



Agape Multi Academy Trust

Job description: Lead Governance Professional

Job details

Grade: Band 10 FTE £49,498 – £54,707

Hours: 20 hours per week plus timesheets as necessary

Contract type: Permanent

Notice Period: 2 months

Pension: LGPS

Reporting to: CEO

Responsible for: Governance

Line Management: Clerks to LGCs

Main purpose

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
- being the Company Secretary

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
- designing and monitoring the governance support structure
- assessing capacity and developing the structure in line with organisational growth

- ensuring effective communications are maintained with governing boards, governance professionals and stakeholders such as the DfE
- writing and presenting training and briefings

Lead adviser for issues relating to governance of MATs

As well as acting as the main point of contact for queries relating to governance within the trust, the lead governance professional will 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

The Lead Governance Professional will clerk meetings of the Trust Board and its committees, ensuring these enable the successful delivery of strategic objectives.

- 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 trustees 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

The Lead Governance Professional will 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 academy 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 academy committees and members, maintaining an up-to-date record of academy committee business
- developing trust-specific documents such as a governance code of conduct and skills matrix
- maintaining the Trust's online governance portal or equivalent
- 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

The Lead Governance Professional will 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 the Trust

- maintaining a central records system to include attendance at meetings and training sessions by members, directors, governors, trustees 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

Line managing Clerks to Local Governing Committees

- deputising as appropriate
- supporting the development and design of governing structures and practice
- supporting for statutory compliance areas such as admissions or data protection

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 includes:

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

Carrying out the duties of a company secretary

- advising the board of trustees on their role, constitutional and procedural matters
- maintaining statutory registers
- ensuring compliance with Companies House annual filing requirements

Person specification

Knowledge

- extensive knowledge of the school system
- extensive knowledge of governance law, structures, policy and practice in all types of state school
- awareness of current issues and thought leadership relating to the governance of schools and academy trusts
- understanding of charity law and governance in other sectors

Skills

- high level communication and IT skills
- high level strategic planning
- decision-making based on intelligent assessment of risk and benefits
- commercial acumen
- interpersonal/relationship building/stakeholder engagement skills
- leadership and line management: planning and coordinating the work of others

Attributes

- personal integrity and commitment to the principles of public life
- respecting confidentiality
- confidence and influence as a senior leader
- can manage and make decisions independently
- ability to lead by example, coach, motivate and inspire others
- agile thinker
- innovator
- calm and resilient under pressure
- commitment to CPD and modelling this to others