

The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

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**Trust Governance Professional
Application Pack
For Start Date 1 September 2024**

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Trust Governance Professional role for a start date with effect from 1 September 2024.

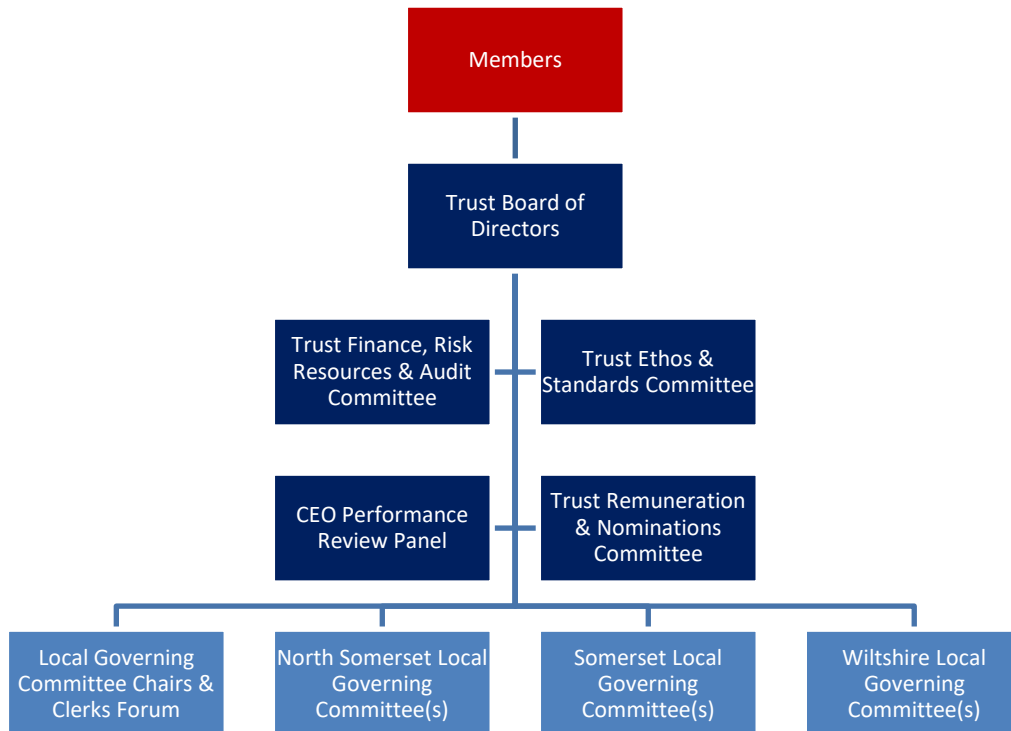
This is an exciting time to join us. The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust (DCET) opened on 1 March 2022 with six primary schools as one of the first Catholic multi-academy trust's (MATs) in the Clifton Diocese. Since then, the DCET has grown to oversee ten Catholic primary schools based in Somerset, North Somerset and Wiltshire with a combined total of circa 1700 pupils, 300 staff and a £10m budget. However, the Bishop's ambitious growth plan means it is expected to expand to a mix of 20+ primary and secondary schools over the next three years. More details about the Trust, its vision, values and schools can be found via: [The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust \(thedcet.com\)](https://thedcet.com).

The Trust Board seeks to appoint a Trust Governance Professional, on a 0.5 (2.5 days per week) permanent, part-time, hybrid basis all year round. The post-holder will be expected to provide independent, expert MAT governance advice and guidance to the Trust Board and its committees, executive and senior leaders, and the Trust clerk team. You do NOT have to be a Catholic but would be expected to uphold its ethos. The Trust offers the career development opportunity to lead and shape governance and clerking best practice within a growing organisation. The Bishop's growth plan means you will need to be flexible and proactive in the context of changing organisational needs, strategic priorities and expansion, which could result in increased hours over time.

What We Can Offer You

- Hybrid working and a flexible approach to work life balance
- A working environment that is values led and collaborative
- Employer contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme
- Excellent career development opportunities as the Trust grows
- Access to continuous professional development (CPD) via Trust membership of sector professional body/ies e.g. Confederation of School Trusts and National Governance Association.
- Annual leave of 25 days (pro rata) plus bank holidays rising after 5 years
- Handover, transition and/or coaching and mentoring support provided by an experienced external company secretary and trust governance lead. Support to complete the Certificate in Academy Governance level 4 course provided by the Chartered Governance Institute UK and Ireland. The latter two offers could be helpful particularly if you have not worked in the education sector previously.

The DCET governance structure diagram is shown below, and more details can be found via: [Governance \(thedcet.com\)](https://thedcet.com). You will need to attend formal meetings which are usually held virtually via Microsoft Teams in the early evening to accommodate busy volunteers who have daytime commitments. There are also a few scheduled occasions requiring in-person attendance such as the annual strategy day.



Next Steps

Stage 1 – If you are interested in the role, in the first instance please send your up-to-date CV and contact details to me via the Trust’s HR Assistant: recruitment@thedcet.com Please also advise if you would like an informal conversation before moving to the next stage.

Stage 2 – to apply formally and comply with the Trust’s safeguarding policy all applicants will need to complete a CES model application for **Support Staff** obtainable at: [Vacancies \(thedcet.com\)](https://vacancies.thedcet.com) and email it to me via the Trust’s HR Assistant: recruitment@thedcet.com The closing date is Friday 26 July at 12pm. Interviews will be held on Week beginning 29th July 2024 in one of the Trust’s schools located in Somerset. Please note the closing date and interview date may be brought forward if sufficient high quality applications are received.

The Trust’s privacy notice can be found via: [Privacy and Cookie Policy \(thedcet.com\)](https://thedcet.com/privacy-and-cookie-policy)

The Trust is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and safeguarding. As inclusive employer applications are welcomed from all. Please note for pupil safety, any appointment will be subject to the satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and Section 128 clearance.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Helen Taylor

CEO – The Dustan Catholic Educational Trust



Trust Governance Professional Job Description

Post title:	Trust Governance Professional
Contract:	Permanent, part-time, 15 Hours a week all year round
Salary:	NJC Scale Points 35 – 39 (£43,421 - £47,536) pro rata (£17,603 - £19,271)
Base:	Trust location with travel to schools and flexible working from home
Accountable to:	Trust Board Chair
Reports to:	Trust Board
Line Manages:	Trust Clerking Team
Start Date:	1 September 2024

Responsible for: leading the provision of independent, expert multi-academy trust governance advice, guidance and company secretarial support to the Trust Board, its committees, executive and senior leaders and the Trust clerking team. Liaison with the Diocesan Governance Officer is required to convene meetings for the Members. This is to enable the delivery of highly effective and ethical governance and strategic leadership of The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust (DCET) in line with its vision, ethos, strategy, and policies to serve the best interests of all pupils.

Job Summary:

The Trust Governance Professional is the Trust's principal governance adviser who will work openly with the governance team, executive and senior leaders and the Trust's clerking team to provide effective and ethical leadership, professional challenge and support in the development and delivery of proactive and robust governance and strategic leadership across the Trust. They will be instrumental in developing highly effective and efficient Trust governance arrangements and practice both now and to reflect its future upscaling in line with the Bishop's ambitious growth plan.

The Trust Governance Professional will have delegated leadership responsibility for designing and overseeing implementation of Trust Board approved governance processes, policies and practice for the Trust as a whole. They will line manage and oversee the professional development of the Trust's clerking team. They will oversee all associated recruitment, induction, training and succession planning processes to ensure governance evidences a positive impact on educational and financial performance. They will work flexibly in meeting the governance needs of the Trust and directors as busy volunteers.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

To oversee all aspects of governance effectiveness and compliance within the Trust, ensure governance adheres to good practice and meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, and provide strategic leadership of services that support governance across the trust.

This is achieved by:

- supporting the efficient and effective operation of the Trust Board and its committees
- ensuring governance at all levels is carrying out its functions



- leading on development of the Trust's governance framework and driving improvements to its systems, processes and structures
- managing and coordinating the delivery and ongoing improvement of governance support across the trust

Strategic leadership across schools

Leading governance services

- work with executives, strategic and operational leads to ensure support for governance is compliant, effective and contributes towards strategic priorities being met
- act as the lead adviser on issues relating to the governance of schools and or the Trust
- developing and implementing the MAT's strategy for effective governance support services
- managing a budget
- designing and monitoring the governance support structure
- assessing capacity and developing the structure in line with organisational growth
- ensuring effective communications are maintained with Local Governing Committees, governance professionals and stakeholders such as the DfE
- writing and presenting training and briefings

Lead adviser for issues relating to governance of MATs

Act as the main point of contact for queries relating to governance within the Trust and proactively update those governing by providing advice and guidance on:

- complex, technical issues that relate to governing structures, procedures and the legal framework that underpins them
- quality assuring governance advice given by others ensuring that it is informed by an intelligent assessment of risk
- risk informed assessments of options for support and interventions to strengthen governance
- high level issue resolution
- highlighting evidenced based best practice, policy and thought leadership in school governance
- carrying out the duties of a company secretary (see below)

Developing governance

Clerk meetings of the trust board and its committees, ensuring these enable the successful delivery of strategic objectives. As such, they have a key role in:

- keeping the Board focused on its core strategic priorities, their strategic leadership responsibilities and their duty to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct and ethics
- setting the cycle of trust board and committee meetings and preparing focused agendas
- ensuring all meetings are inclusive and well structured



- satisfying all aspects of meeting compliance as stipulated in the trust's articles of association and the Academy Trust Handbook, and in accordance with arrangements agreed by the Board
- developing governing structures, particularly in relation to committee structures and the scheme of delegation, and routines across schools (hubs, locality models etc.) and monitoring effectiveness
- ensuring governing structures are developed in parallel with organisational growth strategies
- developing, reviewing and maintaining governance documents, such as articles of association, schemes of delegation, terms of reference, role descriptions and code of conduct
- developing record management and communication methods that are fit for purpose and maintain confidentiality
- overseeing a strategy and protocol for recruiting governors and directors that ensures the board and its committees are properly constituted, inclusive, diverse and meet the needs of the organisation
- leading on the strategy and planning of governance induction and CPD
- developing and overseeing systems for board self-evaluation and review, including commissioning of external reviews

Leading on compliance

Manage information and documentation that clearly details the trust's governance arrangements and satisfies other statutory requirements, including (but not limited to):

- maintaining appropriate records of Trust Board and Trust committee membership, along with any terms of reference
- maintaining a trust policy register and advising on the policy review and approval cycle
- ensuring copies of statutory policies and other statutory documents such as the scheme of delegation and register of interests are published as agreed (on the trust and/or school website) and in line with statutory requirements
- ensuring that governance-specific risks are included in the trust's risk register
- supporting production of the annual report and governance statement published with the trust's annual accounts
- managing the flow of information between the Trust Board and trust committees and members, maintaining an up-to-date record of Trust committee business
- developing trust-specific documents such as a governance code of conduct and skills matrix
- maintaining the trust's online governance SharePoint
- the application of policies, procedures, and relevant legislation/guidance across the trust

Leadership management

- overseeing recruitment and induction of the governance support team/clerks
- briefing and training staff
- conducting performance management and appraisals
- succession planning for different roles in the structure



- managing any budget and resources allocated to the governance support function

Maintaining relationships and communication

Develop and maintain productive working relationships while maintaining independence by:

- working collaboratively and holistically with stakeholders in and outside of the organisation so that governance supports and enables the operational delivery of strategic objectives
- ensuring relevant authorities are notified of changes to membership and governance structures as appropriate
- being a role model for effective and ethical governance

Providing coordinated support

Acting as a central point of contact

- providing advisory support to boards
- being an expert resource for clerks and the wider organisation
- quality assuring advice – acting as a high level resource
- responding to issues including concerns and complaints related to governance
- facilitating networks and communication between governing boards

Line managing clerks

- recruitment, management and quality assurance
- assigning work and deployments
- ensuring board and committee meetings are efficient, effective and properly recorded
- delivering induction, training and briefings
- conducting annual appraisals

Delivering wider and targeted support

- overseeing recruitment, election/appointment and induction for different governance tiers
- overseeing a CPD offer/development programme
- organising reviews and self-evaluation
- presenting training, briefings and at events
- organising targeted support and intervention when circumstances require

Compliance monitoring across a group of schools

- maintaining a central records system to include attendance at meetings and training sessions by members, directors, governor directors and governance professionals
- routine reporting, such as regarding Board vacancies
- ensuring different tiers of governance are properly constituted
- monitoring compliance with schemes of delegation
- ensuring systems and controls are in place to comply with obligations under education legislation, funding agreements, charity legislation, company law, data protection legislation, safeguarding guidelines and health and safety legislation

Personal development



The clerking competency framework supports individuals in assessing their own practice, skills and knowledge and identifying their development needs. Continuing professional development in the role of lead governance professional should include:

- liaising with relevant professional organisations and networks
- undertaking regular training including the pursuit of professionally recognised qualifications
- keeping abreast of policy developments affecting Trust governance
- participating in regular performance management, led by the CEO

Carrying out the duties of a company secretary

- advising the board of directors on their role, constitutional and procedural matters
- maintaining statutory registers
- ensuring compliance with Companies House annual filing requirements
- The Chartered Governance Institute (CGI) have a [model role description for a company secretary](#).

General information

The post holder will be required to comply with the Trust's policies and procedures.

All employees have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. It is an essential requirement that employees are aware of the Trust's Safeguarding procedures for sharing information about the welfare of any person for whom they have safeguarding concerns. Employees have a duty to ensure they attend training to enable them to recognise the indicators for concerning behaviour and receive safeguarding supervision as appropriate.

Review

This job description covers the main duties and responsibilities of the job and will be subject to review and amendment, in consultation with the post holder, to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

Other activities commensurate with this Job Description may from time to time be undertaken by the post holder and as directed by the Trust Board.



Person Specification

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful experience of working as a Governance Professional and/or company secretary within a corporate, public or charity sector organisation. This could be a multi-academy trust. • Experience of working and building positive, professional relationships with key stakeholders and delivery partners i.e. Department for Education, Diocese, local authorities, external specialist contractors, auditors • Experience of working at a strategic level and facilitating a commitment from executive and senior leaders to meet the agreed reporting deadlines • Experience of team leadership and line management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant professional qualification. • Current membership of a relevant professional body and/or network(s) • Experienced coach and mentor • Change and growth management • Company Secretary or legal training • Experience of clerking in a church school • Understanding of the role of the Diocese, the Bishop and Catholic ethos • Maths and English at GCSE (or equivalent) Grade C or above (or equivalent).
Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of wider sector governance best practice and developments • Good listening, oral and literacy skills. • Ability to prioritise workload to meet deadlines for self and others. • Financial and budget management • Data protection and compliance in relation to record keeping, information retrieval and dissemination. • Provide and/or coordinate delivery of training and professional development and networks for clerks and governance team. • Exercising good judgement in producing and quality assuring meeting minutes and follow-up of matters arising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the education sector, national education policy, guidance and publications • In-depth knowledge and understanding of multi-academy trust governance structures, policies and practice, regulatory framework, applicable legislation, guidance and statutory duties. • Knowledge of Equal Opportunities legislation. • Knowledge of HR policy and procedures • Knowledge of strategic planning and risk management • Public sector expectations of conduct i.e. Nolan Principles and high expectations relating to financial probity, regularity and value for money



	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual agenda planning at all levels of the governance structure • ICT including Microsoft Office 365 suite of applications. • Organising meetings. 	
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm and resilient when working under pressure. • Person of integrity and ability to maintain confidentiality, impartiality, and objectivity • Authentic with good interpersonal skills. • Excellent attention to detail • Self-motivated with a 'can do' attitude. • Flexible and proactive in anticipating and meeting the needs of others • Open to collaboration and change. • Committed to ongoing CPD and training. • Commitment to, and support for the vision and values of the Trust 	
Special Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work at times convenient to the Members, Trust Board and its committees, including evenings. • Ability to travel to the Trust's locations and schools for meetings and/or contribute via MS Teams. • Available to be contacted at mutually agreed times. 	