



# FOUNDATION GOVERNANCE RECRUITMENT



DIOCESSE OF TRURO

DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM  
GROWING THE CHURCH

# GOVERNANCE

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There are over 350,000 individuals volunteering in school governance roles across the country. School governance is not a role to be undertaken lightly, it carries significant responsibility akin to being a non-executive director of a company or a charity trustee if in a single academy or maintained school, less so but still valued as much in a multi-academy trust.

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It is also incredibly rewarding through involvement in the most important volunteering role in education. The collective decisions you make, as a member of the board, will help shape the future of children within our schools.

**School governance covers governors in local authority maintained schools as well as directors/ trustees in academies and multi-academy trusts, governors on local boards or individuals on advisory boards.**

As part of a governance team, boards are responsible for three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.



↑ **The key governance responsibility is to act in the best interests of the pupils**

## SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Whether you are monitoring budgets or agreeing equality policies, the underlying focus should be what difference this will make to the children and young people in the school.

School governance roles are highly rewarding, in volunteering you will be making a positive contribution to a school's success and therefore having an impact on the lives of its pupils, teachers, and the local community. In addition, your role can help you develop transferable skills that are useful in your working life.

Some of these opportunities include:

- Experience of strategic planning and development
- Setting aims and objectives for reaching ambitious goals
- Working within a diverse team, performance management and recruitment of senior leaders
- Financial planning, budget control and setting pay and key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Gaining greater awareness of the education system
- Being part of debates and asking challenging questions to support school improvement
- Getting to know the community in which you live and/or work
- Using your existing skills in a new or different way

# WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FOUNDATION GOVERNORS AND DIRECTORS?

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Foundation governors and directors have all the same duties and responsibilities as other governors and directors, these are set out in various places but particularly in the 'Governance Handbook' published by the DfE.

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The Handbook makes it clear that those appointed by the foundation have a particular responsibility;

**Foundation governors, such as those appointed by a church or diocese, have a specific role in preserving and developing the ethos of the school, including any religious character. They must also ensure the school is conducted in accordance with the foundation's governing documents, including any trust deed relating to the school.**

To do these things a foundation governor or trustee will need to understand the ethos and "religious character" of Church of England schools, usually as declared in the particular trust deed or other documents of their school but also reflected in the school's mission statement and vision. Then the trustee or governor will need to be in a position to make a judgement about whether this is being "preserved and developed" and whether the school is being "conducted in accordance" with the foundation documents. We offer training and support for foundation governors and trustees in this work.





# THERE TO SERVE THE WHOLE

Like other governors and trustees appointed by particular groups or bodies, foundation appointees must remember that they are there to serve the whole academy, school or trust in its overall aims, not to promote a particular constituency. This is particularly important when trustees in a multi-academy trust (MAT) are appointed from a school or constituency within the MAT: they govern for the interests of the whole, not the part. People appointed to serve the foundation remember that the foundations of a building support the whole of the building, not just bits of it.

**Governors or trustees represent the foundation, but they are not delegates of it. The education team at Church House will want to support, inform and encourage those whom we appoint, we will appropriately challenge and scrutinise their work, but we do not direct!**

# FOUNDATION GOVERNORS AND TRUSTEES, AND A SKILLS-BASED BOARD

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Schools and academies are increasingly moving towards “skills-based” appointments rather than people who simply represent a constituency or interest group. “Preserving and promoting” the foundation is one of the skills and capacities needed on a board with a church foundation.

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Of course, once a particular skill or capacity is covered on a board it isn’t necessary to keep appointing to that skill-set: there will often be other skills which can usefully be developed. This also applies with foundation appointments; when we are confident that the foundation is properly preserved and developed it is appropriate to prioritise other skills or capacities, even when appointing a foundation representative.

This means that in some cases we will appoint foundation governors or trustees who are not principally recruited to promote or develop the church school character and ethos of the school or academy, but are recruited to meet a specific skill or capacity identified within the board. We will do this when we are confident that the foundation is being effectively promoted and developed, and is secure.

Foundation governors and trustees appointed in this way will still need to understand and to be committed to the church’s vision for education.



↑ **Understanding the character and ethos of a church school is a basic requirement**

## WHO CAN BE APPOINTED TO FOUNDATION GOVERNANCE?

Anyone appointed as a foundation trustee or governor will need to understand the ethos and character of the school or schools that they will serve. They will need to be committed to this, and willing to promote it as a positive contribution to education in general and the children of that community in particular. In other words, individuals will need to understand church schools, and be willing to promote their work.

Not every foundation governor or director signs up to every nuance of Anglican teaching and thought; indeed not every vicar does so. However we do need to be supportive of the work of the Church of England in Cornwall in general and readily promote its work in education.

For a board to strongly represent an Anglican foundation it will need within it a strong voice from the Anglican tradition; but not every voice will need to be that person. We deliberately write “Anglican” tradition here because it links the school to the parish church, Anglican worship, and the life of the Church of England in that place over time.

When a foundation is secure and effectively preserved and developed, new foundation appointments will be made to meet other skill requirements. The basic requirement is that any foundation governor or director should understand the character and ethos of the church schools they serve and be willing to support their work. There is not a “faith” test.

# SUPPORT & TRAINING

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As an individuals involved in school governance which is representing the foundation there is a wealth of training and support available to you. Ongoing training is crucial in building a good understanding of the role and keeping on top of changes in legislation as well as good practice.

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## HERE TO HELP

### ONLINE

**[www.trurodiocese.org.uk](http://www.trurodiocese.org.uk)**

Information and details of training can be found on the Diocese of Truro's website.

### MORE INFORMATION

**Clare Kendle, Education Governance Lead**

To discuss the role or express an interest please contact Clare

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## GET IN CONTACT

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