

Learn Sheffield

By Sheffield, for Sheffield, in Collaboration

Application Pack

Directors

Learn Sheffield Board



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Welcome

Thank you for showing an interest in becoming a member of the Learn Sheffield Board. We hope this information pack will be helpful in supporting your application, should you decide to apply.

Learn Sheffield is at an important stage of its development. The company was launched in 2015 with the aim of strengthening partnership working and developing a strong sector-led system in the city. We have successfully made the transition from the early phase of launching ourselves in the education landscape. The company is now firmly established as a key organisation in the city, to which schools, academies, colleges and other settings, as well as our wider partners, look to for leadership and support in delivering the city's vision and priorities.

Learn Sheffield has moved from a model based largely on work commissioned by Sheffield City Council to a position in which our funding sources are more diverse, with a strong and established school and academy trust subscription model alongside commissions and funding agreements with national and regional partners.

We are proud to have contributed to success in the city – school Ofsted outcomes (percentage of schools rated good or better) are above the national average for the second year running – following a long period during which Sheffield lagged behind the national benchmark. We know there is more to do in the city to improve outcomes for children and young people and we are focused on working with our partners in schools, academies and colleges to achieve improvements in these areas.

We are now looking forward to the coming period with anticipation and excitement. We are looking for new directors from all backgrounds and walks of life to help us carry on contributing to the vibrancy of our city and city region, and to continue to make a difference to the educational landscape of this nation. If you are excited by our vision and mission and believe that you have something to offer us, we hope you will apply.

Antony Hughes
Chair, Learn Sheffield Board
October 2023

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1. Background

Learn Sheffield is a not-for-profit schools company, which is focused on school improvement and is [owned by Sheffield's schools and colleges](#) (who own 80%) in partnership with Sheffield City Council (SCC owns 20%). You can see more background about Learn Sheffield [here on our website](#).

The Learn Sheffield board is responsible for the strategic direction of the company and for monitoring its impact on outcomes for children, young people, schools & colleges and the wider education system in the city. You can see the [list and biographies of our directors on our website](#).

Learn Sheffield (LS) is at an exciting and challenging moment in its development. Since its launch in 2015, LS has established an impressive partnership model for school improvement, with sector-leading engagement from the city's schools and academies. Schools are overwhelmingly positive about both the leadership of the organisation and the quality of service – engagement is high and the platform is firmly established. Learn Sheffield is commissioned by national bodies, including the DfE to lead on local strategic priorities

We continue to work closely with Sheffield City Council (SCC) and our current school subscription package mean that Learn Sheffield is moving into a period of great opportunity and potential to grow as we tackle the key challenges facing the school and post-16 education system in the city.

We are recruiting for that growth – we have a highly experienced and capable core team, working alongside nationally leading associates who bring great expertise and experience to our work with schools, academy trusts, colleges and local partners.

For information about Learn Sheffield staff, associates, and roles, [please see our website](#)

2. Mission and Vision

Our mission (*currently under review*)

Our Vision

Our children and young people have a growth mind-set and experience a high-quality education delivered by a dynamic and collaborative community of education professionals.

Our education professionals are highly skilled, nurturing, continually developing and motivated to create inspiring learning opportunities throughout the schools and colleges of Sheffield.

Our schools and colleges are committed to working in partnership, focussed on the achievement of their children and young people and work closely with their families and communities.

Our families and communities are cohesive, positive about learning and aspirational for their children and young people.

We believe in supporting each other in having the courage and confidence to make a difference and shape a better future, through inspiration, integrity, equality, sustainability, accountability and optimism.

3. The Role and Key Responsibilities

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Main Purpose:

Directors of the Board are charged with ensuring Learn Sheffield operates in accordance with the law relating to Schools Companies and is prudently financially managed. Directors contribute their experience and area of expertise to the Board's role of determining the strategic direction, priorities, policies and planning of the organisation.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

Strategic Leadership:

Under the leadership of the chair and alongside senior staff, the board will develop Learn Sheffield's strategic direction, ensuring the organisation keeps to its objectives within this framework.

The Board will provide clear strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.

Directors will ensure positive change in the organisation, in our sector and in our local community through actions and words that advocate inclusion and equality, creating a culture that recognises and celebrates diversity.

Directors will use their skills, knowledge and experience to help the Board reach sound decisions through challenge, and by being a critical friend.

Directors will act as advocates for the organisation promoting its activities and profile in the local area and beyond.

Governance:

Ensure that the organisation functions within the legal and financial requirements of a Schools Company, and strives to achieve best practice.

Ensure the financial stability of the organisation and the proper investment of funds in accordance with Learn Sheffield's stated aims and objectives and relevant legislation.

Employment and HR Duties:

Appoint the Chief Executive and senior leadership of Learn Sheffield and other staff and associates where appropriate.

Approve the organisation's staffing structure and employment policies.

Ensure the safe and efficient use of premises for staff, contractors and public.

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Board Sub-Committees:

Certain key functions such as Finance, Audit and Operations may be delegated to sub-committees of the Board. Membership of sub-committees will be from Directors with relevant skills and experience.

4. The Person Specification

We welcome applications from candidates with experience from the legal, business, and financial sectors to further enhance the board's oversight in these areas.

We are committed to growing the diversity of our organisation, including at Board level, and we particularly welcome applications from candidates who have experienced racism, have a disability, are LGBTQ+, from a disadvantaged socio-economic background, or for any other reason are under-represented.

All candidates will have:

- An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of directorship;
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, and diversity;
- Strong communication skills including the ability to contribute to meetings;
- An enthusiasm for the work of Learn Sheffield and a willingness to act as a champion for the organisation;
- An ability to understand local, regional and cultural agendas; and
- An ability to represent Learn Sheffield in their own networks and to inspire confidence in staff, other Directors, funders and key stakeholders.

5. Terms

Time Commitment:

In addition to attending Board meetings, Directors will be required to fulfil their advocacy role together with attendance and full participation in any sub-committees which they join.

Board Meetings:

Board meetings are normally six times per year, plus an Annual General Meeting in early February. Board meetings are held virtually at this time but may revert to in-person meetings at our offices in central Sheffield in future (with the option to attend virtually). Typically, board meetings take place late afternoon on Thursdays.

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Remuneration:

The post is unpaid, but all appropriate travel, hospitality and administrative expenditure may be reimbursed to Directors.

Duration:

The appointment is for three years following an induction period. The appointment can be renewed for further terms of three years by simple resolution of the board.

6. How to Apply

Please click here to initiate your application: <https://forms.office.com/r/PWqQ0hzQ28>

or email andy.wynne@learnsheffield.co.uk

We are open to receiving applications in a way that is best for you. This might be a written application, but it could also be by recording a video or an audio file in response. The total video/audio file for your CV/biography or letter of application should be no longer than 7 minutes long. Please email your document/s or recording, or a link on an online platform, to andy.wynne@learnsheffield.co.uk

If you would like an informal conversation about the role prior to submitting an application, please contact Stephen Betts, Chief Executive, by email at stephen.betts@learnsheffield.co.uk

We would be happy to support a candidate with Protected Characteristics in their application in any way we can.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Learn Sheffield is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to fair and open competition. We recognise that there are still significant social barriers and we want to particularly encourage applicants who have experienced racism, have a disability, are LGBTQ+, from a disadvantaged socio-economic background, or for any other reason are under-represented.

Under the Equality Act (2010), we are legally required to consider making reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and selection process. We are therefore committed to meeting, wherever possible, any needs you specify in your application. We will also consider any reasonable adjustments under the terms of the Act to enable any applicant with a disability (as defined under the Act) to meet the requirements of the post