

Barnet Special Education Trust



Trustee Vacancies at Barnet Special Education Trust

Would you like to help make a positive contribution to the education of our pupils? Are you able to utilise your workplace skills, in partnership with our Leadership Team, to promote continuous improvement in the performance of our school?

If so, the Trustees of Barnet Special Education Trust would love to hear from you...

About Barnet Special Education Trust (BSET)

Our Board of Trustees currently has a vacancy for the position of Trustee. You don't need prior knowledge or experience of education, or of working with children, to become a Trustee - your workplace skills and experience can help our pupils to achieve their full potential.

BSET was created in March 2016 to support an application for a new autism specific special free school in the Barnet area. Oak Lodge School converted from Local Authority control on 1st January 2017, becoming our first Special Academy. Oak Lodge is funded for 195 places and is currently oversubscribed.

Previously a 15-place special education provision managed by Oak Lodge School on behalf of Barnet & Southgate College, Oakbridge re-opened in September 2018 as a Special Post-16 Institution. The provision now offers a Further Education transition placement for up to 18 young people aged 19 or above who have complex additional learning needs to develop their skills and prepare for future college courses or social service support.

We also have a successful free school application for The Windmill School at pre-opening stage. This will be a special free school for up to 90 learners aged 5 to 18 years with a diagnosed autistic spectrum condition and an Education, Health & Care Plan.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.bsentrust.org/index.php>

What is the role of a Trustee?

Responsibility for governance of the school lies with its Trust Board; a group of professional volunteers. Trustees transform the lives of children by utilising their professional skills and expertise to make strategic decisions to support the operation of the school and to create an environment in which pupils can learn and achieve their full potential.



Why should you join the Trust Board?

Trustees make a valuable contribution to children's education, their life opportunities and future. Being a Trustee is a challenging but rewarding role and it will give you the chance to make a long-lasting impact on young people's lives, give something back to your local community and to use and develop your skills in a Board-level environment. You will also be joining the largest volunteer force in the country: there are over a quarter of a million volunteers governing schools in England.

Boards like ours need a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective. There is no requirement for you to have an understanding of the education system - just relevant skills, character and time to contribute to the continuous improvement of an organisation. You will be provided with training to help you learn about education. As a Trustee at BSET, you will:

- Use your professional experience to inform conversations.
- Develop and utilise your skills in a Board-level environment.
- Make a valuable contribution to both education and your community.
- Support and challenge the school to continuously improve outcomes for its pupils and staff.
- Bring your unique experiences, perspective and insights into decision-making in the interests of the school community.
- Be committed to the role; confident in giving your opinion; curious with an enquiring mind; able to challenge the status quo; collaborative, to build strong relationships; critical, to improve your own work and that of the Board; creative in problem solving and innovation.

What are Trustees responsible for?

The Board of Trustees has the following strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction of the schools, by:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, values, and setting objectives for the schools.
- Agreeing the school improvement strategies - including its priorities and targets.

- Ensuring that the schools comply with their statutory duties.

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing, and performance managing the Headteachers.
- Monitoring the educational performance of the schools and progress towards agreed targets.
- Contributing to the school's self-evaluations.

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Approving the budgets.
- Monitoring spending against budgets.
- Ensuring money is spent efficiently and in the best interests of the schools and their pupils.
- Ensuring risks to the Trust and schools are appropriately mitigated.

Additionally, Trustees:

- Represent the voice of other key stakeholders by:
 - Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results.
 - Engaging the Trusts wider community.
 - Using the views of these stakeholders to shape the Trust's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures.



What time commitment will be expected?

You will be required to attend a total of seven meetings per year. Each Trustee is elected for a term of office of four years but many Trustees choose to serve multiple terms. As a volunteer you may resign before your term is finished, should your circumstances change or you are unable to continue to offer your services. Trusteeship is a voluntary role and, therefore, unpaid. You will also be expected to attend training during your term.

Trustee Job Description

A. Trustee responsibilities

The key purpose of the Board of Trustees is to provide the best possible education and opportunities

for pupils. Trustees do this by making decisions collectively by:

1. Setting the Trust's values, vision and strategic aims, which involves;
 - a) Agreeing plans and policies which support the schools' values, visions and strategic aims.
 - b) Helping to set and monitor the broad framework within which the schools should be run to achieve those aims.
2. Monitoring and evaluating staff and school performance by:
 - a) Acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher and leadership team, to support and challenge them in managing the schools.
 - b) Asking the schools challenging questions as a 'critical friend'.
3. Ensuring that the schools are accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, to those who fund and maintain it, as well as to the staff it employs.
4. Other duties include:
 - a) Setting and monitoring the overall budget for the schools.
 - b) Deciding on the staffing structures to ensure the national curriculum is taught effectively.
 - c) Supporting the schools to set targets for pupil achievement and attendance.
 - d) Receiving information about the quality of teaching in the schools.
 - e) Having a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns.
 - f) Ensuring health and safety issues are addressed and considering the repair and maintenance of school buildings.
 - g) Developing the school's policies and procedures.

B. Trustee skills and experience:

- a) Trustees play a key strategic role and should be able to solve complex problems.
- b) Ability to work within a team or experience of governance in any sector.
- c) Trustees should be able to understand high levels of analysis of data and be able to support the schools in their evaluations.
- d) Trustees should have a sound understanding of finances.
- e) Trustees should be able to have a sound understanding how to manage the performance of individuals and the organization.

C. As a Trustee you will be committed to:

- a) Raising aspirations, expectations and standards of achievement in the schools. Helping the schools provide the best possible education for their pupils;
- b) Regularly attending and contributing to meetings and workings of the Board of Trustees. It is an expectation that Trustees will attend all meetings save for unexpected or exceptional circumstances. Should these arise, apologies should be communicated to the Clerk and the Board will consider whether to accept the apology.
- c) Promoting and supporting equal opportunities for all members of the schools' communities.
- d) Serving for a period of up to four years.
- e) Focusing on a key aspect of the school such as Link Trustee roles. In the capacity of a Link Trustee, meet with the relevant Lead to develop an understanding of how their 'area' works within the school for the benefit of the pupils, and observe the school in action.
- f) Undertaking training to keep yourself up-to-date on educational and governance matters.
- g) Providing objectivity in debate and decision-making.
- h) Holding the reputation of the Trust and its schools at the forefront of your actions and behaving professionally.

How to find out more or express and interest in this opportunity, or apply for this role:

Deepti Bal, Governance Professional - deepti@educationadvisoryservice.org who would be delighted to discuss this opportunity further with you.