

# Barnet Special Education Trust



July 2021

## Trustee Vacancies at Oakbridge Special Education *Part of Barnet Special Education Trust*

**Would you like to help make a positive contribution to the education of our students? Are you able to utilise your workplace skills, in partnership with our Leadership Team, to promote continuous improvement in the performance of Oakbridge? If so, we would love to hear from you...**

### About Us

We are currently looking for Trustees to be responsible for the governance of Oakbridge Special Education. You don't need prior knowledge or experience of education, or of working with children and young people, to become a Trustee - your workplace skills and experience can help our pupils to achieve their full potential.

Our Trust, Barnet Special Education Trust was created in March 2016 – [Oakbridge Special Education](#) is one of the local provisions of the Trust with charitable status. 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 offers a Further Education transition placement to help 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.

In addition to Oak Lodge School, BSET also have a successful free school application for The Windmill School at pre-opening stage. This will be a special free school for 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 at Oakbridge?

Responsibility for governance ultimately lies with the BSET Trustee Board who act as a group of professional volunteers responsible for the appointment of trustees to the subsidiary charity. As a Trustee of Oakbridge, you will join a group of local volunteers comprising the Oakbridge Trustee Board. This Board have their own separate responsibilities and exercise governance oversight for the provision whilst ensuring compliance with Charity and Company law.

You have the opportunity to transform the lives of young adults by utilising your professional skills and expertise to make strategic decisions to support the operation of Oakbridge and to create an environment in which all of our young adults can achieve their full potential and thrive.



## Why should you join the Oakbridge as a Trustee?

You will make a valuable contribution to young people's education, their life opportunities and future. The role is challenging but rewarding 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.

We 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 skills, character and time to contribute to our continuous improvement. You will be provided with training to help you learn about education and governance. As a Trustee at Oakbridge, 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 will I be responsible for?

Trustee Boards have the following strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction 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 leaders.
- Monitoring the educational performance and progress towards agreed targets.
- Contributing to self-evaluations.

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Approving the budgets.
- Monitoring spending against budget.
- 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 you will:

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



## What time commitment will be expected?

You will be required to attend a total of three Board meetings each year and visit Oakbridge once per term to meet with leaders, staff and students to learn and observe life at the provision. The role is voluntary role and, therefore, unpaid. You will be fully supported with training during your term.

## Job Description

### A. Responsibilities

The key purpose of the Board is to provide the best possible education and opportunities for pupils. You do this by making decisions collectively by:

1. Setting the values, vision and strategic aims in line with the Trust's vision;
  - a) Agreeing plans and policies which support Oakbridge's values, visions and strategic aims.
  - b) Helping to set and monitor the broad framework within which we should be run to achieve those aims.
2. Monitoring and evaluating staff and 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 challenging questions as a 'critical friend'.

3. Ensuring that the provision remains accountable 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.
- b) Deciding on the staffing structures.
- c) Supporting targets for pupil achievement and attendance.
- d) Receiving information about the quality of teaching.
- e) Ensuring health and safety issues are addressed and considering the repair and maintenance of school buildings.
- f) Developing policies and procedures.

**B. Skills and experience:**

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

**C. You will be committed to:**

- a) Raising aspirations, expectations and standards of achievement. Helping provide the best possible education for their pupils;
- b) Regularly attending and contributing to meetings and workings of the Board. It is an expectation that you will attend all meetings save for unexpected or exceptional circumstances.
- c) Promoting and supporting equal opportunities for all members of the community.
- d) Undertaking training to keep yourself up-to- date on educational and governance matters.
- e) Providing objectivity in debate and decision-making.
- f) Holding the reputation of Trust 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](mailto:deepti@educationadvisoryservice.org) who would be delighted to discuss this opportunity further with you.