



Vanguard Learning Trust

Clerk to Local Governing Bodies



Information for candidates



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Dear applicant

We are delighted you are interested in Vanguard Learning Trust's position of clerk to three of our schools' local governing bodies, Ruislip High School, Ryefield Primary School and Vyners School. This is an exciting opportunity for an individual who is keen to embrace the opportunity to be a clerk in a local Trust, with the support and advice of an experienced company secretary.

Vanguard Learning Trust is a cross-phase multi-academy trust in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The Trust currently has three schools: Ruislip High School, Ryefield Primary School and Vyners School. It also has two schools, Field End Junior School and Hermitage School, with associate membership.

We are looking for a clerk who will embrace our vision. We hope to engender collective responsibility across the Trust and the clerk for three schools' governing bodies will support this aim by providing consistent advice and information to each governing body.

Applicants may bring skills, understanding and experience from outside the educational sector but must understand the specific legal and regulatory requirements of an educational setting.

This is an exciting opportunity as the successful candidate will be able to shape the Trust's new governance structure, working alongside the Trust's company secretary to ensure its effectiveness including the launch of a governance development programme.

We look forward to reading your application letter and, for those candidates selected for the interview stage, meeting you as part of the interview panel.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter W Davies".

Mr Peter Davies
Chair of Trustees
Vanguard Learning Trust

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martina Lecky".

Dr Martina Lecky
Executive Headteacher
Vanguard Learning Trust

Trust information



Vanguard Learning Trust is a cross-phase Trust in the London Borough of Hillingdon. Vyners Learning Trust was established in February 2015 when Ryefield Primary School and Vyners School formed the multi-academy trust. In September 2018, Ruislip High School joined the Trust which was renamed Vanguard Learning Trust. During the current academic year, 2019-2020, two local schools - Field End Junior School and Hermitage School - accepted the Trust's invitation for associate membership, with the ambition that both schools formally join the Trust in the future.

School information

Field End Junior School

Field End Junior School is truly a community school and has been part of the Ruislip landscape for over 70 years. It is a four-form entry junior school, sharing the same site as the infant school. It is a genuinely happy and exciting place to be; the school's community plays an important role in shaping the young people into the adults they become when they go out into the world. Staff strive to do all they can to help each child reach their potential. Staff believe that school days should be filled, not only with learning, but with fun, friendship and memories to last a lifetime.

Hermitage Primary School

On entering Hermitage Primary, visitors cannot fail to notice the warm, family feel that permeates the school. Hermitage is a happy, welcoming, stimulating environment where everyone cares about each other and all interactions are based on mutual respect. Hermitage opened in 1968 and is a community school located in Uxbridge. From their first tentative sessions in Nursery through to their final days in Year 6, staff strive to teach pupils their place in the school, the community and beyond.

Ruislip High School

Ruislip High School opened its doors to its first cohort of Year 7 in September 2006. It is a mixed, comprehensive secondary school situated in South Ruislip. Ruislip High School has evolved into a school of choice in the local area with circa 1100 students. The school has been designated outstanding in both Ofsted inspections in 2007 and 2011. Ruislip High School's logo symbolises the school's motto -from grass roots, to reaching for the sky- which represents high aspirations and students' journey as they progress through the school.

Ryefield Primary School

Ryefield was established in 1960 and as a school community it strives for excellence. Ryefield is an excellent school where its children love learning and achieve the highest standards possible in a thriving multicultural learning environment. Above all Ryefield strives to touch the lives of all its children to ensure they grow up to be reflective, self-aware, and resourceful; they are empathetic towards others and confident young people.

Vyners School

Vyners School was established in 1960. It is a highly oversubscribed mixed secondary, comprehensive school based in Ickenham with circa 1200 students. Vyners is an extremely popular and successful school with an excellent reputation for academic achievement and extra-curricular activities. Underpinned by its school's values -community, aspiration, respect and endeavour- Vyners prides itself on the positive relationships that exist in the school and the sense of being part of a happy community. In May 2019, Ofsted designated Vyners as outstanding as part of its Section 5 inspection.

The Trust's vision, values and mission statement are as follows:



Vision

Vanguard Learning Trust is a high-quality, local, cross-phase multi-academy trust that:

- demonstrates best practice in teaching and learning from nursery to sixth form using an evidence-based approach;
- provides a broad and inclusive education for all school communities which develops a life-long love of learning;
- creates dynamic learning environments to stretch and challenge all students, empower them to achieve their full potential and have confidence and enthusiasm in all they do;
- ensures collaboration between schools to secure school improvement priorities and gives resilience to all schools by the strategic use of resources;
- allows staff to focus on projects within the Trust which provide opportunities for professional development, including action research.

Values

- **Life-long Learning:** We foster in all our schools a love of learning through developing capable and resilient students who have the skills and attributes to overcome challenges and persevere when learning is challenging.
- **Pride:** We promote the conditions that encourage all members of each school community - students, staff, parents and governors - to be proud of themselves, their work and their contribution to all schools within the Trust.
- **Belonging:** We develop school communities based on trust and respect where everyone is valued and supported.
- **Respect, Responsibility and Relationships:** We celebrate the values of respect and individual and collective responsibility through developing positive relationships in all our school communities.
- **Tolerance and Humility:** We develop well-rounded students who are ready to take their place in the world and make a valuable contribution to the communities in which they live.

Mission statement

The Vanguard Learning Trust is a group of local primary and secondary schools in Hillingdon. We strive to be a Trust that serves its local community and in particular its pioneering role in its approach to broadening our students' lives. We believe in highly effective teaching which allows our students to shine both in and out of the classroom and that intellectual curiosity is at the core of every learning experience. Whilst schools in the Trust have their own ethos and values, they share the common aspiration that all students can achieve their potential and embrace a life-long journey of discovery.



Job description



| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Job title: | Clerk to Local Governing Bodies, Ruislip High School, Ryefield Primary School, Vyners School |
| Reports to: | Company Secretary |
| Salary: | £20 per hour |
| Working Days: | Flexible hours (average 6-7 hours per week), agreed meeting schedule |
| Start date: | November 2020 or January 2021 |

Section 1: Purpose

Administration of governors' meetings

The administration of local and committee meetings will be the main part of the clerk's role. Each school has annually four local governing body meetings as well two curriculum and standards, and one pay and personnel meeting. In total across the three schools, there will be twenty-one scheduled meetings. The clerk will work by the agreed deadlines in terms of supporting the chair with the agenda and the distribution of paperwork six working days before the meeting. Minutes need to be promptly prepared, checked for accuracy and shared within five working days.

Administration of panel meetings

Schools may need to hold a panel meeting in line with specific policies relating to student exclusions, personnel matters and parental complaints. It is recognised that each panel meeting is slightly different, depending on the length and complexity of the meeting. The clerk will need to liaise with both parties to ensure that all paperwork is shared within the timeframe and the agenda follows the guidelines outlined in the relevant policy. The clerk will take minutes of the panel meeting and, in the case of exclusions and complaints, write the letter on behalf of the panel.

Compliance including advice to governing bodies

The clerk will work alongside the Trust's company secretary to ensure that all paperwork relating to governors is accurate, up to date and, where necessary, shared with a third party and/or on each school's website. The clerk will need a comprehensive understanding of the Trust's articles of association and scheme of delegation to ensure meetings fully comply with them both in terms of format and decision making. The clerk will provide advice to governors as and when required and can refer to the Trust's company secretary for clarification if necessary.

Section 2: Core duties

The following list includes both those duties which are legal obligations as well as those relating to best practice. This is not an exhaustive list and the clerk will be expected to carry out other duties that are commensurate with the clerk's position.

Administration of governors' meetings

Preparation for meetings

The clerk will:

- contribute proactively and support the chair in identifying priorities and upcoming issues when planning meetings;
- contribute to the development of the agenda and supporting papers and distribute all paperwork to governors at least six working days in advance of the meeting to facilitate effective discussion; and
- prepare thoroughly for meetings and ensure that outstanding action points are acted on.

Attendance at meetings

The clerk will:

- check that meetings are quorate, and if not, provide appropriate advice on how to proceed;

- take accurate notes that record challenges made by governors, all agreed actions and decisions made;
- provide advice and guidance to governors on procedural matters, as necessary;
- ensure meetings are conducted in line with the Trust's Articles of Association and governance documents; and
- challenge the board if meetings are not conducted in an orderly manner.



Follow-up after meetings

The clerk will:

- produce draft minutes within three working days and issue to the chair of governors or the committee and headteacher for review;
- make any necessary amendments and distribute final minutes to governors and other relevant parties within five working days of the date of the meeting;
- ensure the five-day deadline is met; it is recommended that the chair of governors or the committee and headteacher spend no longer than one day reviewing the minutes; and
- follow up any actions arising from the meeting and produce an action log which is distributed with the minutes and reviewed at each meeting.

Administration of panel meetings

Preparation for meetings

The clerk will:

- liaise with all parties to form the panel, including any HR advisor, and arrange a date;
- write to relevant parties (parents/staff members etc.) to confirm the date and arrangements; and
- produce the agenda and collate/distribute paperwork to all parties in advance of the meeting (the number of working days depends on the policy); and
- support the chair in identifying priorities and upcoming issues when planning meetings.

Attendance at meetings

The clerk will:

- check that meetings are quorate, and if not, provide appropriate advice on how to proceed;
- take accurate notes that record challenges made by the panel, all agreed actions and decisions made;
- provide advice and guidance to the Panel on procedural matters, as necessary;
- ensure meetings are conducted in line with the Trust's Articles of Association and governance documents; and
- challenge the board chair of the panel if meetings are not conducted in an orderly manner.

Follow-up after meetings

The clerk will:

- write to all relevant parties outlining the decision of the Panel within five working days of the date of the meeting;
- produce draft minutes and issue to the Chair of the Panel for review; and
- make any necessary amendments and distribute final minutes to panel for information.

Compliance including advice to governing body

Record keeping

The clerk will:

- maintain accurate, up-to-date, records in line with the principles of records management as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000 of the following:
- governing body membership, including terms of office (Chair to be notified when an individual's term of office is due to expire)
- attendance for all meetings
- training undertaken by governors
- register of business interests
- skills audits and overall skills matrix
- signed minutes of all meetings

- ensure that statutory policies are in place, and are reviewed/revised when necessary, with the assistance of staff;
- ensure a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check has been carried out on all governors;
- maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of any committees and working parties and any nominated governors e.g. child-protection, SEND;
- provide the school in a timely manner with all the governance information required on a statutory basis for the school /Trust website;
- maintain a record of governor visits to school, including formal governor-link visits; and
- ensure all agendas, meeting minutes, panel documentation and supporting papers are stored securely in line with Trust's requirements.



Other arrangements

The clerk will:

- establish and administer procedures for filling vacancies on the board;
- produce an annual calendar of meetings in conjunction with the company secretary as governing body meetings should be set within the context of Trust meetings; and
- send induction materials for new governors and ensure they have access to appropriate documents, including the Trust Code of Conduct.

Advice for governing body

The clerk will:

- act as the first point of contact for governors with queries on procedural matters;
- advise the governing body on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings, including changes to legal or statutory requirements;
- lead on the induction training of new governors in line with the Trust's governance development arrangements;
- understand the principles of confidentiality and apply this to his/her own work and that of the governing body;
- provide appropriate information for the board and check the credibility of sources;
- access third-party guidance on behalf of the board where necessary;
- provide training for the governors, in conjunction with the Trust's company secretary, including supporting with the arrangements for the two Trust-wide governance days;
- provide clear, logical and impartial advice to the board;
- understand the principles of conflicts of interest, and is able to advise the board on managing and avoiding these;
- understand how and when to escalate concerns where there is non-compliance or suspected misconduct; and
- speak out where the board is overstepping its strategic role or becoming too operational.

Other duties and responsibilities

It is inevitable that responsibilities and duties will evolve and a review of the post is anticipated. The post-holder will be expected to undertake such tasks as are commensurate with the position and on the direction of the executive headteacher

Health and Safety and safeguarding

All staff must:

- be familiar with the Trust's policies that refer specifically to health and safety regulations;
- have regard to health and safety across the Trust in all aspects of work, in line with the Trust's policies and keep up to date with all relevant policies and risk assessments.

Vanguard learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for all posts.

Person specification



| Qualifications and Experience: | Essential | Desirable |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Level 3 Certificate in the Clerking of School and Academy Governing Boards (or previous equivalent) or willing to work towards it within a year of appointment | ✓ | |
| 2. Experience of effective governance and a knowledge of governance structure | ✓ | |
| 3. Understand key national education policies and the wider context in which the board is operating | | ✓ |
| 4. Understand their role as set out in Trust's Articles of Association | | ✓ |
| 5. Evidence of proficiency in Microsoft Office applications | ✓ | |
| 6. Evidence of proficiency using Google G-Suite | | ✓ |
| 7. Previous administrative experience | ✓ | |
| 8. Level two qualifications in both English and mathematics | ✓ | |

| Professional knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes: | Essential | Desirable |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| 9. The ability to achieve challenging professional targets/objectives | ✓ | |
| 10. The ability to retain a comprehensive understanding of the Trust's Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation and ensure the school is compliant with its legal requirements | ✓ | |
| 11. The ability to proofread and write letters and briefing papers for chair of governors | ✓ | |
| 12. The ability to judge when to make a decision, when to consult and when to defer to the chair of governors and/or headteacher | ✓ | |
| 13. The ability to promote the ethos aims and objectives of the Trust and its schools | ✓ | |
| 14. The ability to prioritise own time and others, work under pressure and to deadlines with a sense of balance and perspective (highly organised) | ✓ | |
| 15. The ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing | ✓ | |
| 16. The ability to deal with possible contentious and complex relationships with some authority, tact, persuasion and sensitivity | ✓ | |
| 17. The ability to build effective professional relationships with the governing body, external contacts and others | ✓ | |
| 18. The ability to use appropriate influencing skills to gain the governing body's confidence | ✓ | |

| Personal skills: | Essential | Desirable |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| 19. Energy, determination and perseverance | ✓ | |
| 20. Reliability and integrity | ✓ | |
| 21. An integrated thinker | | ✓ |

All aspects of the personal specification will be assessed through the recruitment process. Applicants should ensure that all aspects of the qualifications and experience section are explicitly referred to in their application form including using the statement if required.

How to apply



The deadline for applications is Thursday 8th October 2020 by 11am. A letter of application, no longer than two sides of A4, and up-to-date CV should be returned to Emma Jordan, PA to Executive Headteacher, via email to: recruitment@vlt.org.uk. The successful candidate will be required to complete a Trust application form and two references will be requested.

The interview will be on Friday 16th October 2020. It will involve a panel interview and tasks to assess knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the job description and person specification. Shortlisted candidates may be asked to complete some online assessments before the interview day.

Unfortunately as schools are partially open and visitors are not permitted onsite, the Trust is not in a position to offer visits for prospective applicants. Questions and queries about the role can be directed to Janet Beater, Company Secretary via email to: recruitment@vlt.org.uk.

