**Chester Diocesan Academies Trust**

**Non- Executive Directors**

**The CDAT Vision**

CDAT has a distinctive ethos that is clearly rooted in the Gospel. Christian values impact on every area of our work and are communicated and shared in such a way that all member schools can understand them. These are more than general moral values which people of different faith backgrounds or no faith might share. Rather they are distinctively Christian values, based on the Bible and centred on the example of Jesus Christ. Our church schools fully demonstrate and exemplify these values whereas our non-church schools demonstrate the values shared by our society but will not be expected to adopt church specific policies.

It is important that all those engaging with CDAT have a clear appreciation of its distinctively Christian vision.

CDAT will seek to be a successful family of church schools providing distinctive and loving environments founded on Christian beliefs which ensure effective education for all children, through excellent teaching, innovation and the sharing of good practice as schools work together across the Trust. We will:

* build a thriving community of schools with common moral purpose rooted in Christian values and ambition for children, but encouraging each academy to develop in the best way to serve its community;
* provide a culture of healthy dialogue and listening between CDAT and its academies;
* provide mutual support and improvement to develop the practice of all our professional staff so that all can improve;
* empower effective school leaders and local governing bodies to take courageous decisions in the best interest of young people;
* provide systems and services that aim to reduce the administrative burden and support school leaders with the professional management of their academies;
* provide purposeful and supportive early intervention for academies that would benefit from accelerated school improvement

CDAT will seek to provide the very best education for every child in every school so that they succeed and are well prepared to move onto their next phase of education. In each academy We will:

* ensure that all children achieve their full potential – making at least the expected level of progress and with many exceeding;
* value and respect children from all faiths and beliefs – and taking into account their beliefs when planning for their learning and the learning of others;
* provide a curriculum that is broad, rich and balanced; focused on developing knowledge and skills; and meeting the needs of each child;
* provide learning opportunities that are inclusive, engaging and challenging for every child;
* create a learning environment within which children are happy and motivated learner;
* support our leaders to be highly effective in leading school improvements;
* support our teachers and support staff to be outstanding practitioners – providing high quality teaching so that every child learns;
* listen to the children and taking their views into account;
* work with parents to enable them to contribute to their children’s learning;
* work with other schools and the wider community to ensure that we maximise on the learning opportunities that they can provide for our children and staff.

**Governance Structure**

**Members**

The following are Members as set out in the Memorandum and Articles

* The Diocesan Board of Education acting corporately by hand of its Director;
* Two individual members of the Diocesan Board of Education nominated by it for the purpose (The Bishop Of Stockport and the Archdeacon of Chester);
* The Chairman of the Directors.

**Directors**

Members appoint at least 5 Directors

The Directors can co-opt up to 2 Directors

**Local Governing Bodies**

Each academy within the Trust has a Local Governing Body constituted as set out in its scheme of delegation.

**Director role**

All CDAT Directors are expected:

* To uphold the Christian foundation of the Trust outlined in the Vision statement;
* To contribute to the development of the Trust’s future strategic goals, ensuring that the safety, wellbeing, learning and faith of children and young people remains central at all times;
* To ensure the highest standards of teaching prevail across all academies in the Trust, and that the Directors, Local Governing Bodies and leaders in academies deliver on their commitment to outstanding outcomes for children and young people;
* To ensure the highest levels of transparency, audit, governance, accountability, internal control and risk management in progressing the work of the Trust;
* To work with other Directors in a supportive, helpful and constructive way to ensure the Board is effective when it meets;
* To ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control whilst ensuring openness and transparency in decision making;
* To ensure the Trust establishes key objectives and control and management frameworks to deliver the agreed plans, identifies and assesses the risk of achieving them and regularly monitors performance to ensure appropriate corrective action can be taken;
* To ensure consistent focus upon what is best for the Trust’s schools and their pupils by providing challenge and advice to the officers of the Trust;
* To represent the Trust in a positive manner with international, national, regional or local bodies or individuals in order to enhance the position of the Trust;
* To lead or participate in relevant Board committees or task groups of the Trust;
* To contribute to the appointment and, if necessary, removal of the Chair as well as participation in the recruitment of future Non-Executive Directors;
* To work as part of a team, and to accept shared responsibility and accountability, as well as to commit to undergoing regular personal appraisal (annual or to a schedule agreed by the Board), reviewing own performance and that of Board members, then to abide by its outcome in terms of personal development.
* To accept collegiate responsibility for all academies within the Trust and thus express openly any concerns

CDAT non-executive directors are subject to charity law, company law, public law and are obliged to:

* Act within identified powers (for example in accordance with the constitution and any agreements with the DfE);
* Exercise independent judgment;
* Exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence;
* Avoid conflicts of interest;
* Not to accept benefits from third parties; and
* Declare any interest in transactions.

As CDAT is also a charity, Directors also have charity trustee responsibilities, including:

* Compliance;
* Care; and
* Prudence.

As a holder of a public office, Directors are expected to work within the 7 Nolan Principles of public life which are:

* Selflessness
* Integrity
* Objectivity
* Accountability
* Openness
* Honest
* Leadership

**Person Specification**

Experience and knowledge

* Currently or previously employed at senior manager/ Director level in the private, charity or public sector.
* Experience in any one of the following areas is particularly desirable – governance, scrutiny, HR, legal, finance, asset management, strategy development and growth.
* Strategic leader and effective communicator with experience of providing constructive challenge and critical insight.
* Experience in working at a level which enables understanding of long-term planning.
* Worshipping member of a Christian community or understanding of, and sympathy with, the Christian faith.

Skills and abilities

* Genuine enthusiasm for improving education for children, and commitment to the Christian ethos of the Trust combined with commercial acumen and business focus.
* Ability to work positively with others and debate issues constructively.
* Ability to analyse and understand complex problems from a variety of different views.
* Commitment to raising quality and standards.
* Strategic perspective – the ability to develop a broad-based view of issues and perceive their long term impact.
* Ability to assimilate facts and rationalise them appropriately.
* Ability to motivate and inspire confidence in others to achieve objectives.
* Ability to bring insight, challenge and support to the Board environment.

**Equal opportunities and safeguarding**

All Members and Directors must be committed as an employer to equal opportunities and the safeguarding requirements of the Trust’s policies. All appointments require a disclosure check.

**Conflict of interests**

All academy trusts are bound by the Academies Financial Handbook that sets out standards of transparency. All Non-Executive Directors must state if they are related to a Board member or an existing employee of CDAT, and if they have any financial interest in the Trust or any of its service partners or if they are involved in any other organisations

**Appointments**

Directors may be drawn from a variety of contexts. Members appoint Directors and will assure themselves that the range of skills and experience on the Board ensures it is effective in its work. When looking to appoint, Members will consider any gap in skills or experience on the Board prior to filling the role.

Those interested in joining the Board will be asked to send their CV and a brief expression of interest which sets out their suitability for the role in terms of both technical and personal skills and the reasons and motivations for applying for a role. The CEO will arrange to meet with him/her and make recommendations to the Members and Directors.