

Role of the SEND Director (Trust Board)



PURPOSE OF ROLE

The SEND Director is a Trust Board Director with a specific strategic leadership responsibility for the Trust's arrangements for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This role is vital in ensuring the Trust Board fulfils its collective legal duty to use its 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of all pupils with SEND and promote their welfare across our schools.

The Director acts as a crucial link between the Trust Board and the executive leadership on SEND matters, ensuring the Board has effective oversight of policy, provision, and outcomes. This strategic role does not involve operational, day-to-day SEND matters or knowledge of individual pupils, which are the responsibility of the Trust SENDCO and school-based SENDCOs. The ultimate responsibility for SEND remains with the entire Trust Board.

This role is fundamental to achieving our 2030 North Star of flourishing, which commits to creating an inclusive culture where every child, regardless of their needs, feels a sense of belonging, safety, value, and inspiration. It directly supports our Equity-Equality Investments driver by championing strategic action to address individual needs and close achievement gaps.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Strategic Leadership and Culture

- **Champion a Culture of Inclusion:** Actively promote a culture of inclusion where every child is celebrated as an integral part of our learning community and diversity is seen as a strength. Ensure high expectations are maintained for all pupils with SEND, fostering an environment where they can achieve, flourish, and thrive.
- **Strategic Oversight:** Maintain strategic oversight to ensure the Trust has appropriate and effective systems, policies, and procedures in place to meet all statutory SEND duties as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- **Board Engagement:** Ensure SEND is a standing and prominent agenda item at Trust Board meetings. Encourage all directors to develop their understanding of their corporate responsibility for SEND.
- **Reporting to the Board:** Report regularly to the Trust Board on SEND provision and outcomes, drawing on information from the CEO, Trust SENDCO reports, and audits. This enables the Board to ask challenging questions and make informed strategic decisions regarding resource allocation and impact.
- **Local Authority Cooperation and Place Planning:** Maintain strategic oversight of the Trust's statutory duty to cooperate constructively with Local Authorities, system partners, and local area partnerships regarding place planning pressures, local sufficiency, and local inclusion strategies.

B. Policy and Compliance

- **Policy Oversight:** Ensure the Trust's SEND Policy and schools' SEND Information Reports templates for individual schools are reviewed annually, are compliant with the latest statutory guidance, and are consistently implemented across all schools.

- **Statutory Compliance:** Assure the Board that all schools are compliant with their legal duties under the Children and Families Act 2014. This includes duties to co-operate with the Local Authority, publish required information, and have a qualified SENDCO in post.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure the Board has oversight of schools' Accessibility Plans, assuring that steps are being taken to increase participation in the curriculum and improve the physical environment for disabled pupils.
- **Scheme of Delegation:** Ensure the Scheme of Delegation clearly defines SEND responsibilities at all levels of governance. The Scheme specifies that the Trust Board is accountable for nominating the SEND Lead Director and ensuring a compliant SEND policy is in place for each academy.

C. Monitoring, Assurance, and Challenge

- **Liaison with Executive Leaders:** Build an effective and supportive relationship with the Trust SENDCO, providing appropriate strategic challenge regarding the impact of SEND provision and the use of resources.
- **Reviewing SEND Reports:** Receive and scrutinise termly reports from the Trust SENDCO and School SENDCOs to monitor the progress and outcomes of pupils with SEND, analyse data for trends (e.g., attainment, attendance, exclusions), and ensure funding is being used effectively.
- **Value for Money:** Work with the Board to oversee the financial performance of the Trust in relation to SEND, ensuring the notional SEND budget and other resources are used well to support pupil progress.
- **Local Governance Link:** Liaise with the nominated SEND Governor on each Local Academy Council to ensure effective local monitoring of SEND provision and to receive termly reports, strengthening the link between local oversight and Trust Board strategy.

D. Training and Professional Development

- **Governor and Director Training:** Ensure all Trust Board Directors and LAC Governors receive appropriate training to understand their responsibilities for SEND, equipping them to provide strategic challenge.
- **Staff Training Assurance:** Seek assurance from the CEO that all staff receive high-quality, needs-led training to support pupils with SEND effectively and implement the Trust's inclusive, adaptive teaching approaches.
- **SENDCO Support:** Assure the Board that the CEO has systems in place to support the Trust SENDCO and school SENDCOs, ensuring they have the necessary training, resources, and leadership status to lead whole-school improvement for pupils with SEND.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The SEND Director will:

- Have a strong commitment to the Trust's vision for inclusion and our unwavering belief that every child can achieve and flourish.
- Develop a clear and accurate understanding of the Trust's responsibilities under the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Be willing to undertake specific training for the role of a SEND link trustee/director.
- Possess strong analytical skills to effectively scrutinise progress data, outcome reports, and financial information related to SEND.
- Have excellent communication skills to challenge executive leaders constructively and report clearly to the Board.

