Harbour
Schools Partnership
A guiding light for education



Welcome to our Trust

Trustee Application Pack

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Welcome from the Chair of Trustees

Sean Mackney



Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of The Harbour Schools Partnership.

We are a dynamic and growing multi-academy Trust serving over 10,000 children across 36 schools in Devon. Formed in 2025 from the merger of Ventrus and Tarka Trusts, we are united by a shared commitment to delivering excellence through collaboration — so that every child, regardless of background, can flourish.

As a trustee, you'll join a committed, values-led Board that plays a critical role in shaping the strategic direction of our Trust. Together, we help ensure strong governance, financial stewardship, and the highest educational standards — always putting children and communities at the heart of our decisions.

We are now seeking new trustees who share our belief in the power of education to transform lives. You do not need to have worked in education: we value diverse skills and welcome applications from people with experience in finance, HR, law, estates, safeguarding, public services, digital technology, or community leadership, as well as education. What matters most is your curiosity, strategic thinking, and commitment to making a difference.

In return, we offer a warm and supportive board culture, comprehensive induction, ongoing support and development, and opportunities to contribute to a nationally significant Trust — one that is helping shape the future of education in the South West and changing the lives of children in some of the most deprived parts of our region.

If you believe in public service, equity in education, and want to use your professional expertise to support children's futures, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Sean Mackney Chair of
Trustees
The Harbour Schools Partnership



Why join us?

Why Join Us?

Being a trustee at Harbour is an amazing, rewarding experience. Put simply, it gives you the chance to:

Make a difference. Use your expertise. Help every child flourish.

- Play a strategic role in improving life chances for over 10,000 children
- Use your experience to support inclusive, high-quality education
- Work with a professional, purposeful board and executive team
- Gain insight into education, governance, and social impact
- Enjoy personal and professional growth in a values-led organisation





About The Harbour Schools Partnership

About The Harbour Schools Partnership

It is our mission to deliver excellence through collaboration to realise the right of every child to flourish.

We educate more than 10,000 pupils and employ over 1700 staff across 36 academies. Our aim is to provide the environment and organisation that enables high-quality, inclusive education for the children and communities we serve.

Not all MATs are the same. The Harbour Schools Partnership was established in April 2025 through the merger of Tarka Learning Partnership and Ventrus Multi Academy Trust. Our approach to enabling young people to learn and flourish is inclusive: if we can help a child to learn we won't turn our back on them, and it is relational: treating children with respect and supporting them to grow into confident, caring young adults.

The needs of children and their families are at the heart of all our decision making.

We know that together, working in partnership with all who share our ambition for the children of Devon, we can achieve more. As a Trust with schools in North, Mid, East and South Devon, we have the potential to be stronger, more efficient, and more resilient. Speaking together as 36 schools, we can project a powerful voice for the children and families in the communities we serve. Currently, our education spans nurseries to secondary schools, large and small, community and church schools, providing opportunities for pupils and staff to learn and work together across all phases of education.

This collaborative approach is wired into the way we work: we deliberately plan for connections, and build relationships and experiences between staff and children while maintaining accessible services at a local level.

10,000 pupils

1700 staff

36 academies



Our ethos, our vision, our mission, our culture

Our ethos

Trust pledge:

- The trust between us is built around the children and radiates outwards to staff and our communities.
- We treat each other with respect and aim to create an environment where children and adults feel physically and emotionally safe.
- We embrace challenge and are open to opportunity.
- We provide clarity of leadership.

Our vision

To lead the intelligent design and delivery of an educational infrastructure that delivers sustainable, high-quality, inclusive education in the communities we serve.

We mobilise the inherent capacity of our family of schools to deliver a Trust dividend that:

- Reduces workload through collaboration.
- Identifies strong practice and collective intelligence to improve outcomes.
- Offers the highest-quality continuous professional development and careers pathways to all.
- Ensures every member of staff connects to a network of professional support.

Our mission

Delivering excellence through collaboration to realise the right of every child to flourish.

Our culture

We work together as one organisation with humility, openness and authenticity to secure high levels of personal and professional trust across our family of schools.

We ensure that children in the schools and communities that we serve are the central focus for all our work.

We maintain high levels of practitioner-led alignment between our schools through intelligent design and as a result of a clear rationale.

Our Headteachers and their teams are empowered to work with the sense of solidarity and interconnectedness that motivates individuals to be creative and innovative together.

We create a safe environment for staff by developing outstanding relationships with colleagues at all levels enabling them to share their successes, challenges and concerns.

We work with unfettered honesty while showing respect and care for each other, recognising that continuous learning helps us all grow as individuals and strengthens our schools and wider organisation.

We maintain dynamic and careful balance between top-down quality assurance, bottom-up innovation and lateral networking so share best practice.



The Role of Trustee

The Role of Trustee

Being a trustee is a challenging but hugely rewarding role. It will give you the chance to make a real difference to young people, give something back to your local community and use and develop your strategic decision-making skills in a board-level environment. You will also get the satisfaction of using your skills and experience to improve the life chances of all our young people.

We really want fresh eyes and different ways of thinking about issues and challenges. If you join us you will positively impact our Trust Board by ensuring we can support the Trust to develop and apply innovative approaches and perspectives that you might bring from your own professional and life experience.

Your Responsibilities

- Strategic leadership and governance oversight
- Accountability for educational and financial performance
- Stakeholder and community engagement
- Compliance with charity and company law

Who We're Looking For

- Strategic thinkers with a collaborative mindset
- Leaders from sectors such as business, law, HR, estates, finance, education, digital or the voluntary sector
- Individuals with time, curiosity and commitment

What You'll Need

- Integrity and commitment to our values
- Willingness to learn, ask questions and challenge supportively

Time Commitment

- 4 full board meetings per year (evenings, online)
- 3+ committee meetings per year
- Additional time for reading, school visits, or link roles
- Optional: join recruitment panels or executive meetings if available during the day

Training and Support

- Full induction
- Mentoring and ongoing development
- Opportunity to attend national and regional governor events
- Access to our Information & Governance Leader, Chair and CEO



How to apply

How to apply

To apply, please complete our application form and email to the below email address.
claire.silverlock@thsp.org.uk

We will then review all applications and will contact you to arrange an interview should we wish to proceed.

If successful, we will support you with full onboarding and introductions to the Chair, CEO and key members of our executive team.

Fancy an informal discussion to find out more?

If you would like to have an informal discussion before deciding whether to submit an application we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email your name and a contact telephone number to the Senior Clerk claire.silverlock@thsp.org.uk and we will be in touch.

When you are ready to submit an application please complete our application form and email to the above email address.

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