



Role of a Member

The Circle Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Like all MATs the Trustees are overseen by Members. The trust will have between 3 and 5 members.

Members are akin to the shareholders of a company and play a very important role in overseeing governance arrangements; however, they are not directly involved in the running of the Trust and will meet less frequently than trustees and advisers. The Members have three main functions:¹

1. Ultimate control over the academy trust, with the ability to appoint and remove trustees
2. The right to amend the trust's articles of association.
3. Responsibility for the trust achieving its charitable objectives (including financial.)

The Chair of the Trustee Board is also a Member to support the flow of information between these two key governance groups; however, it is important that there is a distinction between Members and Trustees and no Member may be a paid employee of the MAT. This enables Members who are independent of the Trustees to provide challenge and scrutiny to the Full Trustee Board.

Members ensure the core values of the trust are faithfully observed and applied.

The Circle Trust's Core Values

The Trust will strive to deliver excellence in education. Our MAT will grow as community of schools that have shared values and share an essential common ethos and vision for education and learning, as encapsulated in our core values.

The core values of The Circle Trust are clear, simple and ambitious:

- Achieving the highest educational outcomes for every learner
- Preserving the unique identity and ethos of all partner schools
- Acting with the highest standards of integrity and stewardship
- Utterly inclusive
- Valuing strong leadership with clear moral purpose, fostering political acumen, Recruiting, retaining and professionally developing members of staff who are ambitious for all students' futures
- Collaborating with others and being outward looking

¹ 4.2.1- Information correct as of November 2015. Refer to Governor handbook

- Being self-reflective, encouraging innovation and driven to improve further

The main role of a Member is to check that the strategic direction for the Trust remains in line with the Articles of Association and core values, holding the Trustees and Executive Headteacher to account and ensuring that public money is spent appropriately.

To serve as a Member there are no specific prerequisite skills – we are seek Members from all walks of life and backgrounds that reflect the diversity of the population in our schools. The most valuable attribute in Members is a passion for the work and values of The Circle Trust and a desire to maximise the Trust’s effectiveness. It is expected that members will meet two or three times a year and, whilst most of our meetings are in the evenings, we will hold meetings occasionally during the day dependent on availability.

If you would like to be considered as a Member we ask you to complete a nomination form and skills questionnaire (as attached) which can include a short personal statement. It is useful for other Members to know a bit about you – as a potential Member what you do, why you would like to be a Member and what experience or skills you have that are relevant to the role. Members are not appointed to represent a specific school in the Trust and it is important that they treat all school fairly and equally. Members will be selected based on their skills and the relevant experience they have in governance’

Newly appointed Members are expected to attend induction and safeguarding training. As a Trust committed to the safety and well-being of young people we expect Members to be DSB (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) checked to ensure their suitability for volunteering in a school environment. We also ask all new Members to sign up to our Code of Practice and declare any business interests that may affect the Trust.

The Full Member Board meets for the Trust Annual General Meeting and for other formal business as required.

Members are also asked, where practical, to attend a Trust half day in school once a year– an opportunity for us to observe the realities of school life!

If you want to know more before deciding whether to stand the Chair of the Members, Geoff Wilde, would be happy to talk to you. Drop him an email (Chairofmembers@thecircletrust.co.uk) with a contact number and Geoff or another Member will give you a call.

If you would like to find out more about The Circle Trust, you can look at the following website thecircletrust.co.uk

Geoff Wilde – Chair of the Members

General Criteria for disqualification:

- Failure to attend meetings of the Members for a continuous period of 6 months beginning with the date of the first meeting missed, without the consent of the Full Members Board
- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or an interim order, debt relief restrictions order, an interim debt relief restrictions order or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced
- Is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, or an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order)
- Has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body
- Is included in the list of teachers or workers considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Has been barred from any regulated activity relating to children/ is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- Is disqualified from working with children or from registering for child-minding or providing day care
- Is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- Has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years before becoming a Member or since becoming a Member
- Has received a prison sentence of two years or more in the 20 years before becoming a Trustee
- Has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- Has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the five years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor
- Refuses a request by the clerk to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for a criminal records certificate.

Trustee

A person shall be disqualified for appointment or election as a Member if he/she is an employee of The Circle Trust

