



**The Island
Learning Trust**

Trust Board Recruitment

May 2022

MRS DEBBIE WHEELER

Welcome to The Island Learning Trust.

The Trust operates 3 primary academies, 2 on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent: Minster Primary School and Halfway Houses Primary School. In February 2020 Sunny Bank Primary School in Sittingbourne also joined The Island Learning Trust. The Trust has a 1575 combined pupil capacity and had a roll of 1427, 91% capacity, in the October 2020 school census.

'Education doesn't need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardise education, but to personalise it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.'

Ken Robinson

The Island Learning Trust is a forward thinking Trust, we promote and strive to achieve excellence with meaningful and empowering contexts for learning. We recognise the importance of outstanding teaching and learning and are fully committed to the development of learners and staff to enable all:

"...to be the best we can be..."

We expect staff to maintain the highest professional standards and to be motivated to embark on their own learning journey to ensure our children experience the very best educational outcomes.

We are a 'growth mindset' Trust: we champion the message that 'everyone can'.

As a multi-academy trust, TILT aims to develop identity as a group but to also protect the unique character of each school. Collaboration should not equate to 'sameness'. Whilst there are clear consistencies across schools, this does not undermine individuality. Through collaboration, we seek to build on the strengths that exist within each school so that our collective intellectual capital benefits the broader TILT community.

We are unwavering about the main things: quality, standards and moral purpose.

The Island Learning Trust is passionate about securing the highest standards of achievement and education for all children. We are committed to achieving this by creating a fully inclusive environment that promotes social justice, aspiration, achievement and equality for all: empowering disadvantaged communities.

As a Trust, we develop ambitious, challenging and creative curricula that enable all children to flourish socially, spiritually, culturally, emotionally and academically. Whilst high academic attainment is important for all children's life chances, we also believe in the importance of providing a rich experience of the arts and physical development.

Overall Aim:

At The Island Learning Trust we are committed to creating a learning community in which children are perseverant, resilient risk takers who take responsibility for their learning and develop their critical creative and social abilities fully. We believe that children learn best when learning is: exciting, challenging, creative, collaborative, practical, reflective and meaningful. Learning should inspire children to ask questions and to wonder. It should provide them with memorable experiences. It should develop in them the skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, social responsibility, problem solving and reflection. It should have the highest of expectations of the learners. It should build on experience and always be purposeful and relevant. We are passionate about celebrating the uniqueness of our learners and our curriculum design reflects this. We believe that by encouraging children to become agents of their own learning, they are empowered to become autonomous and independent and to respond to present and future challenges. This enables them to grow into responsible citizens who are able to contribute to society in a way that maximises their strengths and individual characters.

In partnership with parents, carers and the wider community, we aim to achieve this vision and to deliver the very best education to our children to enable every child in every Trust school

'to be the best we can be'

What characterises The Island Learning Trust?

- Our Trust has been formed by 2 forward thinking schools who have a history of ambition for our children, staff and community
- Children are at the heart of all decision making.
- The well-being of children and staff is our number one priority. Our schools exhibit a strong nurturing ethos allowing ALL children to be successful.
- An innovative, researched based approach to Teaching and Learning with a relentless focus on improving pupil outcomes
- High quality CPD with a well-established coaching culture that is designed to attract, retain and develop all staff to secure outstanding and effective teams. No staff should have to leave for career development opportunities.
- Outward focused intelligent leadership.
- Strong partnerships with CCCU and other training institutions.
- An exciting and dynamic learning community: all children and staff demonstrate a positive 'can-do' attitude and embrace the Trust's Vision and Values embodying them in their everyday interactions with others.
- All children and staff to feel valued, supported and challenged to be the best they can be.

We are now recruiting trustees to the board

The Island Learning Trust has grown and as part of our strategic plan we now find ourselves in the exciting position of redesigning our governance structure from the board down:

'Evaluating the governance structure to keep pace with scale, demands and future challenges of the Trust:'

-a leadership objective in the Strategic Plan.

The time is now right to review the functioning of the Trust Board:

- the Trust has grown; Sunny Bank has joined
- the central team has been established

As a result of the growth and a 360 review of systems and processes we are now at exciting stage of development and **keen to have a positive, proactive and committed board** to secure future success for the Trust.

Effective governance is crucial to MAT success. It provides confident, strategic leadership to MATs and creates robust accountability, oversight and assurance for their educational and financial performance. The key elements of effective governance are set out in the Governance Handbook, and can be summarised as:

- Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy;
- Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance and effectively manages risk;
- People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity;
- Structures which reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities;
- Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements; and
- Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

If you feel you have the required commitment to make a difference to the lives of the children of Swale please do complete the NGA skills audit (included in the pack) write a brief statement with regard to your background and interest and forward these to [Sarah Stanier](#), once received, we will be in touch.

NGA Trustee role description










Trustees work together to carry out their core functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Trustees are responsible for governing a charitable company and directing how it is managed and run. Trustees must also ensure that the trust complies with all legal and statutory requirements. Trustees should seek the advice of the board's governance professional and other professional advice as appropriate.







The board of trustees' strategic responsibilities

The board of trustees works closely with their senior executive leader. Senior executive leaders are responsible for day to day operational management of the trust and its schools, whereas the role of the board is strategic. As such, trustees are responsible for:

-  determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the trust
-  deciding the principles that guide trust policies and approving key policies
-  appointing and appraising the senior executive leader and making pay recommendations
-  working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
-  ensuring that stakeholders are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
-  ensuring that all schools in the trust deliver a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
-  taking ownership of the trust's financial sustainability ensuring effective resource management
-  agreeing the trust's staffing structure, keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
-  ensuring robust risk management policy and procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective





Monitoring and evaluating trust performance

Trustees must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

-  measuring the trust's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
-  ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the trust is operating effectively in line with these policies
-  holding the senior executive leader to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies
-  evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by senior executive leaders and external reporting on all aspects of trust performance
-  asking challenging questions of the senior executive leader in order to hold them to account
-  ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively




Contribution to the governing body

Trustees should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the board by:

-  attending meetings (typically 6 full board meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for the senior executive leader in advance
-  establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior executive leaders and colleagues on the board of trustees
-  getting to know schools within the trust, including visiting occasionally during school hours
-  undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

In trusts with local governance arrangements

In most medium-sized and larger multi academy trusts, there will be some form of governance below the trust level. In such cases, trustees are responsible for:

-  ensuring that the trust's governance structure meets the needs of the trust
-  agreeing clear schemes of delegation, outlining the responsibilities delegated to the senior executive leader and the responsibilities of the board and academy committees
-  ensuring effective communication channels are in place

Expenses

Trustees should receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as trustee and NGA recommends that a board of trustees should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and dependency care, but not loss of earnings.



The Island Learning Trust

10 characteristics of governance in effective MATs

- 1. The skills required for governance of the trust are identified explicitly** and set out in a role specification that informs the recruitment and appointment of people to the board and any LGBs for their skills, as well as informing elections where applicable.
- 2. Trustees take their own professional development seriously.** They are inducted properly when they are new to the board, and continue to undertake training or other development activity as necessary to continue to develop their skills.
- 3. The chair of the board plays a vital leading role in setting the direction and structures for the trust.** They support the development of positive working relationships between the board, the executive leaders and trust staff.
- 4. The board evaluates its own effectiveness,** particularly when the trust is new and at key growth points, including commissioning periodic external reviews of their effectiveness to gain an independent external perspective of their strengths and areas for development.
- 5. Governance structures are designed** for the context of the organisation and the schools being governed, not as a legacy of arrangements that existed in schools before they joined the trust.
- 6. The board and its executive leaders are transparent** with any school looking to join the MAT about the level of delegated power that will be vested at a local level and the circumstances in which this may vary over time.
- 7. As the MAT grows the trustees recognise the need to review governance structures** and delegations including the option of a regional or sub-regional layer of governance that spans groups of schools, in addition to or instead of functions delegated to LGBs at individual school level.
- 8. The board receives management information in a standardised and easily accessible format** which enables comparison of the performance of schools across the MAT.
- 9. There is no duplication** between the roles of executive trust leaders and LGBs in holding individual school leadership to account.
- 10. There are effective and meaningful arrangements in place to engage with parents and the wider community** to seek their views and feedback, which in turn informs the scrutiny provided by trustees and supports greater accountability.