

Non-Executive Director

Little Thinkers

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust seeks a Non-Executive Director with experience in Early Years management or has demonstrable knowledge at a business executive, senior finance or senior HR level to join the Board of Directors.

This is a voluntary role.

About the Trust

Little Thinkers is a subsidiary nursery provision of Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT). Little Thinkers nurseries pride themselves on being a 'Thinking' nursery that provide children with wonderful experiences that promote development. Their 'curiosity' curriculum is panned by experienced teachers and practitioners who understand the next stage of education and are committed to laying the very best foundations during the early years for their all-through thinking journey. Little Thinkers settings offer children a selection of natural, real objects as well as modern resources which encourage curiosity and eagerness to explore and create. Little Thinkers nursery provisions are currently located in Paignton and Portsmouth. We would ideally like our new Non-Executive Director to be a commutable distance from one of these locations for meeting attendance and provision visits. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

Plans for the future

The key challenges for the board over the next 12 months are:

- Sustain a high-level of education and deliver the nursery vision through a period of financial turbulence across the country.
- Ensure the provisions are transforming the life chances of all children whilst adapting operational models and growing in size.
- Evolve and grow the number of nursery provisions throughout the regions we currently serve.

Role – Trustee/Non-Executive Director

- Trustees – or Non-Executive Directors - are both charity trustees and company directors of the board; the role is to hold to account the executive and senior leadership team. The board of trustees manages the business of Little Thinkers and may exercise all the powers of the Trust. The trustees ensure compliance with the Trust's charitable objects and with company and charity law.
- Trusteeship is a voluntary, unpaid role for people who have the energy and skills to make a real contribution to shaping the future of our nurseries. Full training and support will be given to the successful applicant.

Role summary

- Contribute to the development of future strategic goals, ensuring that the best interests of pupils and local communities are always a priority.
- Ensure the highest levels of transparency, audit, governance and accountability in the education, corporate and financial affairs of the nurseries.
- Have an awareness and understanding of the national policy context and of local needs for education.
- Work with other directors in a supportive, helpful and constructive way to ensure the board is effective when it meets.
- Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control whilst ensuring openness and transparency in decision making.
- Ensure consistent focus upon what is best for the provisions and their pupils by providing challenge and advice to the executive leadership team.
- Be familiar with the articles of association of the trust and awareness of its powers, duties and objectives.
- Be familiar with the directors' code of conduct and any standing orders of the Trust.
- Every trustee is expected to abide by the trust's code of conduct and the 7 Principles of public life set out by Lord Nolan: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Ensure knowledge is kept up to date regarding legislation of education.

Person Specification

The appointed Non-Executive Director will contribute to the work of the Board in improving the life chances of all of the provisions' children and young people. In particular, they will apply HR knowledge and skills to hold to account the executive team.

Essential	Desirable
Ability to proactively challenge leaders	Business executive experience
Experience of driving improvement	HR Strategy experience
	Operating at Board level experience
	Senior finance experience
	Risk management knowledge
	Early Years education experience at management level
	Education experience

Time Commitment

4 hours/month minimum.



Location of board meetings

Board meetings are held via Teams. Board members are required to attend 3 meetings in person per year.

Applications

If you are interested in applying for this role and would like an informal discussion prior to application, please contact Sonia Nickerson, at sonia.nickerson@tsatrust.org.uk.

Please note: candidates should live within reasonable travelling distance of a Trust school. A list of our Trust schools is available on our [website](#).

TSAT is committed to safe recruitment procedures and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointments to this post are subject to an enhanced DBS check and Children's Barred List check.

Deadline for applications: 31st September 2026

