



The Sycamore
Church of England
Trust

Grow together, Learn forever

Governance and Risk Lead Recruitment Pack

Closing Date: Sunday 11th October 2026*
Shortlisting: Monday 12th October 2026*
Interviews: Monday 19th October 2026*

*We may review applications and interview suitable candidates before the closing date. We therefore encourage interested applicants to submit their application as soon as possible.



Governance and Risk Lead

Working Hours:	Full time, 37 hours per week
Salary:	Grade 12
Contract:	Permanent, all year round
Required From:	1st December 2026 or as soon as possible

Providing confidence, assurance and leadership across a growing Trust

As The Sycamore Church of England Trust continues to grow, so does the importance of strong governance, effective compliance and proportionate, well-understood risk management.

We are seeking a Governance and Risk Lead to help shape and develop governance, risk and compliance across our family of schools. This is an exciting opportunity for a professional with experience in governance, compliance, risk, audit, assurance or a related field who wants to make a meaningful contribution within a growing organisation. Whether your experience spans the full portfolio or you bring particular strengths in one area, we are looking for someone with the ambition, curiosity and professional judgement to grow alongside the role.

Working closely with Trustees, governors and leaders across the Trust, you will provide professional advice, strengthen systems and processes, and support clear accountability, effective risk management and reliable assurance. This is an opportunity for someone with sound judgement, curiosity and relevant professional experience to make the role their own, shape a growing function and develop deep expertise across governance, risk and compliance.

Why Join Us?

You will have the opportunity to:

- Shape governance, risk and compliance across a growing Trust.
- Work directly with Trustees, governors, executive and school leaders across a diverse family of schools.
- Be trusted and empowered to influence systems, processes and ways of working.
- Lead and develop a small compliance team.
- Build on your existing strengths through high-quality professional development, training and networking.
- Join a collaborative and supportive central team.
- Make a genuine difference to our schools, leaders and governance stakeholders.
- Access the Local Government Pension Scheme and a range of employee wellbeing support and benefits.

Interested?

If this sounds like the opportunity you have been looking for, we would love to hear from you and ask that you apply online. Please note that we are unable to accept CVs or paper applications.

If you would like an informal discussion, please contact Jo Seddon, Chief Operating Officer. If you require support with your application, please contact us on 0161 505 2519 or at recruitment@thesycamoretrust.co.uk.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.



Job Description

Post Title	Governance and Risk Lead
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Reporting to:	Chief Operating Officer (COO)
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Main Purpose of the Role

The Governance and Risk Lead is responsible for leading and developing the Trust's governance, compliance and risk management function. The postholder will provide professional advice, guidance and assurance to the Chief Operating Officer, Executive Team, Trustees and Local Academy Committees, ensuring that statutory and regulatory requirements are effectively understood, implemented and monitored across the Trust.

The role is responsible for leading governance, compliance and risk management across the Trust, including undertaking Governance Professional responsibilities for the Board of Trustees. The postholder will develop and continuously improve governance frameworks, compliance processes and risk management arrangements, ensuring statutory requirements are met, risks are effectively managed, and decision-making is supported by clear information and robust assurance.

Working across a growing Trust, the Governance and Risk Lead will lead and develop a small compliance team, oversee governance and compliance activity, and drive consistency, quality and continuous improvement across the organisation.

Core Responsibilities and Tasks

Governance Leadership and Professional Support

- Act as the Trust's lead professional for governance.
- Undertake Governance Professional responsibilities for the Board of Trustees, ensuring governance arrangements comply with statutory, regulatory and constitutional requirements.
- Lead the planning, coordination and administration of Trustee meetings, including agendas, reports, minutes, action tracking and governance records.
- Provide professional advice and guidance to Trustees, Local Academy Committees, Executive Leaders and school leaders on governance matters.
- Develop and maintain governance frameworks, templates, guidance and resources that promote effective decision-making, accountability and consistency across the Trust.
- Establish and oversee governance arrangements for Local Academy Committees, including meeting cycles, agenda structures, reporting templates, governance platforms, record-keeping requirements and quality standards.
- Coordinate Trustee and Governor recruitment, induction, training and ongoing development.

Job Description

- Support the coordination of governance-related hearings, complaints, appeals and other statutory panel processes.
- Monitor the effectiveness of governance arrangements and lead continuous improvement across the Trust.

Compliance and Regulatory Assurance

- Lead the development, implementation and continuous improvement of the Trust's compliance framework.
- Ensure statutory and regulatory requirements are identified, communicated, monitored and reviewed across the Trust.
- Oversee Trust-wide policy management arrangements, ensuring policies remain compliant, up to date, accessible, maintained and reviewed within agreed timescales.
- Monitor changes in legislation, regulation and statutory guidance, advising on implications and required actions.
- Ensure systems and processes are in place to support effective governance, compliance monitoring and assurance.
- Maintain oversight of governance, compliance and statutory records, registers and documentation, ensuring information is accurate, accessible and appropriately maintained.
- Ensure published governance and statutory information, including websites, GIAS and regulatory disclosures, remains accurate and compliant.
- Coordinate compliance reviews, audits and assurance activities, ensuring actions are implemented and monitored to completion.
- Support the preparation of governance and compliance evidence required for internal and external audit, inspection and review processes.
- Provide assurance reporting to Trustees, Executive Leaders and Committees regarding governance, compliance and regulatory matters.

Risk Management

- Lead and coordinate the Trust's risk management arrangements, ensuring there are clear processes for identifying, assessing, monitoring, reporting and escalating risk.
- Work with leaders across the Trust to embed effective risk management practices.
- Produce risk reports and assurance information for Trustees, the Executive Team and relevant Committees.
- Monitor emerging risks and support leaders to implement effective mitigating actions.
- Provide oversight of governance, compliance and operational risks, ensuring appropriate controls and assurance arrangements are in place.

Leadership and Team Management

- Lead, manage and develop the Trust's governance, compliance and risk function.
- Line manage Compliance Officer/s and other staff within the function as required.
- Allocate workload and resources to ensure effective delivery of governance, compliance and risk activities.

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- Provide professional advice, coaching and support to team members and colleagues contributing to governance and compliance activity.
- Promote collaborative working, continuous improvement and high professional standards across the Trust.

Stakeholder Engagement and Organisational Development

- Build effective working relationships with Trustees, Governors, school leaders, colleagues and external partners.
- Act as a trusted adviser on governance, compliance and risk management matters.
- Promote a culture of accountability, transparency and continuous improvement.
- Contribute to the development of efficient systems, processes and communications that strengthen governance, compliance and organisational effectiveness across the Trust.

Corporate Responsibilities

All employees of The Sycamore CE Trust have a responsibility for, and must be committed to, safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of children and young people and for ensuring that they are protected from harm.

In addition, we expect all employees to:

- Be aware of, support and contribute to the ethos and values of the Trust.
- Recognise own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to support and advise others.
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.
- Familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, all relevant Trust Policies and Procedures.
- Comply with the Trust's Health and Safety requirements.
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents, and colleagues.

This is an outline job description only and the post holder will be expected to undertake duties commensurate within the range and grade of the post or any other reasonable duties as directed by the Trust. Duties may be subject to periodic review, in consultation with the postholder, to reflect the evolving needs of the Trust.

Person Specification		
Education and Qualifications		
Relevant professional qualification, degree-level learning, or equivalent knowledge and experience in governance, compliance, risk, audit, assurance, regulatory practice or a related field.	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Certificates
Evidence of continued professional development and commitment to further relevant learning, including Governance Professional training where appropriate.	Essential	
Experience		
Relevant experience and demonstrable strength in at least one area of governance, compliance, risk, audit, assurance or a related field.	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Reference
Experience of interpreting complex requirements and translating them into clear, practical advice, processes or actions.	Essential	
Experience of developing or improving systems, processes, reporting or assurance arrangements.	Essential	
Experience of working effectively with senior leaders, Boards, committees or other key stakeholders.	Essential	
Experience of leading, managing, developing or coordinating the work of others.	Desirable	
Experience within an academy trust, school or similarly regulated environment.	Desirable	
Experience of Governance Professional, clerking or company secretarial responsibilities.	Desirable	
Knowledge Skills and Personal Attributes		
Strong knowledge and practical capability in at least one relevant area, with the ability and commitment to develop across the wider governance, risk and compliance portfolio.	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Reference
Ability to analyse information, identify and communicate risk and provide clear, proportionate advice and appropriate professional challenge.	Essential	
Strong organisational, planning, communication and report-writing skills.	Essential	
Professional credibility, integrity and sound judgement with the ability to build trusted relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.	Essential	