Central England Academy Trust Governor Recruitment Pack 2026/27

To view our current vacancies, please see the Governance Page on the Central England Academy Trust website here:

Central England Academy Trust - Governance
(found under the 'key information' tab)

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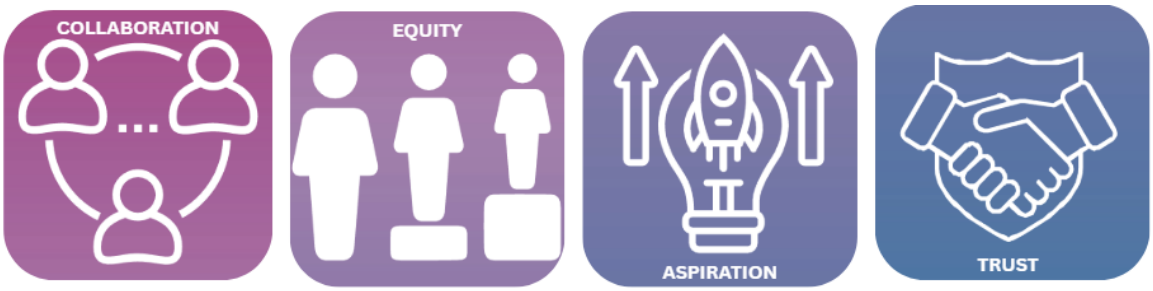
Welcome from our CEO and our Chair of Trustees

Thank you for your interest in joining Central England Academy Trust as a governor in one of our schools. Our growing Trust currently consists of a diverse family of 6 schools in the Nuneaton area and 1 primary special school in Birmingham.

Our Trust's core values summarise what is important to us and what we actively promote:



Collaboration: to work closely and productively with others for the greater good of everyone involved. To be positive, thoughtful and supportive towards others through showing appreciation and respect of own and other cultures, values and beliefs. We want everyone in our Trust to feel as though they are an important part of a large family.

Equity: recognising that we do not start from the same place equity is about providing others with what they need in order to provide an equal access to opportunities. We want our school communities to be happy, empowered and supported through democratic processes and robust systems and structures where the autonomy, strengths and the uniqueness of the individual is supported, promoted and celebrated.

Aspiration: to always be ambitious ensuring that pupils and staff in our schools have the knowledge and skills to progress towards their aspirations and beyond. To support pupils to take their place in society and achieve success in adulthood.

Trust: to feel safe knowing that the reactions of others are well meaning and that systems and structures to support are consistent and predictable. To be well-informed and kept up-to-date and empowered to communicate *wishes, concerns and opinions without fear of retribution*.

We are looking for aspiring governors who are interested in supporting our schools and joining us at this exciting time in our journey, and we hope this application pack provides you with the information needed to consider joining us in this key role. We look forward to discussing you joining one of our local governing boards moving forwards.

Best wishes

Andrew Dickinson
Chief Executive Officer

Carole Davies
Chair of Trustees

About our Trust

Our motto is 'Serving the heart of England', and we are committed to ensuring that all pupils in our communities are supported and nurtured to achieve to their full potential.

We are an inclusive and child-centred Trust, and every decision that we make is always done in the best interests of the young people entrusted to our care. Local governors across our schools work with our leaders to ensure we achieve our ambitions through providing support and challenge, and ensuring that children remain at the centre of all decision making.

We currently have seven schools in our Multi Academy Trust:

Our Schools

1. **Oak Wood Primary School** (primary special school)
owp.ceatrust.co.uk

2. **Oak Wood Secondary School** (secondary special school)
ows.ceatrust.co.uk

3. **Higham Lane School** (mainstream secondary school)
highamlaneschool.co.uk

4. **Higham Lane North Academy** (mainstream secondary school with a specialist resource provision)
hlna.co.uk

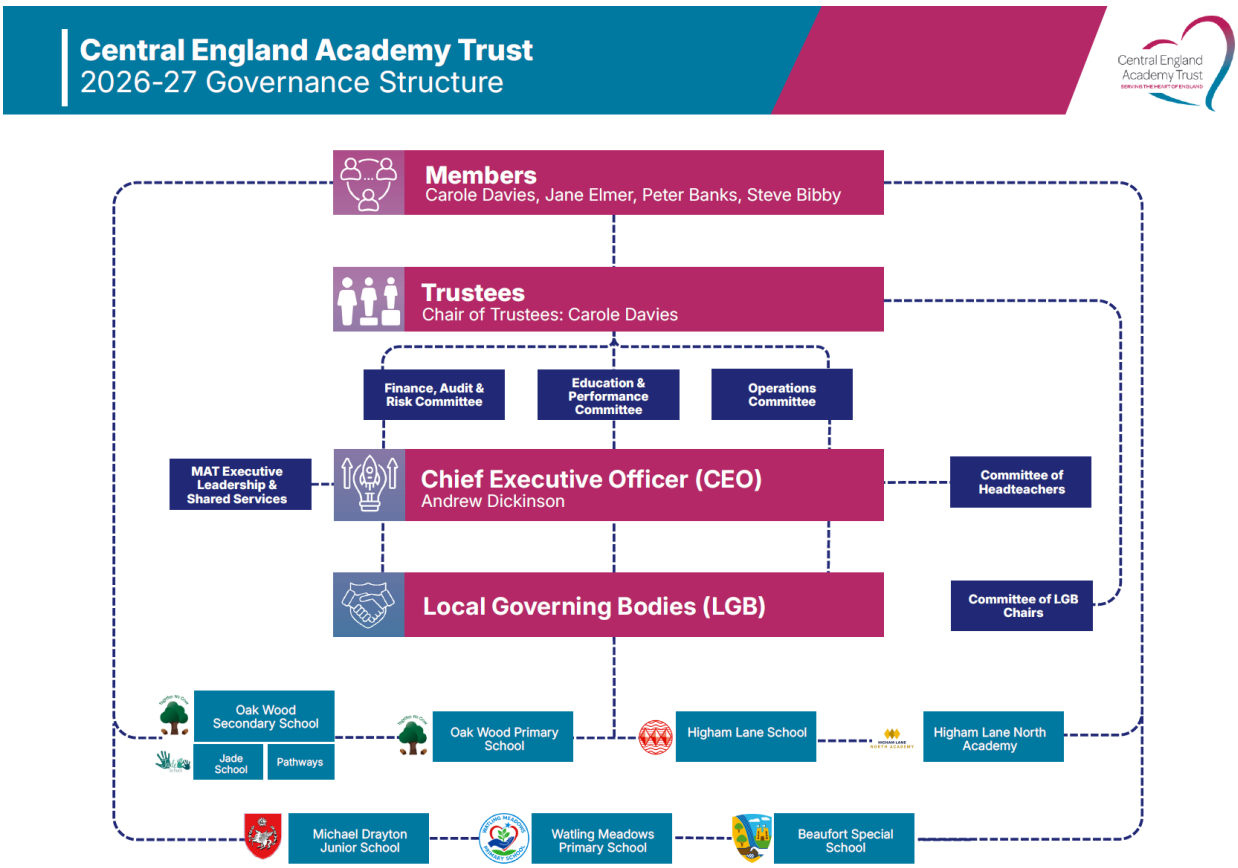
5. **Michael Drayton Junior School** (large mainstream junior school)
michaeldraytonjunior.co.uk

6. **Watling Meadows Primary School** (mainstream primary school with a specialist resource provision)
watlingmeadows.co.uk

7. **Beaufort Special School** (primary special school)
beaufort.sch.life/

Governance at Central England Academy Trust

Our governance structure:



The local governing bodies at each of our schools have clear delegated responsibilities to fulfil their roles effectively. These 'terms of reference' are:

Area	Delegated functions
Safeguarding	• Monitor safeguarding practice, ensuring compliance with school and trust wide policies and statutory requirements.
SEND	• Ensure pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) get the support they need and seek assurance that staff are adequately trained.
Standards	• Monitor school performance – reviewing data, including exam results, attendance rates, and pupil progress. • Work with school leaders to identify and address areas for improvement.
Stakeholder engagement	• Develop communication channels, consult stakeholders and work in partnership with the local community. • Ensure stakeholder views are accounted for.
Other responsibilities	• Local Policies: Ensure that the required policies and procedures are in place and that the school is operating effectively in line with these policies, including reviewing and approving local policies where necessary. • Finance: Receive information in relation to the school's finances, including monitoring the school's agreed annual budget and spending plans.

Each school governing board consists of nine people:

- Headteacher
- 1 x staff governor
- 2 x parent governors
- 5 x community governors

What is the commitment?

The governing body at each of our schools meets at least six times a year: (twice every term). There may on occasion be extra meetings or governor panels called if needed.

Governors also take on 'link roles' and are expected to conduct school visits at least once per term. There are also usually multiple opportunities for governors to support their school throughout the year should they wish to do so.

Who can be a governor?

Anyone aged 18 or over can be a governor, though there are some exceptions. You do not need to be a parent. There is also no requirement for you to have an understanding of the education system, just the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. Governing bodies need and benefit from a range of professional knowledge on their board including key areas such as education, finance, human resources, property and estates management.

Please note: all governors will be required to carry out an enhanced DBS check.

Benefits of becoming a governor

This is an exciting opportunity to play a role in a growing, vibrant and collaborative Multi Academy Trust

The role of a governor is incredibly rewarding and the benefits include:

- ✓ Personal and professional development, using your own experience of education and life beyond school to inform conversations
- ✓ Bringing your unique experiences, perspectives and insights in to decision-making in the interests of the school community
- ✓ Gaining insight into the education sector
- ✓ Gaining experience working strategically at Board level in a high-performing organisation
- ✓ Develop and utilise your skills in a board-level environment
- ✓ Being able to have a significant impact on the life chances of pupils at a school in our Trust

The Nolan Principles

Local governing bodies must have a good mix of knowledge, experience and skills. All governors must abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life as outlined below:

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all decisions and actions that they take., They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Current Recruitment Priorities

Please see the Governance page on the CEAT website (found under the 'key information' tab) to view our current vacancies.

Expressing an interest in becoming a governor

If you are interested in becoming a governor at one of our schools, please contact Vicky McKay (PA to the CEO) on 02476 740932 or email admin@centralengland.co.uk.

Vicky will arrange for you to speak with the relevant Chair of Governors to discuss the role and answer any questions you may have. As governing bodies are often looking to address specific skills gaps, it would be helpful to outline any relevant experience or skills you can offer. These do not need to be education-related; the most important qualities are a willingness to take an active interest in the school and a commitment to learning and developing in the role.

Following this discussion, and if both parties feel the role is a good fit, you may be invited to complete our governor application form. As part of the application process, you will also be asked to provide the names of two suitable referees.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who can apply?**

Anyone over the age of 18 can become a school governor: no specific knowledge or experience is required and there is no requirement to be a parent, although parent governors are elected in our schools.

2. **What is the time commitment?**

The average time commitment is a couple of hours per month, although it will vary depending on the needs of the school and the role. This includes meetings, background reading and school visits. Our governing bodies hold their meetings in the evenings.
Like magistrates or members of a jury, school governors have a right to reasonable time off of work for their public duties, although this may be unpaid. Your company's HR department will be able to tell you about its policy.

Each governor serves a term of office of four years, and many serve multiple terms. However, as a volunteer you can resign before your term is finished if your circumstances change.

3. Will I need training?

You don't need any specific training to be a governor; we have an induction programme and ongoing training and resources to support you.

We also provide access to training and information provided by the National Governance Association.

4. What does a governance role not do?

A role in governance is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role. You will not:

- Write school policies;
- Undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor or trustee has the relevant professional experience;
- Spend much time with the pupils of the school – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the school;
- Fundraise – the governors should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks;
- Undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the governing body monitors the quality of teaching in the school by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources;
- Do the job of the school colleagues – if there is not enough capacity within the paid workforce to carry out the necessary tasks, the relevant committee need to consider and rectify this.

5. Are there any factors that mean you couldn't be a governor?

Bankruptcy can disqualify someone from being a governor. Disqualification applies to anyone who is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, interim bankruptcy restriction order, debt relief restrictions order, or interim debt relief restrictions order; or whose estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced.

6. Is there any kind of payment?

Governance is a voluntary role and therefore it is not paid. It is worth noting that serving as a governor is a great way to gain experience of professional skills such as chairing, strategic planning, budgeting and team work that are valued by employers. Plus, governors can have a huge impact on the education of young people in their communities, and there's no greater feeling than knowing you've made a difference.

7. What is the difference between a 'governor' and a 'trustee'?

Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) have a main board made up of trustees (also known as directors); they are accountable for the Trust as a whole. Governors within our Trust have the responsibility for schools (as indicated through a scheme of delegation), and the strategic direction within it. They work closely with the school and within their individual governing body. Governors uphold the uniqueness of each school, it's vision, values and ethos, whilst supporting the overall objectives of the Trust. Support is also provided to the local governing bodies by the Trust's Board and executive leaders.

8. What is a Multi Academy Trust?

Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), are organisations or entities that are responsible for a number of schools. They have a trust board made up of trustees, also called directors. Trust boards will be overseeing several schools and therefore will be dealing with larger budgets and more complex governing arrangements. Within the Trust, each school retains its own local governing body. Their responsibilities are defined by the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

9. Can I apply to be a parent governor?

Parent governors are elected by the parent body; anyone who has a child of school age (under 16) can be a parent governor – we request our parent governors have a child on roll at the school at which they govern. You may express an interest in being a parent governor if there is a parent vacancy within the school. We will follow the required process for electing parent governors.