

Foundation Trustee Role Descriptors

Please note that we are using the term 'Trustee' to refer to an individual who sits on the main trust board of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). They may also be referred to as Directors. We are using Trustee generically as this is used by Department of Education (DfE) guidance, whilst acknowledging that there is legal difference between the two.

We expect all Foundation Trustees to be effective Trustees (please see your Trust's or the Confederation of School Trusts (CST) or National Governance Association (NGA) trustee role descriptors). In addition, we expect Foundation Trustees to:

- Develop and grow a positive relationship with the Diocese (via training, forums, advice, annual meeting) both personally and for their trust.
- Ensure the Christian Foundation of church schools in their Trust is protected.
- Ensure the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Trust and Diocese is adhered to.
- Ensure the Diocesan assets identified in Church Supplemental Agreements (school buildings) are insured, managed and maintained effectively.
- Ensure each church school has a link with their church.
- Contribute to whatever system your Trust uses to monitor Church School/ Christian Distinctiveness. This may involve leading or forming a trust wide Ethos Committee or Christian Distinctiveness Committee or engaging with school specific ethos committees.
- Have oversight of the following. (This work will usually be undertaken by Foundation Trustees but can be done by any Trustee.) NB – you don't have to do it personally, just know it is happening.
 - The effectiveness of how Religious Education (RE) is taught in the Trust's church schools
 - The effectiveness of Collective Worship in the Trust's church schools
 - Ensure your church schools are ready for SIAMS (please see Diocesan advice on trust preparedness for SIAMS). Trustees should be reassured that their schools are ready for inspection.
 - Ensure you know which church schools are former Voluntary Aided (VA) schools and that they are preparing for a VA SIAMS inspection.
 - Ensure that each school with a SIAMS inspection in the next academic year has a link Trustee that will visit the school, as Trustees now have a greater role in the inspection.
- Confidentially advise the Diocese if they become aware of any conflicts that arise between the associated Church of England church and school.

In mixed MATs, all Trustees should be aware of the following:

- Everyone on the board is responsible for the maintenance of the Christian foundation in the Trust's Church of England schools.
- Trustees should ensure Diocesan consent is obtained for:
 - Changes to buildings where the Diocese is the site trustee. This includes additional buildings, significant changes to existing buildings, solar panels, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.
 - Any changes to the school (admissions, age range, mothballing, closure).
 - Chief Executive Officer (CEO) appointment
 - Head Teacher (HT) appointments in a church school (especially if it is an appointment and not an interviewed for position).
- Church schools do not move into the leasehold ownership of the Trust on academisation unless part of the site such as the playing fields is owned by the Local Authority (LA). Your Trust will have a Church Supplemental Agreement to operate and manage the school at that location. This does not have a time limit (unlike the 125-year leases).
- When agreeing to third party contracts that relate to church schools the Trust Board should ensure that advice has been taken from their own solicitors and that of the Diocese to confirm who the contracting party should be. The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) as site trustee may need to be involved depending on the documentation involved.

New, Closed and Repurposed Schools

- The Diocese remains open to partnering with your Trust in applying for new church academy free schools and would welcome a conversation with you if you are considering applying for a free school. We have successfully bid with Trusts for several new church academies.
- Where a school needs to close, the Diocese would like to explore with you how the site can be repurposed to fulfil an alternative educational purpose in line with the trust deed. Please talk to us about examples of this across the diocese.