

Job Description

Governance Professional

Location: Kelvedon, Essex

Contract: Permanent 7-10 hours per week over 1 or 2 days (term time only)

Plus:

- An additional 9 hours clerking paid per Full Board meeting (6 x per year) - evenings 7pm-9pm
- An additional 5 hours clerking paid per Board committee (6 x per year) - daytime
- *There may be further opportunities for hourly paid clerking for local governing committees*

Salary: Essex NJC Scale 9 (£39,862-£44,075 FTE / £20.66 - £22.85 per hour)

Reports to: Chair of the Trust Board, CEO & CFOO

About Canonium Learning Trust:

Canonium Learning Trust is a primary academy trust serving a growing family of schools across Essex. In under two years, we have grown from four to twelve schools, becoming one of the most dynamic and fast-developing trusts in the region. Our mission is grounded in the values of Opportunity, Challenge, and Integrity, and we are committed to delivering inclusive, high-quality education that enables every child to thrive. In 2025, we were proud to be named Tes Trust of the Year (*9 schools or fewer*) in recognition of our educational impact, strategic leadership, and collaborative culture.

Purpose of the Role

Following a recent governance review aligned to our growth and future ambitions, we are investing in this new post to further strengthen our governance structures and support sustained excellence at both trust and local levels. Governance is a strategic enabler of our mission - and this role will be central to its continued success. The Governance and Compliance Professional is a senior administrative and advisory post responsible for ensuring the effective operation of governance at Trust and school level. The postholder serves as the independent and professional adviser to the Trust Board, ensuring that all statutory and regulatory duties are met and that governance practice supports the Trust's strategic aims, compliance obligations, and ethos. The postholder will lead all clerking for the Trust Board and its committees, oversee the distribution and escalation of information between Local Governing Committees (LGCs) and the Board, and coordinate a robust programme of induction, training, policy oversight, and governance self-review. They will also carry out key compliance tasks, including maintaining statutory registers, updating GIAS, and ensuring website governance content is up to date. The role also includes oversight of the Scheme of Delegation, Governance Handbook, Code of Conduct, and related frameworks.

Key Responsibilities

1. Trust Board and Committee Clerking

- Provide high-quality clerking and procedural support to the Trust Board and its committees.
- Prepare and circulate agendas, papers, draft minutes, and action logs in accordance with agreed timelines.
- Advise the Chair, CEO, and committee leads on procedural matters and best practice in governance.

2. Governance Coordination Across the Trust

- Coordinate the flow of governance information from LGCs to the Trust Board and vice versa.
- Collate and quality-assure LGC minutes and ensure significant issues are escalated appropriately.
- Ensure that approved policies, strategies, and decisions from the Board are communicated to all LGCs.
- Maintain a Trust-wide governance calendar covering meetings, compliance deadlines, policy reviews, and training.
- Maintain, review and coordinate the Scheme of Delegation, ensuring it reflects current structures, responsibilities, and compliance expectations.
- Support annual reviews of core governance documents, including the Governance Handbook, Code of Conduct, Terms of Reference, and policy responsibilities.

3. Governance Development and Compliance

- Coordinate annual induction and training programmes for Trust Board directors and Local Governing Committee (LGC) members.
- Lead, supported by the HR team, the recruitment process for new trustees and LGC members – including role descriptions, advertising, eligibility checks, and appointment documentation.
- Support Board and LGC self-assessments, skills audits, and governance evaluations to ensure effective performance and succession planning.
- Monitor changes in legislation, DfE guidance, and sector best practice, advising trustees and senior leaders on their implications.
- Maintain statutory registers, including business interests, attendance, terms of office, and diversity data.
- Ensure governance content on school and trust websites is compliant, accurate, and up to date.

4. Company Secretarial and Regulatory Duties

- Ensure timely submission of statutory filings to Companies House and updates to GIAS.
- Coordinate the annual review and publication of the Scheme of Delegation and other governance documents required by the Academy Trust Handbook.
- Support the CEO and Chair in preparing governance returns, inspection documents, and trustee declarations.
- Maintain key documentation such as the Articles of Association and Register of Interests.

5. Policy Oversight

- Work with the Trust Administration Manager to maintain the Trust's Policy Matrix and schedule of review cycles.
- Ensure all policies are reviewed, approved, and distributed to schools and governors in line with governance protocols.
- Liaise with internal leads and compliance officers to ensure policies are aligned with statutory and trust-wide requirements.
- Supported by the Trust Administration Manager, coordinate version control, formatting, and publication of policies across trust and school websites.

6. Values, Ethos and Church School Governance

- Support the fulfilment of Church of England governance requirements in Foundation schools.
- Liaise with Diocesan Boards of Education regarding appointments, governance structures, and reserved matters.
- Ensure Canonium's values of Opportunity, Challenge, and Integrity are embedded in governance frameworks and language.

Safeguarding

Canonium Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All appointments are subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

Working Hours and Expectations

- One regular day per week in the Trust office (e.g. for meetings, document management, team collaboration).
- All Trust Board and Committee meetings (2 hours) must be attended in person (primarily in Essex).
- Remaining clerking hours can be undertaken remotely, with flexibility and by agreement
- Evening meeting attendance will be required.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Experience clerking boards or committees in education, charity, or public sector settings	✓	
Strong working knowledge of legislation (e.g. Companies Act, Charity law, Academy Trust Handbook)	✓	
Experience supporting multi-academy trust or local authority school governance	✓	
Experience managing governance policies, calendars, or systems	✓	
High-quality minute-taking and agenda preparation	✓	
Excellent organisational and administrative skills, with accuracy and discretion	✓	
Ability to work independently, maintain confidentiality, and offer professional challenge	✓	
Strong communication skills (written and oral), including the ability to summarise complex information	✓	
Confident in using Microsoft 365 and remote meeting tools (e.g. Google Meet, MS Teams)	✓	
ICSA, NGA Clerking Accreditation, or equivalent governance training		✓
Understanding of Church school governance or experience working with diocesan structures		✓
Commitment to the Trust's values and safeguarding responsibilities	✓	