

REMARKABLE

REDEFINING WHAT'S POSSIBLE

Becoming a School Governor

Remarkable
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Who are we?

Remarkable Autism Ltd is a registered charity (No.1104715) which operates as a Non-Maintained Special School and Independent Specialist College supporting children and young adults diagnosed with autism. Located in Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, we are approved by the Department of Education and provide a valuable specialist service to over 14 local authorities for some of the most vulnerable young people in our region.

Our educational focus centres on the holistic needs of the child or young adult, integrating therapeutic approaches to develop skills for learning, communicating and being independent, alongside working to support the real issues families of children with autism face. Our dedicated Board of Trustees delegate the day to day running of the school and college to a team of senior managers and governor volunteers who act as 'critical friends'.

What are the personal benefits to be gained from being a Trustee?

The main benefit you can gain from being a trustee is a sense of satisfaction through involvement in one of the most important volunteering roles in education. The collective decisions you make, as a member of the trustee board, will help shape the future of children and young people here at Remarkable.

Other benefits will include:

- The opportunity to develop new skills and to strengthen existing ones
- The opportunity to practise work talents. As part of a team, being a charity trustee will give you the opportunity to work with a wide range of people from a variety of social, cultural and religious backgrounds
- The opportunity to gain an understanding of the decision making process of trustee board and an awareness of the education system as a whole
- The opportunity to make a real difference and the chance to contribute to the good of the community, leading to personal satisfaction and a sense of achievement
- The opportunity to undertake training

What are the responsibilities of a Trustee?

Trustees are involved in planning the long-term future of Remarkable, in overseeing its aims, values and ethos, and in monitoring its performance. Trustees have a legal obligation to:

- Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Comply with your charity's governing document and the law.

- Act in your charity's best interests.
- Manage your charity's resources responsibly.
- Act with reasonable care and skill.
- Ensure your charity is accountable.

Charity trustees direct how a charity is run and help make sure it does what it was set up to do. This includes making sure the charity:

- sticks to its charitable mission
- has the money it needs
- spends that money responsibly on the activities it was raised for
- follows the law and doesn't break its own rules

Our trustees are also known as board members, trustee governors and committee members

How much work does being a Trustee involve?

Time spent on trustee duties varies. Our trustee board generally meets at least once a quarter and are supported by sub committees that discuss key areas such as Finance and Business Resources, Personnel, and Quality of Education. If you decide to become a trustee it is important that you are able to attend the majority of full board meetings; some reading will also be necessary as preparation for these meetings. Participation in one of the sub committees is encouraged.

Although it is difficult to quantify the time commitment involved, it is likely to average out at 4 hours per calendar month. Most board meetings take place on weekdays starting from 6pm, subcommittee meetings usually start from 4pm. It is worth finding out if your employer has a policy that makes allowances for the time you spend as a trustee.

How big a commitment is this?

The normal term for serving as a trustee is four years. If you want to be an effective trustee and provide stability and continuity to our trustee board you will ideally be able to commit to this period of time. As a volunteer you can choose to leave the trustee board at any time.

What qualities or qualifications do I need to be a Trustee?

You do not need any special qualifications to be a trustee. The most important qualities a trustee will bring to our trustee board are enthusiasm and commitment. You are likely to be working with people from a variety of social, religious and cultural backgrounds so it will also help to be a good listener, taking time to understand the views of different people. Trustees bring a range

of skills, experience, interests and perspectives from many walks of life. This will aid the decision-making functions of the trustee board.

Why people with work and management skills?

Remarkable Autism Ltd is a Charity which over arches Wargrave House School & Sixth Form, ASCENT College and Sundial Therapy Service. Wargrave House School & Sixth Form is a non-maintained special school, ASCENT College is an Independent Specialist College and as such they are autonomous, dealing with a budget in excess of £5 million and more than 100 members of staff. People from all areas of society including the world of work bring a different perspective to the governing body that is also very beneficial.

Skills learnt in the workplace can add real value to governing bodies. Volunteers with an external, work based perspective who are willing to challenge assumptions and promote innovation, will be increasingly important as the school, college and therapy service deal with major issues such as the expansion of knowledge and resource; the pace and type of change, the implication of new governance and legislation and the influence of new technology.

People have a range of transferrable work skills that can add value and strengthen trustee boards and subcommittees such as:

- Marketing
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Financial Planning
- Team Working
- Project Management
- Strategic Planning
- ICT
- Personnel
- Communications

Who should I contact?

We would like to invite you to support us in our journey to make a real difference to the lives of this very special group of people and enjoy the rewards of working with us. So if you are interested in becoming a trustee and would like to find out more, please contact Kate Wellock, PA to SLT, who will be pleased to arrange for you to visit Remarkable and meet with the Senior Leadership Team to see for yourself the vital work that we do.

Kate can be contacted via:

- Telephone: 01925 224899
- Email: katewellock@wargravehouse.com
- Address: Remarkable, C/o Wargrave House School & College
449 Wargrave Road, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, WA12 8RS
- Website: www.wargravehouse.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

What they do

Charities vary widely in terms of size and purpose. In larger charities, staff take on the day-to-day work and trustees have a more strategic role. The main purpose of a trustee is to decide the charity's priorities and future plans. Some also give practical help with the charity's activities. Charity trustees also make sure the charity achieves its plans effectively.

The role of charity trustee requires commitment and responsibility. It also allows you to see the charity's positive effects on people and society. Being a charity trustee can also help you gain new skills and experience that can help you develop your career.

Becoming a trustee

You must be over 18 to be a trustee for Remarkable Autism Ltd. We need committed and enthusiastic people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Our trustees are unpaid, but can receive 'out of pocket' expenses such as travel.

Who can't be a trustee

Some people can't be a charity trustee, for example because they:

- have an unspent criminal conviction involving dishonesty or deception
- are an undischarged bankrupt
- have been banned from serving as a company director

Get advice about becoming a trustee

The Charity Commission's guide *The Essential Trustee* explains the main legal responsibilities trustees have.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is a good place to find out more about becoming a charity trustee.

