

# Trustee Recruitment Candidate Pack

November 2024

[speechandlanguage.org.uk](https://speechandlanguage.org.uk)

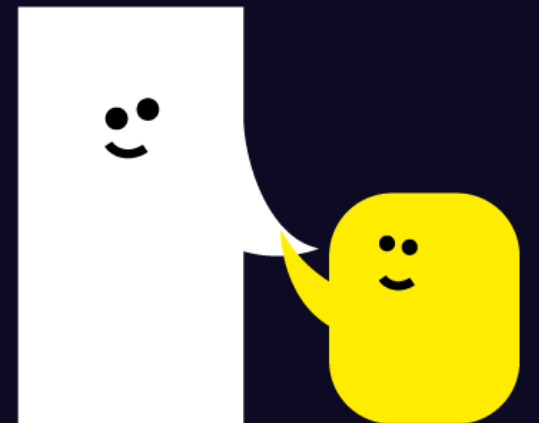
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Eastside People



# Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee with us. We hope that you will find the information in the Pack interesting and helpful, and that you will be encouraged to apply.

1 in 5 children in the UK have a speech and language challenge and this number is increasing year on year.

Our growing charity is helping to give more of these 1.9 million children confidence in their futures. We have recently rebranded and launched our new strategy Confident Young Futures so that we can change more young lives.

We have huge opportunities to change young lives and we need advice, support and challenge from committed Trustees to help us. We have recognised that we need to recruit people with specific skills and experience on to our Board of Trustees that governs our work to give us that support and challenge. We know that this will ultimately benefit young lives as we think about our ideas afresh and take even better decisions.

Like all charities, we have a Board of Trustees made up of volunteers from business, education and academic backgrounds. They help to challenge plans, bring new ideas from different sector and add to our charity's ability to make an impact.

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We also have five committees that look at specific issues, including our income and engagement, and policy and programme development committee and you would be asked sit on one of those.

We would love to hear from you if you can bring some fresh thinking to our work. We are particularly looking for people who:

Are a person of colour, LGBT, disabled, working class, under 35 years old, female or from the North, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

## AND

Have worked in public affairs and/or public policy in any sector, or charity fundraising

We are not expecting you to have been a Trustee for a charity before and value and welcome fresh perspectives as much as experience.

Thank you so much for your interest in our charity. We hope to hear from you.

Best Wishes,



**Jane Harris**  
Chief Executive,  
Speech and Language UK



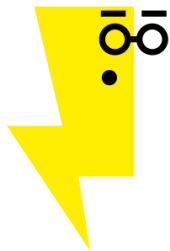
**Roy Blatchford CBE**  
Chair of Trustees  
Speech and Language UK

## Who we are

We are Speech and Language UK – we want every child to face the future with confidence. For 1.9 million children in the UK, learning to talk and understand words feels like an impossible hurdle.

So we give children and young people the skills they need so they aren't left behind, Welcome to Speech and Language UK.

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## Our vision, mission and charitable cause

### Our vision

Every child who is facing challenges with talking and understanding words can look to the future with confidence.

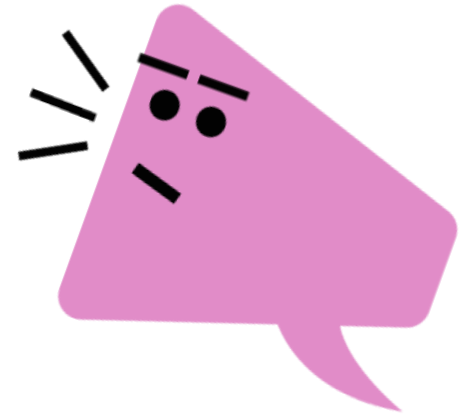
### Our mission

We give children and young people the skills they need so they aren't left behind, waiting to be understood.

We do this by creating tools for schools and nurseries, generating new practices from our two special schools, giving advice and guidance to families and putting pressure on politicians.

### Our charitable cause

For 1.9 million children in the UK, learning to talk and understand words feels like an impossible hurdle. Without the right help this can destroy their world.



# What does Speech and Language UK do?



**Provide innovative tools and training to schools and nurseries**

Our Talk Boost series is proven to help children who face challenges talking and understanding words catch up with their peers. Every year, we train thousands of early years staff and teachers in how to educate children with these challenges.



**Give advice and guidance for families**

Our family support services include our free advice line, webinars, a digital progress checker and assessment centres. We want to provide more advice directly to young people.



**Push for policy change**

We conduct research with young people, families and teachers about the realities of living with a speech and language challenge. We create policy solutions from their and our experiences and we advocate these to Government and all political parties.



**Generate practice from our two special schools**

Our two special schools improve hundreds of children's lives each year and we use them to generate practices that other schools can replicate to change more young lives.

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# Key Values

**Brave**

**Kind**

**Curious**

**Practical**

**Collaborative**

# Our Aims

Aim 1

**Make speech and language central to more schools' and nurseries' everyday practice across the UK by:**

- Investing in our existing tools and training like *Early Talk Boost*, *What Works and Early Talk*.
- Training teachers and early years staff to use positive speech and language practices every day.
- Launching an online speech and language learning platform.
- Working with partners to create a new screening tool for schools to use.

Aim 2

**Make our two schools leading examples for speech and language practice by:**

- Improving the learning, mental health and independence of our students.
- Upgrading facilities to match our high-quality education and therapy standards.
- Helping other schools by sharing successful approaches from our schools.
- Maintaining the high quality of our education and residential services.

Aim 4

**Make sure speech and language is at the forefront of the political agenda by:**

- Advocating more powerfully for the impact of lack of support for speech and language challenges.
- Sharing stories of affected families, showing the impact on children's education and mental health.
- Influencing policies through our expertise, parliamentary engagement, and media reach.
- Building a much bigger community of families and young people.

Aim 3

**Make sure all families know about speech and language development by:**

- Making our information easier to find and use, including for non-English speakers so that we can reach even more than the 30,000 families who use our website every month.
- Collaborating with new publishers and content providers to reach more families.
- Providing more advice for parents before the birth of their children.
- Creating new tailored advice for young people and expanding outreach.

Aim 5

**Make sure our culture, infrastructure, and funding model is fit for the future by:**

- Enhancing collaboration between our schools and other staff members.
- Developing diversity and anti-racism initiatives and an independent governance review.
- Improving technology and diversifying funding sources for long-term sustainability.

**We demand a country in which every child with challenges in talking and understanding words has the skills they need to face the future with confidence.**

**Together we can achieve it.**

# About Us

Speech and Language UK is dedicated to supporting children and young people with speech and language challenges. Our mission is to ensure that every child can develop the necessary skills to face the future with confidence. Challenges with speech and language affect around 1.9 million children in the UK – or 1 in 5 children - making it a significant issue that impacts various aspects of a child's life, including their academic progress, emotional well-being, and future opportunities.

We work to raise awareness about the challenges faced by children with these challenges. We provide expert advice, tools, and training to families, educators, and other professionals to help spot and support children who struggle with talking and understanding words. This includes offering free resources on our website, running a free advice line , and creating interventions and training programmes to equip educators from early years to secondary schools.

In addition to providing resources, we play an important advocacy role. We speak out so that policymakers and government bodies know the scale and impact of speech and language challenges today.. Through our campaigns and reports, we strive to influence national policy and funding decisions, so that speech and language support is a priority.

We also run two specialist schools and services for children with more complex challenges . These schools provide tailored education and therapy to help children with speech and language to develop their communication skills in a supportive environment. The curriculum is co-designed by speech and language therapists and teachers, so that speech and language development is at the heart of every classroom and every lesson.

By combining direct services, training, advocacy, and research, we play a vital role in improving the lives of children and young people with communication difficulties, empowering them to reach their full potential.

# Background to the Roles

The Speech and Language UK Board currently includes ten Trustees including the Chair. We are lucky to have a broad mix of relevant skills, enjoy a positive culture and good working relationships with the executive team. At this stage of the charity's development we have recognised the need to enhance the Board and welcome new Trustees who will bring specific knowledge and experience to support our important work. We are seeking motivated people who share our commitment to improving the lives of children with speech and language challenges and who would relish the opportunity to get involved.

The Board oversees all of the Trust's work and there are four sub-committees with responsibility for:

- Income and Engagement
- Policy and Programme Development
- Finance and Audit
- Remuneration and People

To enhance our Board's capacity we are now looking for people with experience and expertise in the following areas:

- Fundraising
- Public Affairs and Public Policy

As well as sitting on the Board as a trustee you would each join the following sub-committees made up of a group of trustees and co-opted volunteers:

## Income and Engagement Committee

The Income and Engagement Committee meets three times a year on a weekday afternoon online. It looks at our current fundraising and sales of our tools and training to schools and nurseries. It also considers how well our communications are

reaching key audiences such as families and young people with speech and language challenges, schools and nurseries, and politicians.

This committee is chaired by Riccardo Basile, who works in his day job in a private equity firm. Riccardo is originally from Florence in Italy and has been helping our charity for over 6 years.

## Policy and Programme Development Committee

The Policy and Programme Development Committee meets three times a year on a weekday morning or afternoon. It looks at the impact of the tools and training we provide to schools and nurseries across the UK. It also looks at our work to change Government policy and what we can do to improve the political priority given to children with speech and language challenges.

This committee is chaired by Ann Gross, who is now retired but previously worked in the Department for Education. Ann lives in East London where she's involved in the local community and is an active school governor and has been volunteering with us as a Trustee for 4 years.

## Diversity

We are also keen to diversify our Board so that we better reflect the people and communities that we serve and we would therefore particularly welcome applications from **people from racialised minorities, from people living outside of the south-east of England, and from women**. We recognise that having people with a range of different life experiences will bring fresh perspectives to our work and enhance our Board's effectiveness and ability to support children in many communities across the UK.



# Being a Board Member – what's involved

Every not-for-profit organisation has a Board – a group of volunteer Trustees who ensure that the organisation is effective in carrying out the purpose for which it was set up. Trustees have responsibility for overseeing the work of Speech and Language UK, ensuring it is financially stable, well-run, and fulfilling its 'objects', as set out in our Articles of Association.

Boards govern effectively by:

- Focusing on their governance responsibilities - providing strategic support and challenge and not getting involved in operations
- Being clear about the role of the Board vs. the role of the Executives - and fostering good relationships between both
- Working well as a team

As a Speech and Language UK Trustee you'll be an ambassador for our charity and our work. You'll share our vision that every child who is facing challenges with talking and understanding words can look to the future with confidence.

## What we can offer you

Becoming a Trustee is a fascinating way to engage in the not-for-profit sector.

It's a role that will give back just as much as you put in and often much, much more. Our Trustees have already proved themselves and recognise that they have developed a wealth of personal and professional skills that they can continue to apply outside the salaried work environment, for the benefit of others, as well as continuing to apply those skills in their personal lives.

So, becoming a Trustee will empower you with a new sense of contribution in the pursuit of a wider purpose.

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*'I was really impressed by the induction' recently recruited committee volunteer*

## Contributing to a great cause – sustainability

There is no doubt that being a Board member in a not-for-profit organisation is one of the most powerful ways in which you can contribute to a cause you really care about. As a Speech and Language UK Board member, you will have an opportunity to have a real impact on our work addressing the challenges of children in communities across the UK. Our work helps them to have successful futures.

## Strategic experience

Strategic experience can be hard to come by. It can often take decades to find yourself in a role which requires strategic oversight. A not-for-profit Board role is a fantastic way of getting a head start on this, at once giving you the opportunity to develop and hone your critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills as well as developing vital strategic sensibilities and team working skills. The strategic experience which can be gained through a Board role can have an immediate and powerful impact on your career, opening doors to new responsibilities and more senior job prospects.

Equally for those who have already had some strategic responsibilities, a not-for-profit Board role provides an opportunity to use those skills in a significantly different context.

## Continued personal development

Joining a Board can be a very interesting experience, not least because it allows you to adapt and apply everything you have learnt to date into an entirely new context. Through a not-for-profit Board role, you can gain a clearer idea of your own professional strengths and weaknesses whilst simultaneously learning altogether new skills.

Understanding how to adapt your professional knowledge to useful and impactful ends is a good reminder of your own versatility, giving you confidence in your existing abilities whilst challenging you to push the boundaries of your expertise. Most of us are idealists at heart, even if life has shown us that things are not as simple as we once thought. As a Trustee of Speech and Language UK you will be able to combine your own sense of purpose with your expertise and skills to bring a great deal of benefit to others.

## Teamworking

As a Board member at Speech and Language UK you will be part of a team and will have the opportunity to apply your unique skills and experience, while also learning from others. Working closely with a passionate team of people who have different perspectives is often one of the most enjoyable aspects of the role.

# Role Profile

**Location:** Central London/Hybrid

**Time Commitment:** Central London/hybrid

Three Board meetings are held during the year in person 10.00 – 2.30 with one taking place as part of an annual Awayday 10.00 – 6.00

The Sub-Committees meet virtually three or four times a year

**Duration:** A minimum of 3 years

**Remuneration:** Unpaid; travel and caring expenses covered in line with policy

## Role summary

To support the charity to change young lives and progress its strategy within its charitable objectives

## Principal responsibilities

With other Board members, to:

- Govern the charity's execution of its strategy *Confident Young Futures* and ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Make decisions on future strategy, policy and resource allocation in line with the Scheme of Delegation, always complying with the charity's governing document and the law and acting in the charity's best interests
- Hold the Senior Management Team to account for delivery of the strategy
- Ensure the charity manages its resources responsibly and ethically, both human and financial
- Fulfil responsibilities as required by company and charity law
- Work with the Senior Management Team and other Trustees to ensure the future financial and environmental sustainability of the organisation
- Act in accordance with the charity's values of being brave, kind, practical, curious and collaborative
- Act as an ambassador for our charity, networking in support of our strategy and introducing relevant contacts who could act as donors, funders, customers or advocates for our cause
- Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor his/her performance
- Take part in training and development provided for the benefit of the Board members
- Contribute to the work of Board Committees and other Speech and Language UK Groups
- Abide by the organisation's Code of Conduct
- Fulfil such other duties and assignments as may be required from time to time by the Board

## Specific Duties

To attend the Policy and Programme Development Committee or Income and Engagement Committee; To advise the Board on public affairs or fundraising best practice

## Knowledge, skills and experience

### Essential:

Among your key attributes, we are looking to secure experience at a senior level of

- **public affairs**, including how organisations can engage with Government and influence policy through a combination of insider lobbying and public campaigning
- OR **fundraising**, including an understanding of the mix of income streams, including trusts, foundations, corporates, individual giving and community fundraising.

Alongside an:

- Ability to understand and accept the duties and liabilities of a Trustee and how they differ from operational management
- Empathy with the vision, mission and values of the charity
- Willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort
- Ability to think and apply knowledge strategically
- Ability to analyse and evaluate management information and any other evidence
- Ability to communicate clearly and sensitively and to participate in discussions
- Ability to work effectively in group situations
- Ability to constructively challenge and ask questions in an appropriate manner
- Ability to manage difficult/challenging situations
- Ability to maintain confidentiality on confidential and sensitive information
- Ability to manage boundaries and conflicts of interest appropriately

### Desirable:

- Personal or family experience of having a speech and language challenge

# How to Apply

[Eastside People](#) is supporting Speech and Language UK in the recruitment for these roles. Please click [here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter, which should cover the following:

Why are you interested in a trustee role at Speech and Language UK?  
How you can contribute to Speech and Language UK as a trustee?

Please highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the role as set out in the Person Specification.

Please note that we will focus on your demonstrable experience and potential in the above areas and do not expect candidates to have experience in all responsibilities outlined in the Job Description. If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Lucinda Shaw at our recruitment partners [Eastside People](#) to arrange a convenient time at [lucinda@eastsidepeople.org](mailto:lucinda@eastsidepeople.org). Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability, and potential. Please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustments so that we can help with making the application process work for you.

**The closing date for applications is Monday 2 December 2024** and interviews will take place the following week.

Speech and Language UK is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity to ensure that we reflect the full breadth of the people we aim to support. We warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.

# Thank you

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