



The
Balcarras
Trust

TRUST GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL
(CLERK TO THE TRUSTEES)



INFORMATION FOR
APPLICANTS



LETTER FROM THE CEO AND CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

January 2024

Dear Colleague,

Trust Governance Professional (Clerk to the Trustees)

A letter to potential applicants from the Chief Executive, Dominic Burke and the Chair of Trustees, Bernard Roberts

Thankyou for your interest in this post. The Balcarras Trust came into existence on December 1st 2020. The Trust currently has three schools: Balcarras, The High School Leckhampton and Winchcombe, but we are likely to extend the Trust to other schools in the years ahead.

We are seeking to appoint a Governance Professional to act as Clerk to the Trustees and to advise the Trust on all aspects of governance. In putting this job specification together we have looked carefully at the Clerking Competency Framework, the Academies Trust Handbook and the Governance handbook.

We believe in excellence and our mission is to create schools which are rated amongst the very best in the country. It has always been the case that sound governance is the bedrock on which this is built but it is even more crucial when the educational landscape is shifting so quickly. The Trustees are keen to appoint a governance expert who can help to ensure that the framework of governance is fit for purpose as the Trust grows in the years ahead. We are looking for a colleague who is eager to play a key role in supporting our development as we grow from being a relatively small Multi Academy Trust to a larger one.

Hopefully this pack of information will provide you with all of the information you need. If you have any questions then please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Dominic Burke
CEO The Balcarras Trust

Bernard Roberts
Chair of Trustees

THE BALCARRAS TRUST AND ITS MISSION

The Balcarras Trust came into existence on December 1st 2020. We are a Multi Academy Trust based in Gloucestershire. Prior to this the company (Balcarras School) was a Single Academy Trust.

The Mission Statement of The Balcarras Trust:

The Balcarras Trust is committed to delivering outstanding inclusive, comprehensive education in each of its schools. Every child within the Trust will be expected, encouraged and supported to reach their full potential and, when they leave school, to be fully equipped to go on to be successful in the next phase of their lives.

The Trust will establish and maintain high standards of teaching, pastoral care and behaviour in its schools. No child will be “left behind.” There will be excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Each member of staff in the Trust’s schools will be an excellent role model and will play their part in ensuring that each school in the Trust will have its own special ethos. Students will feel proud of their school.

The Trustees will, at all times, uphold the highest standards of financial propriety and make efficient and appropriate use of the public money made available to them.

Underpinning all the activities in the Trust is the belief that, however strong the performance of the Trust’s schools may be, there is always room for improvement. Everyone associated with the Trust; the trustees, governors, school leaders, staff and pupils, will share this aspiration.

The Balcarras Trust is committed to its role as a ‘system leader’ in the wider educational environment. The Trust oversees the GLOW Maths Hub and the Balcarras Teaching School Partnership, both of which are leading providers of Continuing Professional Development for educators.



THE WORK OF THE TRUST

Currently there are three schools in the Trust:

Balcarras: an 11-18 coeducational academy with 1402 pupils on roll. Consistently rated outstanding by Ofsted, the school secures superb outcomes at both GCSE and A level. Recently the school was awarded the Sunday Times Southwest State School of the Decade Award. The school is led by Dominic Burke (Headteacher) who combines this role with CEO of the Trust. Balcarras is the lead school in the GLOW Maths Hub and the Balcarras Teaching School Partnership. Balcarras is located in Charlton Kings and is currently where the Trust's registered office is located.

The High School Leckhampton: a brand new 11-16 coeducational comprehensive academy with an eventual capacity of 900. The school opened in September 2021 initially on the Balcarras site. It transferred to its own purpose built accommodation in September 2022. It now occupies a beautiful campus at Farm Lane in Leckhampton. This facility cost £35 million and is state of the art. The school is led by Helen Wood and has for the first two years of its existence been oversubscribed.

Winchcombe School: in November 2023 Winchcombe School, led by Jonathan Templeton, became the third member of the Trust. Winchcombe is a smaller than average 11-16 co-educational comprehensive school based in the Cotswolds. The school is rightly proud of its family feel but it also has an excellent academic record with results in recent years that place it high up the Gloucestershire league table.

In addition the Trust has a wider role as a system leader: the Trust also runs The Balcarras Teaching School Hub, The GLOW Maths Hub and is the legal entity for the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership (GITEP). It is worth noting that each of these have their own governance arrangements. The person appointed would not be expected to be involved directly in their governance.



MAIN DETAILS

POST TITLE	TRUST GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL (Clerk to the Trustees)
SALARY	Competitive
RESPONSIBLE TO	The Chair of Trustees/CEO
POSITION	Part Time (The exact hours will be worked out with the successful candidate. There are at least 10 Trust Meetings a year as well as preparation meetings with the CEO and Chair)

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Academy Trust Governance Professionals are responsible for overseeing all aspects of governance and compliance within the Trust ensuring governance adheres to good practice and meets all statutory and regulatory requirements. In particular this will be 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 the 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.
- ensuring Trust Board meetings and committee meetings are efficient and effective and properly recorded.
- providing support so that annual company reports are compliant with both financial and legal requirements.
- providing advice to Trustees/Members on constitutional and procedural matters.
- communicating with other professionals (e.g. lawyers and auditors) and stakeholders (e.g. students, parents, and the wider public).
- keeping up to date with policy, legal and statutory requirements and managing information effectively.
- communicating Trust Board decisions and ensuring actions are implemented by those required to undertake them, reporting back as necessary.
- satisfying all aspects of meeting compliance as stipulated in the Trust's articles of association, the Academy Trust Handbook, Company law and Charity Commission guidance, and in accordance with arrangements agreed by the Board of Trustees.
- maintaining the confidentiality and the security of information and documents as required
- notifying relevant authorities of any changes to membership.
- reviewing the Trust's articles of association, proposing and implementing changes as appropriate
- maintaining a record of attendance at meetings and training sessions by Members, Trustees, Governors, and governance professionals.
- ensuring systems and controls are in place to comply with obligations under data protection legislation, safeguarding guidelines and health and safety legislation.
- keeping the Trustees Folder of Information up to date so that Trustees have access to all relevant information.
- providing advice to the Board of Trustees as regards any changes to their responsibilities resulting from a change in statutory guidance.
- providing advice regarding compliance with education legislation, funding agreements, charity legislation, company law and other relevant legislation and regulations.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective organisation and administration of trust board meetings

The person appointed will clerk meetings of the trust board and its committees, ensuring these enable the successful delivery of strategic objectives. As such, they have a key role in:

- keeping the Trust Board focused on its core strategic priorities.
- working with Chair of Trustees and CEO to set the cycle of Trust Board and committee meetings and to prepare focused agendas. Currently the Trust has two standing committees, Finance, Audit and Risk, which meets 5 times per year, and a Trust Development Committee which meets occasionally.
- 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 of Trustees.
- working with the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee of the Trust to prepare the work of this committee.

We also envisage that this role will require extra remunerated time for strategic planning with the CEO and Chair of Trustees and ideally this will involve some time spent at the Trust's Central Office located at Balcarras School. Please also be aware that each school in the Trust has a Local Governing Board (LGB). Currently these LGB meetings are clerked separately.

Please note that we are currently using the Governors' Virtual Office as the main vehicle for conducting Trust business. Training will be provided for the successful candidate if they don't have experience of using this system.

Advice and Guidance

As well as acting as the main point of contact for all queries relating to governance within the Trust, proactively update those governing by providing advice and guidance on:

- the respective roles of Members, Trustees and Local Governors as required, including their duty to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct and ethics.
- strategic leadership responsibilities.
- best practice in academy trust governance, particularly in relation to committee structures.
- the application of policies, procedures and relevant legislation/guidance.

Manage statutory information and governance documentation

Governance professionals should act as gatekeepers for 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 Trust committee membership, along with any terms of reference.
- in conjunction with the CEO, 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 register of interests are published as agreed (e.g. on the Trust website) and in line with statutory requirements and are available to the external auditors.
- developing and overseeing Trust documents such as the Trustees Code of Conduct and ensure that all such documents are on the Trust website as appropriate. These will include the latest version of the Scheme of Governance, all terms of reference for Trust committees, the Decision Making Matrix and the terms of reference for Local Governing Boards.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED

- ensuring that governance-specific risks are included in the Trust's risk register.
- supporting the production of the annual report and governance statement published with the Trust's annual accounts.
- managing the flow of information between the Trust Board, Trust committees and members, maintaining an up-to-date record of all Trust business.
- maintaining the Trust's online governance shared area.

Oversee governance membership and structure

In order to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Trust's governance framework, governance professionals are responsible for:

- ensuring the Trust Board and its committees are properly constituted.
- advising the Trust Board on succession planning.
- supporting the Trust Board in developing effective and inclusive recruitment practices which promote diversity.
- overseeing recruitment of: Members, Trustees, committee members as required, advising on election and appointment procedures in conjunction with the Chair of Trustees and the CEO.
- developing an induction process for new Trustees.

People and relationships

Governance professionals develop and maintain productive working relationships whilst maintaining independence by:

- working collaboratively with other key Trust functions, including senior leadership so that governance supports and enables the operational delivery of strategic objectives.
- working closely with the Chair of Trustees and committee chairs to ensure strong links between the Trust Board and other stakeholders.
- maintaining effective communications with relevant stakeholders such as the local authority.

Evaluation and development

In contributing to rigorous and effective methods of self-review across the Trust, governance professionals are responsible for:

- coordinating the design and review of professional development plans for the Chair of Trustees and committee chairs.
- coordinating a programme of regular evaluation of the quality of governance, including skills audits and individual reviews for those governing.
- co-ordinating (alongside the CEO and the Chair of Trustees) the annual School Resource Management Self Assessment Tool.
- alongside the Chair of Trustees, developing and supporting a training programme for Trustees.
- supporting the commissioning of external reviews of governance where appropriate.

MAIN DUTIES CONTINUED

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 governance professional should include:

- 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 Trustees.

Other duties

Governance professionals may also be asked to undertake the following duties:

- act as clerk to the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Trust (usually held in Spring).
- source or provide clerking cover during times of absence.
- clerk panels as required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for someone who has experience of supporting good governance preferably in the education sector. A working knowledge of academy trust governance would certainly be an advantage as would any relevant professional qualifications in this area. The Trust is committed to professional development and we would certainly be willing to support the right candidate in seeking appropriate professional development opportunities.

HOW TO APPLY

I hope having read through this document you are keen to apply. If so then please do the following:

- Fill in the standard Balcarras Trust Application Form which can be found here:
<https://www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=19>
- Write a supporting statement/letter of no more than one side of A4 articulating why you are interested in this role and demonstrating why your experience make you a suitable candidate.

The **deadline** for receiving applications is: **Friday 9th February 2024, 9am**

If you require any further information then please do get in touch. We are happy to speak to prospective candidates on the telephone or to arrange a visit. The best point of contact is the PA to the CEO: Karen Adkins ksa@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Shortlisting will take place shortly after the deadline and we will look to interview soon afterwards. We will agree a start date with the successful candidate dependent on their notice period. The selection process is detailed fully overleaf.

We look forward to reading your application.

Dominic Burke CEO and Bernard Roberts Chair of Trustees

SELECTION PROCESS

- ⇒ After the deadline for the position has passed there will be a shortlisting meeting with the Chair of the Trust/Trustees/CEO to review the applications.
- ⇒ Qualifications, experience and suitability for the post will be considered during the shortlisting process.
- ⇒ Unsuccessful applications will be notified by email. Unsuccessful candidates can request feedback by email.
- ⇒ Successful applicants will be invited for interview by telephone or email.
- ⇒ References will be requested at this stage.

Please stipulate clearly on you application form should you wish for your references not to be checked prior to job offer.

- ⇒ A formal letter confirming the interview arrangements and plan for the day will then be emailed to candidates including details of documentation that will be required to be presented on the day.
- ⇒ One of the requirements of the day will be to complete a “Declaration of Criminal Record and other information” check.
- ⇒ If you have a DBS certificate from your current work place, you will be required to show this.
- ⇒ Candidates will be required to undergo a formal interview (including safer recruitment questions) and where appropriate a task. All information concerning the day will be provided in the formal letter.
- ⇒ A decision will be made on the day where possible.
- ⇒ Both successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified by telephone where possible.

For all enquiries about this position please email jobs@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

<https://www.thebalcarratrust.co.uk>