



# Academy Councillor Candidate Pack

Together we make a  
positive difference

# Message from our Board of Trustees

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## Welcome to TMET

**We believe that together we make a positive difference – to the life chances of our children, to our communities and to each other.**

Thank you for your interest in becoming an academy councillor with The Mead Educational Trust (TMET). This pack is designed to give you a clear understanding of who we are, how we work and how your contribution can help us make a real difference.

The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) is a thriving partnership of 15 schools (eight primary, six secondary and one special school) in Leicester and Leicestershire.

At TMET, we believe that together we make a positive difference. That difference is only possible through the collective efforts of our staff, our leaders, and crucially, our governance community.

Academy councillors play an essential role in shaping our direction, providing support and challenge and keeping our mission at the heart of everything we do.

Strong, effective governance is the cornerstone of our success. As an academy councillor, you will receive a full induction, ongoing training and access to resources to help you develop confidence and impact in your role. Our Trust is committed to supporting you every step of the way.

We are incredibly grateful to all those who give their time and expertise to governance. You are helping shape not only the future of our Trust but also the life chances of thousands of children.

**Board of Trustees**

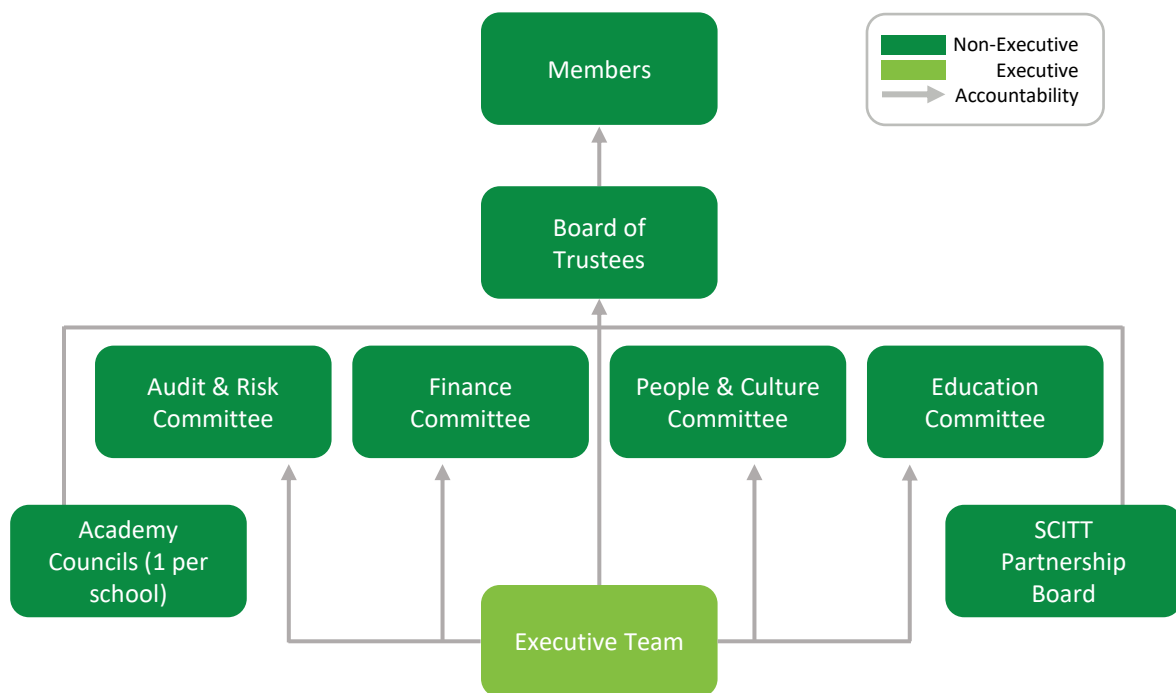
**The Mead Educational Trust**



# Our Governance Structure

## TMET Governance and Accountability

As a multi academy trust, our schools are joined together as a single legal entity; The Mead Educational Trust. The Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and has a number of layers of governance, the Members, Board of Trustees, Academy Councils & Executive Team.



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It's a privilege to be involved with The Mead Educational Trust. From day one, I felt my views were valued, and the Trust's openness to learning from diverse perspectives creates a truly collaborative environment. An unexpected reward has been the professional development I've gained in return. Ultimately, success is about people—and the people at TMET are its greatest asset.

Gemma Bhagalia, TMET Trustee

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# About our Trust

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## What makes our family of schools special

We are a thriving, cross-phase family of 15 schools across Leicester and Leicestershire, supported by a central team and enriched by The Mead Institute for Professional Learning, our Teaching School Hub and our SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training). While each school has its own unique identity, we work closely together, united by shared values and a collective ambition to improve life chances for every pupil.

We believe every young person, from any background, deserves an equal chance to succeed in whatever they choose to do. Our goal is to equip them with the knowledge, confidence and love of learning to thrive in school and beyond.

As a school trust, we are deeply committed to improving the local communities we serve—not by seeing education as a way out, but as a way forward. We believe in nurturing young people who will, in turn, invest in their communities and help create thriving, inclusive places to live and learn.

Our mission—*Together we make a positive difference*—reflects our determination to harness the collective strength of our governance, leadership and professional teams so that every school can provide an excellent education or is making strong progress towards doing so.

We are ambitious for our pupils and equally ambitious about the people who support them—including our governance volunteers. In joining us, you will be empowered to make a meaningful contribution, deepen your understanding of education and help shape the life chances of thousands of young people.

Across TMET, we recognise and celebrate individuality, diversity and wellbeing. These principles are central to the way we work. Through strategic oversight and partnership, governance volunteers play a crucial role in upholding these values and ensuring every pupil, in every school, can flourish.



# Investing in our governance community

## What you'll gain while helping us to make a positive difference

- ✓ **Knowing you're making a positive difference** – Every decision you help shape contributes to the life chances of children and young people. Your voice will help keep education inclusive, ambitious and responsive to the needs of our communities. Governance volunteering offers a powerful way to give back—using your time, skills and insight to make a real and lasting difference.
- ✓ **Career and personal development** – As a governance volunteer, you'll be supported from day one with a structured induction and access to ongoing training. Whether you're new to governance or bringing experience from other boards, you'll have the opportunity to deepen your understanding of education, strengthen your strategic thinking and develop new skills.
- ✓ **Professional impact**—volunteering as an academy councillor is a valuable form of board-level experience. It demonstrates strategic leadership, accountability and oversight—skills that are highly transferable to a range of professional settings. You'll gain insight into how organisations make impactful decisions, manage risk and deliver for their communities, all of which can enhance your own career development.
- ✓ **A purpose-led community** – When you volunteer with TMET, you become part of a values-driven community of professionals, educators and volunteers who are all committed to one shared mission: together we make a positive difference. Our culture is collaborative and inclusive, and we value the diverse insights each person brings. Whether you're attending a governance meeting, a school event, or connecting with fellow volunteers, you'll be surrounded by like-minded people working collectively to improve outcomes for children and young people across our schools.
- ✓ **A place to belong** - At TMET, governance volunteers are valued members of our Trust community. You'll be invited to school events, offered CPD opportunities, and kept up to date with Trust developments. You're not just joining a board—you're becoming part of a collective effort to transform lives.



Being a governor has been a rewarding experience. It's fantastic to be part of a team that listens, involves us in decision-making, and celebrates scholar successes while ensuring a safe and inclusive environment

Marc, Academy Councillor at Castle Mead Academy



# Academy Councillor role description and personal specification

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## Purpose of the role

Academy Councillors play a vital role in ensuring that each school within TMET serves its community and delivers the very best education for children. They support and challenge school leaders and help shape the school's vision and ethos in line with the Trust's values.

While day-to-day management is the responsibility of the principal and senior leadership team, Academy Councils provide strategic oversight and act as a bridge between the school, its community, and the Trust Board.

## What Academy Councillors do:

As an Academy Councillor, you will:

- Champion the vision, ethos and aims of the school in line with TMET's values.
- Provide constructive support and robust challenge to the principal and senior leadership team.
- Monitor progress towards school improvement priorities and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies.
- Ensure safeguarding and wellbeing policies are effectively implemented.
- Strengthen links between the school and its community, acting as a voice for parents, carers and others.
- Support collaboration across the Trust, sharing best practice and improving value for money.
- Uphold the highest standards of governance, integrity and confidentiality.

## What we're looking for:

You don't need to have worked in education to become an Academy Councillor. We welcome people from all walks of life who bring different skills, experiences and perspectives. What matters most is your commitment to helping children and young people thrive and your willingness to work as part of a team.

### Key qualities include:

- Curiosity, integrity, and openness to new ideas.
- Confidence to ask questions and contribute to discussions.
- Respect for the views of others and ability to work collaboratively.
- Willingness to commit to training, development and self-reflection.
- Adherence to the Nolan Principles of public life.

# Frequently asked questions

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## Is this a paid role?

Academy councillor roles are voluntary and unpaid. However, reasonable expenses incurred as part of your role will be reimbursed, as per our Trustee, Member and Councillor Expenses Policy. Many employers support staff to take on community roles through Employer-Supported-Volunteering (ESV), so you may be able to use this scheme if your workplace offers it.

## How much time will this role take?

Academy Councils usually meet four times a year. Meetings typically take an hour or so, with some time needed to read papers beforehand. Occasionally you may also join school visits or training sessions, but the workload is designed to be manageable.

## Where do the meetings take place?

Meetings typically take place at the school.

## Will I be involved in school activity?

As an academy councillor you are likely to be encouraged to attend some school events and will also visit the school for learning walks and monitoring visits where your time allows.

## Do I need to have worked in education to be an academy councillor?

Not at all. Our councillors come from all walks of life. What matters is your commitment to supporting children and young people and your willingness to learn.

## Will I get training and support?

Yes, you'll receive an induction with our Director of Governance, safeguarding training and free access to a wide range of development opportunities. You'll also have access to The Key and GovernorHub to support you in your role.

## Do I need special qualifications or experience?

No – what matters most are personal qualities such as teamwork, integrity, curiosity and a willingness to learn. With training and support, anyone from any walk of life can thrive as an academy councillor.

## How long is the term of office for an academy councillor?

Four years.

## Who votes to appoint me as an academy councillor?

We have three different types of academy councillors, as per our constitution, each with a slightly different appointment route. They are:

- Trust-appointed (community): These positions will be appointed by the Trust's Executive Team.
- Parent: When a vacancy arises, the school will invite nominations from parents and carers (you can nominate yourself). If the number of applicants matches the number of vacancies, those parents are appointed directly. If there are more applicants than vacancies, an election is held and parents vote to decide who will be appointed.
- Staff: Similar to parent vacancies, schools invite expressions of interest, and if more staff apply than there are vacancies, an election is held.

# Ready to apply?

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We're delighted that you're considering an academy councillor role with TMET.

## Informal chat

If you'd like an informal conversation before applying, please contact our Director of Governance **Cathy Brown** at [cbrown@tmet.uk](mailto:cbrown@tmet.uk) and we'll be happy to arrange a call. Alternatively, if you're a parent/carer or staff member, you could talk to an existing parent/staff academy councillor at your school.

## Apply

**Parents and staff:** If you're applying for a role at your own school, your school will invite nominations when vacancies arise. If more people apply than there are places, an election will be held.

**Community applicants:** If you're applying as a community member, please complete our short application form <https://forms.office.com/e/ifedUf04k2>

We welcome applications from people from all walks of life and look forward to hearing from you.

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Volunteering as a governor has been a hugely rewarding experience. I chose to get involved because I wanted to give something back to the school community, and the role has allowed me to see education through a different lens — offering support and challenge that helps the leadership team to thrive, while celebrating the fantastic achievements of staff and pupils. The most rewarding part is seeing the tangible difference our work makes: creating opportunities for children to flourish, strengthening their learning, and ultimately helping to shape brighter futures.

Raj Kaur, Academy Councillor at Rushey Mead Academy

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