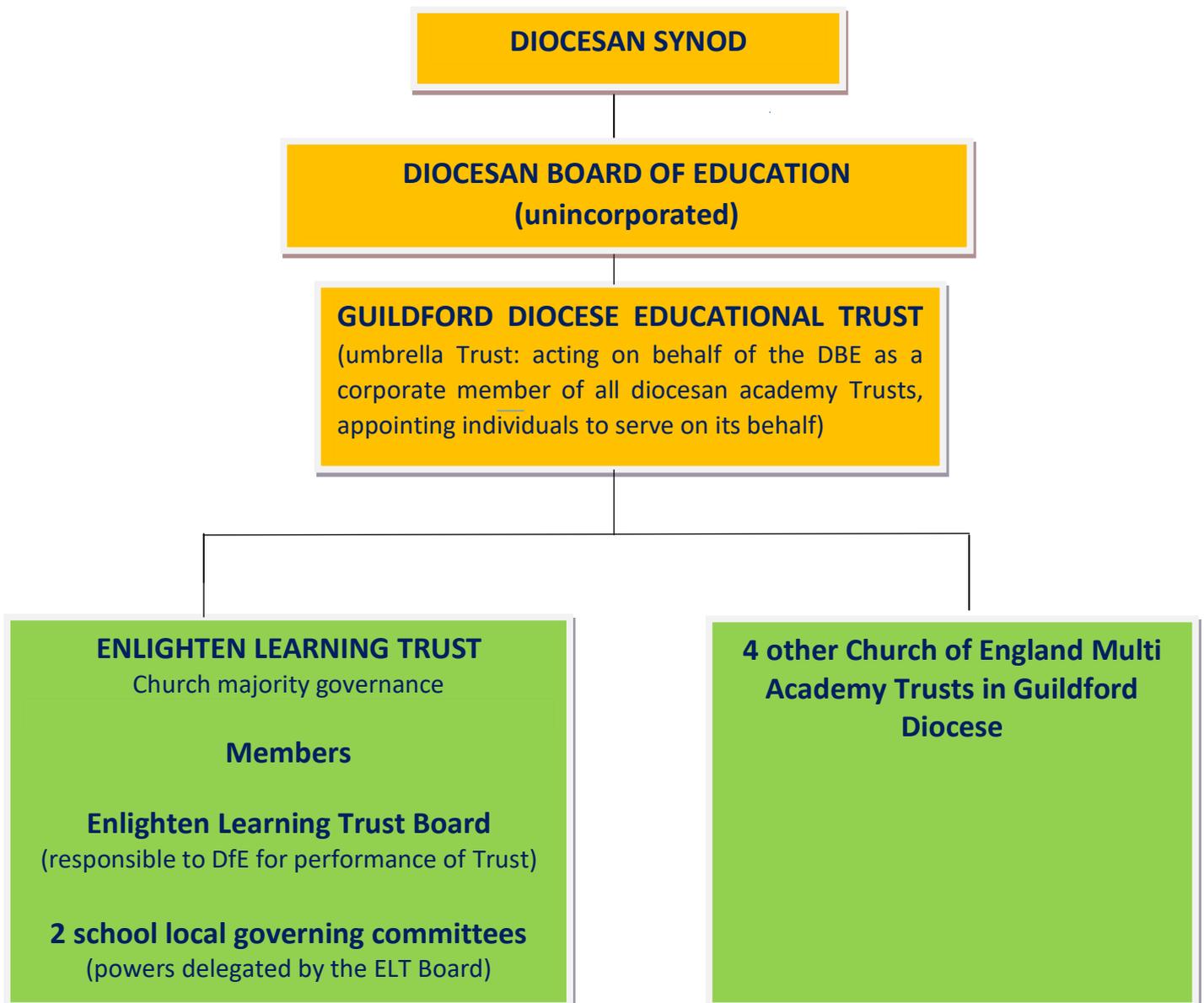
We strongly recommend applying as early as you can to have the best possible chance of being considered as we may change the closing date if we have received sufficient applications

Appointments will be announced as soon as possible thereafter once references have been taken and DBS checks undertaken.



## Guildford Diocese – Academy Structures

The diagram below shows the governance relationships within Guildford Diocese’s academy structures.





## Academy Trust Trustee - Role description

The Charities Act 2011 defines charity Trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. The Trustees of an academy Trust are both Trustees of the Trust as a charity and Trustees of the Trust as a Company limited by guarantee. In the Church of England, they are generally referred to as Trustees to avoid any confusion with the role of the Trustees of school sites; those who hold school sites under Trust for the benefit of the school. Trustees act collectively as a board of Trustees.

Under charity law the Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the Trust, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for which it has been set up. In law Trustees have a range of legal duties, which are often described as those of compliance, care and prudence.

Non-executive Trustees work in partnership with their Chair, fellow Trustees and the Trust's Chief Executive Officer and leadership team to provide clear vision, mission and strategic direction for the Trust to:

- Contribute to the development of the Trust's future strategic goals, ensuring that the best interests of pupils and local communities are always top of the agenda and that they are fully engaged throughout this period of change for the Trust.
- Ensure the highest standards of educational provision across all academies within the Trust, and that the leaders of the Trust and all academies are held to account to deliver outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Ensure the highest levels of transparency, audit, governance and accountability in the education, corporate and financial affairs of the Trust.
- Provide strategic leadership and direction to the Trust through oversight of and contribution to key strategy documents as well as by setting the strategic priorities.
- Ensure that the Trust's Christian ethos is actively promoted, as set out in the ethos statement of the articles of association, and that the Christian distinctiveness of each church school is developed and supported.
- Have an awareness and understanding of the national policy context and of local needs for education.
- Develop and review the Trust's internal controls and an audit regime to ensure that these identify the risks and opportunities to enable the Trust to be sustainable and relevant for all of the stakeholders.
- Work with their Chair and fellow Trustees in a supportive, helpful and constructive way to ensure the board is effective when it meets.



- Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control whilst ensuring openness and transparency in decision making.
- Ensure the Trust establishes key objectives and control and management frameworks to deliver the agreed plans, identifies and assesses the risk of achieving them and regularly monitors performance to ensure appropriate corrective action can be taken.
- Ensure consistent focus upon what is best for the Trust's schools and their students by providing challenge and advice to the Trust's executive leadership team.
- Be familiar with the articles of association of the Trust and awareness of its powers, duties and objectives.
- Be familiar with and ensure compliance with the Trust's funding agreements and the Academies Financial Handbook published from time to time by the Education and Skills Funding Agency or its successor organisation.
- Be familiar with the Trustees' code of conduct and any standing orders of the Trust.
- Represent the Trust in a positive manner with national, regional or local bodies or individuals in order to enhance the position of the Trust.
- Lead or participate in relevant board committees or task groups of the Trust.
- Contribute to the appointment and, if necessary, removal of the chair as well as participation in the recruitment and selection of future non-executive Trustees.
- Work as part of a team, and to accept shared responsibility and accountability, as well as to commit to undergoing a personal annual appraisal, reviewing own performance and that of board members, then to abide by its outcome in terms of personal development.

Non-executive Trustees are subject to company legislation and are obliged to:

- Act within their powers (for example in accordance with the constitution and any agreements with the DfE)
- Promote the success of the Trust
- Exercise independent judgement
- Exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Not to accept benefits from third parties
- Declare any interest in transactions