



AGORA
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP



Finance Trustee Recruitment Pack

March 2025

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Our Vision

Work Together, Learn Together, Succeed Together

Together

In ancient Greece, the word 'Agora' was used to describe a public open space used for assemblies and markets; Agora, a place where people could be together. As such working together and learning together are fundamental to achieving our vision.

Children

At the Agora Learning Partnership, we believe in the power of collaboration to improve the life chances of children and young people, whilst enabling them to flourish and achieve the very best outcomes in all aspects of school and future life. This belief underpins the vision for our organisation.

Staff

For such collaboration to be a success, our staff must have a variety of skills, knowledge and expertise; supported through the connection and development of our staff groups, Partnership-wide. We strive to be the employer of choice, so that we can recruit and retain talented individuals who are suited to the schools and the children they serve.

Schools

Furthermore, we aspire for carefully planned collaboration within the Partnership and beyond, to be the driving force for school improvement and strive for a self-improving, self-sustaining system. We believe this, alongside our 'local decisions for local children' approach, will support ongoing improvement in schools and will result in the children and young people we serve being offered a first class, enriched education that is fully inclusive; we will meet the needs of every child, preparing them for future life.

Children

We understand that each of the Partnership schools has a unique identity. We will continue to work hard to engage with each school community to ensure that the needs of these communities are met. Also, throughout our whole Partnership, we will work to provide a welcoming, safe and respectful environment; an environment where diversity is embraced and celebrated and where there is equity of opportunity for all.

Strategic Aims

Work Together, Learn Together, Succeed Together

Together

To work together to improve the life chances of children.

Children

To enable all children to flourish and achieve the very best outcomes in all aspects of school life and beyond.

Staff

To be the employer of choice to recruit, develop and retain talented individuals.

Schools

To achieve ongoing school improvement by implementing the Partnership's self-improving and self-sustaining system, underpinned by collaborative-working opportunities.
To continue to implement a 'local decisions for local children' approach in order that all children receive a first class, enriched education that is fully inclusive.

Community

To recognise and promote the unique identity of each school, ensuring the needs of each school community are met.
To provide a welcoming, safe and respectful environment, where diversity is embraced and celebrated and where there is equity of opportunity for all.

Governance Management & Structure (2024-25)

Members (5)

Trust Board (9-12)

Finance, Audit
Risk & Estates
Committee

Education & People,
Remuneration
Committees

Executive Team

Academy Governing
Boards

Academy Leadership
Teams

Governance Structure

The Trust is an exempt charity regulated by the Department for Education and a registered company limited by guarantee.

Members

Members are the guardians of the vision and values of the Trust and must ensure that it carries out its charitable objects. To do this, Members have an overview of governance arrangements, but responsibility for conducting the business of the Trust remains firmly with the Trustees.

Members:

- Agree the Trust's Articles of Association
- Appoint Trustees
- Appoint the Trust's external auditors
- Receive information about the Trust's business (including formally receiving the annual report and accounts)
- Have the power to remove Trustees that are failing to fulfil their responsibilities

The Trust Board

The Trustees oversee the management and administration of the Trust and its Academies.

Trustees work together to fulfil the purpose of the Trust Board:

- **Strategic Leadership** – defining the vision, fostering the Trust's culture and setting the strategy.
- **Accountability and Assurance** – robust and effective oversight of Trust operations and performance.
- **Strategic Engagement** – oversight of relationships with stakeholders, ensuring decision making is supported by meaningful engagement.

The Trustees act as both charity Trustees and Directors of the company and must ensure that the Trust complies with all legal and statutory requirements. The Board is supported in its work by three committees:

Finance, Audit, Risk & Estates

Remuneration Education & People

The Academy Governing Body (AGB) of each Academy is a committee of the Trust Board; delegated responsibilities are detailed in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. As such, each AGB is accountable to the Trust Board for ensuring that the school fulfils its responsibility for educational outcomes, safeguarding, health and safety and community engagement. They provide constructive challenge and support at Academy level.

Management Structure

The Executive Team

Comprises the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Chief Operations Officer (COO) and the Chief Finance Officer (CFO).

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day leadership and management of the Trust to the CEO, who is also the Accounting Officer (AO).

The CEO is responsible for the leadership and management of the Executive Team (ET) which, in turn, is responsible for the ongoing improvement and successful development of the Trust and for supporting the Trust Academies.

Academy Senior Leadership Teams

Are led by the Headteachers/Executive Headteachers of the Trust's Academies, who are responsible for the day-to-day management of their school.



Becoming a Trustee at the Agora Learning Partnership

Trustee Responsibilities

We are currently seeking a new Trustee with skills and experience in accounting and/or finance to join our Board and hope that the information in this Candidate Pack will inspire you to apply.

The Trust Board's strategic responsibilities

Senior executive leaders are responsible for the day-to-day leadership and management of the Trust and its Academies; the CEO and Executive Team are accountable to the Trust Board. The role of the board is strategic and, as such, Trustees are responsible for

- Determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the Trust.
- Deciding the principles that guide trust policies and approving key policies.
- Appointing and appraising the senior executive leader and making pay recommendations.
- Working with the CEO to set the Trust strategic direction and strategy.
- Ensuring that stakeholders are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate.
- Ensuring that schools have the required systems and processes in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum, ensuring it is broad and balanced, such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life.
- Taking ownership of the Trust's financial sustainability and ensuring effective resource management across the Trust.
- Agreeing the Trust's staffing structure centrally and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy.
- Ensuring a robust risk management policy, and related procedures, are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective.

Monitoring and Evaluating Trust Performance

Trustees must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress by:

- Measuring the Trust's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives.
- Ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the Trust is operating effectively in line with these policies.
- Holding the CEO to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies.
- Evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by senior executive leaders and external reporting on all aspects of Trust performance.
- Asking challenging questions of the CEO and Executive Team in order to hold them to account.
- Ensuring there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively.

Trustee Responsibilities

Contribution to the Trust Board

Trustees should ensure that they make a positive and meaningful contribution to the Board by:

- Attending meetings (typically 6 full Board meetings each year, plus up to 6 committee meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for the CEO and Executive Team in advance.
- Establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior executive leaders and colleagues on the Board of Trustees.
- Getting to know schools within the Trust, including visiting occasionally during school hours.
- Undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis.

Local Governance

Each Academy in the Agora Learning Partnership has an Academy Governing Board – a local governing body. Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Trust's governance structure meets the needs of the Trust.
- Agreeing a clear Scheme of Delegation, outlining the responsibilities delegated to the CEO, as well as the responsibilities of the Board and Academy committees.
- Ensuring effective communication channels are in place.

Finance

- Ensuring that the Trust has adequate financial and internal audit controls and risk identification and management and that these are monitored and reviewed regularly
- Working with the central Finance Team to ensure that financial information is both accurate and presented in such a way and level of detail that facilitates good financial governance
- Scrutinising management accounts, performance against budget, cash flow, etc and provide assurance to the Board regarding their status and management
- Advising the board on the financial implications and operational risks arising from organisational strategy and plans, and board decisions, especially the board's strategic and policy decisions, and working with EFSA in its overall oversight role of such matters.
- Advising the board on its financial and business strategy and to review and monitor the financial strategy on behalf of the board
- Advising the board regarding investment policy including risk, ethics, and strategy
- Ensure that intangible assets such as organisational knowledge and expertise, intellectual property, the Trust's good name and reputation etc. are properly valued, utilised and safeguarded

Trustee Personal Specification

The following are the core competencies and skills expected of the Agora Learning Partnership Trustees:

Personal qualities and values:

- A desire to create positive change for children and young people.
- A commitment to the principles, aims and objectives of the Trust.
- A willingness to devote time and effort.
- An ability to work effectively in a team, while contributing an independent perspective.
- An ability to build productive and supportive professional relationships and be ready to ask pertinent questions.
- A commitment to the Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- A commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.
- A commitment to safeguarding children and young people
- An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship.
- An ever-developing understanding of the use of attainment and other data to assess the progress, strengths and weaknesses of a school.
- An accounting qualification would be preferred but the equivalent professional experience would be acceptable

Skills:

- Strategic vision
- An ability to think creatively
- Strong, independent judgement

How to apply

How to apply

Eastside People is supporting Agora Learning Partnership in the recruitment for this role. Please click [here](#) to apply.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add there the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why are you interested in the Finance Trustee role, and why with Agora Learning Partnership?
- How can you contribute to Agora Learning Partnership as a Finance Trustee? Please highlight relevant experience and demonstrate how your skills match the specific requirements of the role as set out in the role description and person specification.

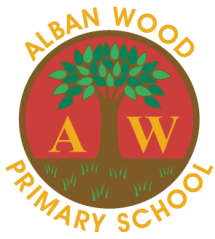
If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email lucinda at lucinda@eastsidepeople.org to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

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

The closing date for applications is Monday 28 April with shortlisting interviews taking place as applications are received. The two-stage interview process with Agora Learning Partnership will take place in the following weeks.

Eastside People is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and work with our clients to ensure that we recruit inclusively, seeking to address the under-representation of some groups of people on boards and in leadership teams.

Our Schools



Alban Wood Primary School,
Watford



Bromet Primary School,
Watford



Creswick Academy,
Welwyn



Grange Academy,
Letchworth



Meryfield Primary School,
Borehamwood.



Orchard Primary School,
Watford.



Oxhey Wood School,
Watford.



Warren Dell Primary School,
Watford.



Waterside Academy,
Welwyn Garden City.



Wilbury Junior School,
Letchworth.



Eastside People

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