Governance Professional
Central Services
Attain Academy Partnership

Job Description

Introduction from the CEO

I am delighted to be CEO of Attain and Director of the Chelmsford Schools' Alliance (CTSA), and it is wonderful to work with talented and conscientious staff and trustees who have the outcomes for all our children at heart.

Attain Academy Partnership is a multi-academy trust formed in 2016. Our vision is to create a community of outstanding Trusts with the highest aspiration and dedication to achieving the best outcomes for all our learners.

The dedicated staff and trustees across all our Trusts form a team, which is creative, collaborative and supportive of one another, enabling the sharing of expertise and opportunities for outstanding professional development.

Attain Academy Partnership is so-named because we believe that committed, co-operative, professional partnerships will secure the best outcomes for all pupils in the future. Attain is committed to delivering high quality educational provision across all our academies whilst reflecting and responding to the individual needs of local communities.

Our aim in all our academies is to ensure that every child is a happy and successful learner, a confident individual and a responsible citizen who can develop their skills, abilities, talents and interests in order to fulfil their true potential and achieve what they want to do.

Our ethos is to grow a collaboration of academies that work together with a shared desire to be innovative, inclusive and inspirational.

Our Aims and Ethos: **'Working together towards success for all'**

- An unshakeable belief in the intrinsic value of every individual within our community based on mutual respect.
- A moral code and high behavioural expectations which are based on Christian values and recognise and respect those beliefs held by different denominations.
- Exciting and creative climates for learning within a safe and supportive environment.
- Sustainable collaboration and sharing of best practice.
- Personal and professional development for all members of staff.
- Accountability based on honesty and responsibility in all our relationships.

We believe:

- That every pupil deserves a good education that enables them to be the best they can possibly be.
- That every individual in our community of Trusts (our pupils, staff, families and friends) is important and has something to contribute.
- In building an exciting and creative climate for learning within a safe and supportive environment.
- In working together and sharing best practice.
- In ensuring the personal and professional development for all members of staff so that they have a rewarding and a fulfilling career within our community of Trusts.
- In accountability based on honesty and responsibility in all our relationships.

Every pupil can expect to:

- Experience a caring and supportive culture in which every individual is safe and can thrive.
- Build positive relationships with the staff in their Trust.
- Experience an aspirational culture in which we refuse to accept barriers to achievement.
- Have ambitious targets and access to appropriate resources to support their learning.
- Meet and talk with our staff regularly about their learning and progress.
- Learn within the classroom with appropriate support and to receive extra help when necessary.
- Have their learning and progress and that of their peers effectively tracked.
- Experience peer-to-peer support within the classroom rather than having total reliance on adults.

Learning will:

- Embrace creative and innovative approaches that engage all learners.
- Reflect planning between experts and teachers to ensure the accessibility of the work.
- Have pace and a continuous focus on progress both academic and social.
- Use modern technology and the virtual learning environment to ensure relevance in the 21st century.
- Be personalised so it is relevant to each pupil and ensure challenge.
- Be tailored to the needs of key groups, for whom appropriate programmes of study will be devised.
- Reflect a balanced but challenging curriculum.
- Enable progress to higher education and/or employment.

Collaboration will ensure that:

- The areas of greatest need are well supported and show rapid and sustained improvement
- The Trust produces flexible and experienced professionals capable of career progression
- Staff within the Trust are well-supported and receive an excellent introduction
- Resources are shared, and economies of scale are achieved

Professional development will:

- Deliver outstanding professionals to work across our trust.
- Ensure that all teachers remain at the forefront of creative and innovative practice.
- Be tailored to meet different standards and needs.
- Focus on outstanding teaching and learning and on developing future leaders who impact on Trust improvement and outcomes.
- Support the needs of our pupils and take account of the stage of development of each Trust.
- Be delivered by inspirational experts.
- Enrich collaborative and reflective working relationships between and within Trust.

Accountability:

- Pupils and staff will understand what they must achieve and how to do this.
- Performance will always be measured against the most ambitious targets.
- Pupils and staff will be held to account for their targets and progress towards them.
- Pupil premium will be used to accelerate the progress of vulnerable pupils.
- Every member of staff will undergo performance management regularly.
- Good and outstanding teaching will be the norm.
- Leaders are proactive in addressing issues and timely, appropriate interventions will be honest and based on objective information.
- Trust bodies will know their Trusts and hold them to account.

The post outlined in this job description is a key role within the Academy and the resource fulfilling the role is expected to achieve the core principles as defined above.

CEO: Susannah Edom-Baker

Pay and Conditions

This is a permanent position requiring flexible working during term time supporting the Trust Board and its committees across a number of meetings (approximately 45 per annum). The total annual hours worked is expected to be in the range of 250 to 300 depending upon circumstances.

In order to reflect the demands of the post, the salary will be in within Scale 9 or Scale 10 per hour) depending on experience. You will also be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Leadership Structure

The governance structure consists of:

Members (four in number)
Trust Board – up to 12 trustees including a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Trust Board – the Board meets up to six times per annum plus one AGM which the members attend
Finance, Risk, Audit and Premises Committee – meets up to six times per annum
Standards Committee – meets once per term
HR committee – meets once per term
Local Governing Bodies – currently meet four times a year. There are seven LGBs across the Trust which meet in a defined two week period each term and report to the following Board meeting.

The structure of the current Senior Leadership Team is as follows:

CEO
CFO
COO
Governance Professional
Governance clerk
Headteachers/Heads of Schools

Specific Job description – Governance Professional, Central Services

This job description is not exhaustive but is designed to give a flavour of the wide-ranging nature of the position and its importance to the functioning of the Trust.

The Governance Professional will provide support to the Board of Trustees and its committees (including seven Local Governing Bodies) in ensuring that the governance of the Trust not only meets the statutory and other requirements but also drives the Trust forward to provide the best possible educational outcomes for every child and ensures that the Trust is an excellent employer.

Support for some administration processes and procedures is in place in the Central Team and the precise segregation of duties will be reviewed and discussed with the successful candidate to ensure optimal efficiency.

The Governance Professional will be a key contact for Trustees and Local Governors in delivering and operating an excellent governance management system and process.

They will also be committed to the development of Attain's aims and ethos, have experience of and the ability to successfully support, monitor and challenge, and have a good understanding of how to work collaboratively with schools.

Job Purpose

The Governance Professional is the Trust's strategic lead for governance, compliance and assurance, responsible for ensuring that governance across the Trust is highly effective, legally compliant and aligned to best practice.

The postholder will act as the Trust's principal adviser on governance matters, supporting Members, Trustees, The Chief Executive Officer and senior leaders to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

The role combines strategic leadership with operational delivery, including direct responsibility for clerking the Trust Board and committees, while developing a consistent, high-quality governance functions cross the Trust.

The successful candidate will also act as the trust's specialist advisor and lead administrator for complaints, disciplinary and exclusion review processes, appeals and all formal communications with interested parties, ensuring lawful, timely and well-documented outcomes that protect pupils and the trust.

Main Responsibilities and Duties

Provide advice to the Trust Board:

-Advise the Trust Board on its core functions and Department for Education (DfE) governance advice, including the Governance Handbooks and Competency Framework for Governance.
-Know where to access appropriate legal advice, support and guidance, and where necessary seek advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the Trust Board.
-Advise the Trust Board on best practice in relation to its scheme of delegation for governance.
-Advise on the annual business cycle of Trust Board meetings and tasks.

-Advise the Trust Board on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings.
Inform the Trust Board of any changes to its responsibilities as a result of a change in status or changes in the relevant legislation.
-Offer advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures both at Trust Board and academy level.
-Identify priorities, anticipate issues which may arise and draw these matters to the chair's attention and propose recommendations

Provide effective administration of meetings:

-With the Trust Chair, Chairs of Committees, CEO, Head teachers/head of school, CFO (as appropriate) prepare focused agendas for the Trust Board meetings and committee meetings. Ensure meetings are quorate.
-Draft minutes of Trust Board and all committee meetings, indicating who is responsible for any agreed action with timescales, and send drafts to the chair.
-Liaise with those preparing papers to make sure they are available on time, and distribute the agenda and papers as required by legislation or the articles of association.
-Record the attendance of Trustees at meetings (and any apologies – whether they have been accepted or not), and take appropriate action in relation to absences, including advising absent Trustees of the date of the next meeting.
-Follow-up any agreed action points with those responsible and inform the chair of progress.

Membership

-Advise the Trust Board on the DfE's recommendations and guidance in relation to members and Trustees.
-Chair that part of the meeting at which the chair is elected, giving procedural advice concerning conduct of this and other elections.

Manage Information

-Manage the flow of information from Trust Board to local academy committees and vice versa.
-Support the COO with Risk Assessment, recording, reporting and responding to breaches of data protection
-Support the COO with assembly of subject access request and Freedom of Information request data and providing advice and guidance to schools thereon

People and relationships

-Develop and maintain effective professional working relationships with the chair, the Board and executive leaders.
-Undertake appropriate and regular training and development to maintain his/her knowledge and improve practice.
-Keep up-to-date with current educational developments and legislation affecting academy governance.
-Participate in regular performance management
-Work closely with the governance clerk to support with the preparation, minuting and advice to Local Governing Bodies

Complaints management and advice

-Act as the trust's primary adviser on the complaints procedure: advise the central team, heads of school and relevant trustees on process, timescales, evidence required and lawful responses.
-Ensure complaints are logged, acknowledged and progressed in line with the published complaints procedure and statutory requirements; prepare and circulate papers to panel members and parties.
-Draft clear, proportionate responses and outcome letters for consideration by the executive, ensuring legal implications, data protection and safeguarding requirements are addressed.

Panels, reviews and appeals

-Organise, clerk and minute complaints panels, exclusion reviews and appeal hearings (including where a clerk is required by statutory guidance).
-Make reasonable efforts to ensure all parties receive relevant papers at least five school days before a review/hearing, and manage the circulation of documents as required.
-Provide impartial procedural advice to panels and ensure minutes and records of decisions are produced and retained in line with policy and statutory guidance.

Communications and stakeholder management

-Act as a named point of contact for parents, pupils (where appropriate), staff, governors, the local authority (for maintained schools), and external legal advisers on governance, complaints and appeals matters.
-Draft and manage formal communications (acknowledgements, outcome letters, statutory notices) in collaboration with the central team and headteachers, ensuring tone is professional and legally sound.
-Promote timely, transparent communication while protecting confidentiality and the best interests of pupils.

Possible additional duties

-Work closely with the COO and the heads to ensure that websites are fully compliant and policies are up to date

-Work closely with the COO to ensure consultations are carried out in accordance with regulations and any other requirements

-Support the central team, governors, trustees, heads in preparing for and participating in OFSTED inspections

-Convene and manage regular meetings for chairs of governors with the CEO, trust chair and vice-chair

Person Specification

We seek an excellent administrator with excellent communication and self-organisational skills and a flexible approach to working.

They will combine a record of successful administration practices and knowledge with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to explain complex issues to stakeholders at all levels.

They will demonstrate the following experience, skills, knowledge and personal attributes.

Essential requirements

Criteria	***Desirable requirements***
Qualifications	
	Essential requirements • Qualified with ICSA Certificate in Academy Governance or similar qualification
Professional Experience	Essential knowledge: • Understanding of governance in a Multi Academy Trust or similar organisation • The ability to use information technology to an intermediate standard. • Experience of working with Board and senior committee members • Experience of having successfully serviced boards and committees including writing agendas and concise and accurate minute taking • Experience of maintaining systems and records in a governance or committee environment • An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship Essential skills and abilities: • Preparedness to make recommendations to the Board and its committees and a willingness to speak their mind with diplomacy • The ability to undertake a wide range of operational and administrative tasks. • The ability to adapt to both varying tasks and those of a routine nature. • The ability to absorb information readily and speedily and work under pressure. • The ability to respond effectively to Trustees and Local Governors, both in person, remotely and over the telephone. • A good understanding of the need for confidentiality and secure operational

	processes and systems. • Proven literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Essential experience: • Be able to demonstrate experience of providing governance support services in other organisations. • Experience of using and developing new and developing operational systems and procedures. • Excellent time management • Attention to detail • Confident in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, the internet and email • Excellent communication skills Special conditions: • Willingness to undertake further training as required • The ability to work flexibly and ensure that essential tasks are carried out within agreed timetables. • The physical ability to perform the duties of the post with the support of aids and adaptations if necessary.
Personal Attributes	• Ability to build and maintain effective relationships • A deep commitment to the vision and aims of the Trust. • A strong team player with good interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively as part of a growing organisation. • High levels of energy and personal impact with the authority to command the respect of Heads of Schools/Head teachers and senior stakeholders across the Trust. • High professional standards in dress, attendance and punctuality • Hardworking, efficient and ever-visible • A good understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities policies and its relationship to The Attain Academy Trust. • Polite and friendly with a positive attitude • Prepared to have a flexible approach to working • Being professional and maintaining confidentiality at all times

Data protection

- Being aware of the Trust's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1984 and all subsequent legislation and/or regulations for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held on such systems and ensure that all administrative and financial processes comply with this.
- Maintaining client records and archive systems, in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.

Confidentiality

You are expected to treat all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence. There are strict rules and protocols defining employees' access to and use of the Trust's databases. Any

breach of these rules and protocols will be regarded as subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Equalities

The Trust has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and to promote its policies in their own work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge racism, prejudice and discrimination.

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment

The Attain Academy Partnership Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as required under the Education Act 2002 and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

An ENHANCED DBS check is required for this post.

This Job Description is subject to annual review and alterations may be negotiated to reflect the changing needs of the school.