

**AURIGA ACADEMY TRUST
TRUSTEE/GOVERNOR INDUCTION
WELCOME PACK**

*“The Auriga Academy Trust aims to provide outstanding special needs provision
for the local community.”*

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1. Getting to know the Auriga Academy Trust

Our Mission - The Auriga Academy Trust (AAT) aims to provide outstanding special needs provision for the local community. The Trust works in a supportive partnership with local special schools with each school maintaining its unique identity and ethos. Through the Trust, the schools work collaboratively together to ensure maximum benefit for all students through shared best practice, resources, and economies of scale.

The Auriga Academy Trust was established on 1st October 2016. The trust comprises of three separate and distinct special academies:

- Capella House School (Headteacher – Dominic Sunderland)
- Clarendon School – (Headteacher – Niall Dumigan)
- Strathmore School – (Headteacher, Toni Edmond-Smith)



Capella House is a day, co-educational special school for pupils aged 4-16. The school specialises in children whose primary or main presenting needs relate to difficulties with speech, language, and communication. They have a Primary Campus and a Secondary Campus in Twickenham.



Clarendon is a community special school for 140 pupils aged four to 16 with moderate learning difficulties, many of whom have additional complex needs, including autism. The school manages an offsite centre: Gateway, which is for 20 pupils aged 11-16 co-located with Twickenham School. The Primary Campus is in Hampton and the Secondary Campus is in Twickenham.



Strathmore is a community special school for children and young people aged 4 -19 with severe and complex learning difficulties including those with an additional diagnosis of autism and/or physical/sensory disabilities. They have an all through campus in Twickenham, and separate primary and secondary campuses in Ham.

The Auriga Academy Trust is an innovative and proud provider of special education. Our mission is to enable all our young people to achieve their full potential through inspirational teaching, integrated therapies, bespoke curricula and maximising inclusion opportunities.

Schools within the Trust believe that, through Trust wide collaboration, we can achieve even more for our pupils. Through the Trust we will:

- ☉ Be recognised as a centre of excellence and innovation for special educational needs, supporting schools within the Trust and promoting outreach opportunities to support others, by
 - working in a supportive partnership with the schools within the Trust so that each school can cater for the specific needs of its pupils and students, with each school still maintaining its unique identity and ethos

- giving staff the opportunity to gain and share knowledge, to encourage and inspire each other and others in our wider community for the benefit of all pupils with additional needs
 - being the employer of choice that invests in our people, providing career pathways that maximises individual potential
 - being an active participant in existing, and new partnerships and forums, locally, regionally and nationally, and
 - ensuring holistic and integrated provision of therapy and wider support services so that they are embedded in the daily experience of our learners.
- 🎯 Being rooted in the communities our schools serve and ensuring a strong voice for all our stakeholders.
- 🎯 Build a sustainable Trust that is responsive to the changing landscape in special educational needs and be innovators in addressing this, by
- anticipating the future capacity required
 - being innovative and research informed in meeting the changing demand for specialist provision now
 - having an estates development plan that increases capacity and ensures that all environments are fit for purpose.
- 🎯 Maintain a financially viable, sustainable and ethically driven organisation by
- creating economies of scale by sharing core administrative functions
 - ensuring the best value in services for our schools to enable greater investment where it matters, in the classroom
 - embracing the principles of Ethical Leadership in Education.

The Auriga Academy Trust is founded on the vision that, through working together, we can provide outstanding learning experiences for the pupils and students in our communities, both now and in the future.

Essential Reading

[Auriga Academy Trust Strategic Objectives](#)

[Auriga Academy Trust Articles of Association](#)

[Auriga Academy Trust Acronyms](#)

Please refer to the websites of the Auriga Academy Trust and its schools for further information.

2. What is a MAT?

A multi-academy trust (MAT) is a single charitable organization that governs a network of two or more schools (academies). All schools in the MAT share a single trust board and are centrally managed, which allows for shared resources, a common ethos, and streamlined operations to improve educational standards across the group. These academies are

state-funded schools that are directly funded by the government and are independent of local authority control.

In a MAT there is only one *legal* entity accountable for all the schools (Academies) within the Trust, i.e., the Multi Academy Trust ("MAT"). The MAT has one set of Articles of Association which govern all the Schools in that Trust. The MAT also has a Master Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State. Each School also has a Supplemental Funding Agreement. The AURIGA Academy Trust is the statutory body for all the schools in the MAT. The Secretary of State for Education has entered into an agreement with The AURIGA Academy Trust to run the schools in the Trust and therefore the Multi Academy Trust Board ("the Board of Trustees ") is responsible for the standards and operation of all schools in the Trust.

MAT's must comply with the requirements set out in their articles of association as a condition of their funding agreements with the Secretary of State. The Articles of Association provide a framework for academy trusts to govern in transparent and accountable ways that fulfil the trust's charitable purpose or 'object'. The Articles reflect elements of charity and company law and departmental governance policy.

The Auriga Academy Trust's Charitable legal 'object' is:

"to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular..., by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing ... schools specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs ("the Special Academies")"

Extract from Auriga Academy Trust Articles of Association

Essential Reading

[SEN Code of Practice \(Section 6-Schools\)](#)

[AAT Funding Agreements](#)

3. How the MAT operates

The Auriga Academy Trust is responsible for the strategic direction of the MAT and has three types of governance stakeholders: the Members of the Trust, the Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies.

Governance at Auriga Academy Trust



The effectiveness of our Trust Board and local governing bodies depends on the skills, commitment, and knowledge the people who they appoint as Trustees and Governors and how they work together with Trust and School Leaders.

It is imperative that Trustees and Governors understand the governance framework of the trust and its processes.

Members

The Members are akin to shareholders and have guardianship and oversight over the direction and running of the MAT, holding the Trust Board to account for the effectiveness of their governance arrangements. The Members enter into the funding agreement with the Secretary of State and need to assure themselves that the governance of the trust is effective and that the Board of Trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object. At their Annual General Meeting, the Board of Trustees must provide information to Members including the Trust's audited annual report and accounts. Extraordinary General Meetings may also be requested.

Trustees

Trustees fulfil the role of both directors under company law and trustees under charity law, exercise the powers and carry out the duties of the Auriga Academy Trust. The Board of Trustees are responsible to the Members of the Trust as well as the parents, pupils, and staff at the academies

Local Governing Bodies (LGB's)

As the Trust comprises of three separate and distinct special academies, each school has its own Local Governing Body to support the ethos of the school and ensure the needs of the pupils are being met.

The Local Governing Body is made up of representatives from the school and its local community, including at least one elected parent governor. These Governors support the Trustees to deliver strategic management and operational

oversight at each academy, getting to know and understand the school well on the Boards behalf.

Some of the detailed work of the trust and local governing bodies is undertaken through specialist committees and governors / trustees undertaking lead monitoring roles, always reporting findings back to the full board'

The Auriga Academy Trust's Scheme of Delegation sets out where responsibilities and accountabilities sit within the multi-academy trust's (MAT) structure.

Essential Reading

[AAT Scheme of Delegation](#)

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Trustee/Governor

The Board of Trustees with the local governing boards are accountable for ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in their educational settings.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the core purposes of

- ✓ **Strategic leadership:** defining a vision, fostering a culture and championing the strategy
- ✓ **Accountability and assurance:** providing robust and effective oversight of operations and performance
- ✓ **Strategic Engagement:** strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders

Further information on the role and responsibilities of a trustee can be found in the Essential Trustee document published by the Charity Commission.

Local governors, working with the Headteacher and senior staff are responsible for:

- Challenging and supporting the agreed vision of the Multi Academy Trust (MAT).
- Reporting to the trustees on the provision of education at the academy.
- Providing a strategic overview and a monitoring role in connection with the Academy.
- Monitoring and being accountable for budget setting and review.
- Acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher.
- Representing the views of the community.

Further Information about the responsibilities each structure and person hold in academy trust governance can be found in the Department of Education document - Academy Trust Governance Guide which is updated regularly.

This also guides how trust boards discharge their duties. Trustees and Governors should familiarise themselves with the elements which apply to our trust.

The government has high expectations of those in governance. Being an effective Trustee or governor requires you to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for good governance in the academy sector.

Essential Reading

[Auriga Academy Trust Trustee Role Description](#)

[Auriga Academy Trust Governor Role Description](#)

[Academy Trust Governance Guide](#)

[The Essential Trustee \(Charity Commission\) \(Trustees only\)](#)

[Academy Trust Handbook](#)

5. Trust Board/Local Governing Board Procedures & Expectations

The principles and personal attributes that individuals bring to the governing at Auriga are as important as their skills and knowledge. These qualities enable Trustees and Governors to use their skills and knowledge to function well as part of a team and make an active contribution to effective governance.

The Auriga Academy Trust and its schools have a written Code of Conduct (see link below) so that all trustees/governors know what is expected of them. The Code of Conduct includes the following principles and says that all trustees/governors should:

- Have the well-being and success of the Trust or school as their central concern.
- Act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- Understand that all Governors or Trustees are equally important to the success of the Trust.
- Appreciate that in general no Governor or Trustee has individual power.
- Be actively involved in the work of their board and accept a fair share of responsibility.
- Make every effort to attend and participate in every meeting and prepare for them by reading papers, submitting questions in advance and thinking about agenda items.
- Accept decisions made by the majority.
- Work in partnership with the CEO, Headteacher and all the staff.
- Understand and balance their own strategic role with the CEO / Headteacher's responsibility for the implementation of policy and the day-to-day management of the Trust/school.
- Make the effort to get to know the schools in the trust and their staff, pupils, and parents. This includes supporting the school's activities.
- Ensure that matters discussed in meetings that are deemed confidential are not discussed outside the meeting.
- Know and comply with the policies and procedures adopted by the Board including for dealing with criticisms and complaints.

Being an effective governor or trustee does mean promising to commit time to the role. As well as attending meetings you will need to develop your knowledge and understanding of the work of the schools within the trust; this will mean visiting the schools during the working day and attending relevant training courses.

The Auriga Academy Trust has set out its operational procedures for trust/school governance – please see the link below.

There are a set of key documents that need to be read annually by all trustees/governors of the trust and confirmation of this will need to be provided by the end of September each year. On becoming a trustee/governor, you should read these prior to becoming an active board member. They will help you understand how the MAT operates, what is expected of you and the key aspects of providing services for children, especially your safeguarding duties. It is important to make sure you know and understand these documents, as they form the foundation for your role as a trustee/governor –

- Code of Conduct
- Terms of Reference and Agenda plans relevant to your role
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Legislation
- Auriga Academy Trust or school Child Protection Policy

Every new trustee/governor will be asked to make a declaration of business and pecuniary interests to ensure that the trust is transparent and open – these will be recorded and published on the trust/school's website on our Register of Interests. Interests are anything that might sway the trustee/governor's decision making or affect their ability to act in an impartial way. Trustees/governors will also have the opportunity to declare interests at the start of every meeting so that they can withdraw from the discussion of relevant items of business on the agenda.

Each new trustee/governor will be given access to Governorhub (a document sharing and information platform) where there is a wealth of information and documents available. New trustees/governors will be signposted to an induction folder on Governorhub which will include key documents and important links. Documents will include -

- Trust/School Governance procedures
- Board meeting minutes/papers
- Committee Meeting minutes/papers
- School Development Plan Documents
- School Self Review Documents
- Risk Register
- Trust/School Policies
- Financial Accounts & Information

Essential Reading

[AAT Trust Code of Conduct](#)

[AAT Trust Agenda Plans](#)

[AAT Trust Terms of Reference](#)

[AAT Trust Accounts](#)

[AAT Trust Policies](#)

[AAT Register of Interests](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education Legislation](#)

[Auriga Academy Trust Child Protection Policy](#) – Individual School Policies can be found on their websites

6. Meeting your fellow trustees/governors

As part of the recruitment and induction process you will meet with the CEO/Chair of the trust board (trustees) or Chair of the Local Governing Board and Headteacher (governors). You will also be assigned a mentor. It is important to get to know all the trustees/governors on your board, because you are collectively responsible and accountable for the overall management of the Multi Academy Trust (MAT), including areas where you may not be directly involved. These relationships will be key to the MAT's success, particularly in times of challenge.

Essential Reading

[Auriga Academy Trust Governance Structure](#)

[AAT Mentor Role Description](#)

A short biography of each trustee/governor is available on the Trust and Schools websites

7. Visiting the Auriga Academy Trust Schools

Boards must get to know their schools in order to understand how they operate and are managed and to maintain robust accountability. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, trustees/governors will:

- Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school development plan
- Observe how those procedures are working in practice
- Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

The trust schools welcome visits by trustees/governors. New trustees/governors should aim to visit the trust schools as soon as possible after their appointment. This can be done along with their mentor. Any visit should always be arranged in conjunction with the Board and the relevant Head Teacher. All visits should then be written up on the form provided in the visit protocol and circulated, via the respective headteacher, to the next board meeting to ensure that findings are shared with other board members.

All governors will be expected to take on Link governor role over time. Direct experience is not required for these areas but may be helpful. Sometimes a fresh perspective can be most helpful. You should consider an area you want to find out more about that is required by the Board or LGB, but your interest and

Essential Reading

[AAT Link Governor Visit Report](#)

AAT Link Governor Visit Protocol – *in Development*

8. Meetings and Decision Making

Meetings will be a necessary and consistent call on the time of a trustee/governor. For trustees, there will be a minimum of 6 board meetings per academic year and for governors, there will be a minimum for 5 governing body meetings per academic year. Both trustees and governors will also be expected to attend committee or link network meetings (minimum 3 per year). It is important to prepare for meetings and use them to contribute views and ideas. Meetings are important for making sure that the trust/school is on track and for monitoring performance against plans and for monitoring key risks. Trustees/governors should be prepared to ask questions, particularly on things that they are unclear about to increase their knowledge.

Decision making is an important part of the trustee/governor role. Some decisions will be straightforward, others more complex. Trustees/governors should use relevant guidance, research, and robust discussion with their fellow board members to help make sure their decisions are properly made, particularly when making more difficult strategic decisions, such as those affecting the provision of services by the schools, finances, or future direction. Trustees/governors should ensure that they have the information they need and that decisions are considered as a group.

Essential Reading

[AAT Trust Meeting Calendar](#) – also on GovernorHub

[NGA - Questions to ask at Meetings](#)

9. Administration

Prospective Trustee/Governor Information Request - New Trustees and Governors are required to have completed a Prospective Trustee/Governor Details form (Appendix 1) during the recruitment process where they will need to provide personal contact details, contact details of referees, a declaration of pecuniary interests and a short supporting statement for wanting to be a governor.

Email Address - for reasons of privacy, safeguarding and General Data Protection Legislation (GDPR) it is best practice to communicate with each other via trust/school email addresses. Trustees/Governors will be provided with a trust/school email account.



GovernorHub - Trustees/Governors will be given access to GovernorHub linked to their Trust / School email address. GovernorHub is the leading governor collaboration tool in the country and provides over 70,000 school governors, trustees, and clerks with the tools to communicate, share documents and access the information that they need to support schools. On GovernorHub, trustees/governors will find the trust meeting schedule, key governance documents, meeting minutes and other useful sources of information.

DBS – Trustees/Governors are required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to ensure that they are entitled to work with children. This will be arranged by the trust Human Resources (HR) team and must be submitted within 21 days of appointment. Once completed, Trustees and governors must register with the DBS update service within 30 days of receiving your certificate.

AfC (Local authority) Governor Support – All new trustees/governors will be sent a welcome pack from the AfC Governor Support Team.

Your details and school email address will be registered with the DfE's Get Information about Schools. Trustees will be required to sign a consent to act and complete an AP01 form for Companies House.

Training and Development – Trustees/governors will be registered with various parties that will support them in their training/development requirements – further details under below under training & development.

10. Training & Development

Training and development are key elements of the role of a trustee/governor - not only when they are new to the role but also when they are established and want to increase their knowledge and understanding.

Mandatory Training should be completed as per the schedule set out in the Training Guide (one page) every three years to keep abreast of any legislative procedures or guidance in line with best practice.

It is important that each trustee/governor takes individual ownership of their training needs and that they maintain a comprehensive log of all training attended to ensure local records are robust and can be evidenced (this can be done on GovernorHub).

There are various sources of training and development opportunities available to trustees/governors:



The Key for School Governors - Having registered with GovernorHub, trustees/governors will have access to The Key (this can be found on the menu bar of the GovernorHub home page 'Knowledge' then 'Training'). The Key is an essential on-demand training and knowledge bank that provides support when trustees /governors need it - giving them confidence in their actions and the knowledge to be truly effective. The Key provides online induction training for both academy trustees and governors which can be completed in one go or in bitesize chunks –

- Induction for Academy Trustees
- Induction for Academy Governors on Local Governing Bodies



Achieving for Children (AfC) Governor Support – they offer a comprehensive Continual Professional Development (CPD) Schedule of training across the academic year. All new Trustees/Governors of subscribing schools are sent a login by Governor Support to enable them to register and book training.

The CPD schedule details a series of course recommendations, based on the stage a trustee/governor is at with their own professional development however key courses are detailed below -

- Introducing New Governors - Understanding your role
- Safeguarding Basic Awareness eLearning
- The Role of the Parent Governor (as applicable)
- Education Inspection Framework (EIF) - An Introduction for Governors

In addition to the above, new trustees/governors should familiarise themselves with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) legislation.

The CPD schedule also gives details of various E Learning Opportunities.



National Governance Association (NGA) - Trustees/Governors will receive National Governance Association (NGA) membership. The NGA is an organisation that aims to improve the educational standards and

wellbeing of young people by increasing the effectiveness of governing boards and promoting high standards. The NGA provides online information and publications to support trustees/governors in their governance role as well as many training opportunities. Induction training includes a suite of 8 online core modules that covers key governance areas.

Your email will also be signed up to receive information from Andrew Hall and the NSPCC for safeguarding newsletters

Essential Reading

[Training Guide \(one page\)](#)

[Achieving for Children \(AfC\) Continual Professional Development \(CPD\) Schedule of training](#)

[National Governance Association \(NGA\)](#)

The Key for School Governors training can be accessed through GovernorHub

11. Statutory Duties (Trustees Only)

As an academy trustee, you have legal duties as a charity trustee and a company director. As outlined in the DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide, a trustee must comply with the following duties under charity law:

- Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with the charity's governing document and the law
- Act in the charity's best interests
- Manage the charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill
- Ensure the charity is accountable

The Charity Commission has published guidance on your responsibilities as a trustee under these duties (The Essential Trustee).

As an academy trustee you're also a company director. Also outlined in the DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide are your duties under the Companies Act 2006 to:

- Act within your powers
- Promote the success of the company
- Exercise independent judgment
- Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Not to accept benefits from third parties
- Declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

Academy trusts must comply with the Academy Trust Handbook as a condition of their funding agreement. It provides an overarching framework for implementation of effective financial management and other controls, consistent with their obligations as publicly funded bodies.

Essential Reading

[Academy Trust Governance Guide](#)

[The Essential Trustee \(Charity Commission\) \(Trustees only\)](#)

[Academy Trust Handbook](#)

12. Induction Checklist

Trustees/governors will receive an induction checklist (Appendix 2) which is to be used in conjunction with this Welcome Pack to help them understand and track all the elements of their induction process.

13. Contacts/Useful sources of Information

[Department of Education \(DfE\)](#) - Contains a range of information and resources, e.g., teaching and learning; pupil support; leadership & governance

[Ofsted](#) - Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection reports for all types of providers.

[Confederation of School Trusts](#) -Sector body and employer body for academy school trusts, working to build a strong and resilient trust-led education system in England for the benefit of children.

[National Governance Association \(NGA\)](#) - national membership association for governors, trustees, and governance professionals in England's state schools and trusts.

[Charity Commission of England & Wales](#) – the regulator of charities in England & Wales.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Prospective Governor Trustee Details Form



Prospective Governor
Trustee Details Form.c

Appendix 2 – Induction Checklist



First 4 months -
Governors Induction C