



Appointment brief

Appointment of Trustees

February 2025

Ref: FBNQB

APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEES, ACS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

ACS is committed to inclusion across race, gender, faith, identity and abilities. We believe that diversity helps us to fulfil our purpose, realise our vision and exemplify our values. We welcome applications from candidates who can add to the diversity of both representation and thinking of our Board of Trustees.

ABOUT ACS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Thank you for your interest in ACS International Schools.

ACS International Schools is a leading provider of high-quality international education, operating schools (day and boarding) for students between the ages of 3 to 18 from around the world at our campuses in the UK based in Greater London.

We are proud of our diverse and welcoming community and the outstanding educational offering that our staff deliver. We are a global family offering a positive and energising working environment where our employees can fulfil their potential. We believe in the importance of developing in our students the curiosity to ask questions, the courage to take risks, the compassion to care for all, and the knowledge, understanding and confidence to thrive. Together, we inspire our students to become the world's next global thinkers and doers.

Founded in 1967 to serve the needs of global and local families, ACS International Schools educate around 2,500 students, aged 2 to 18, day and boarding, from more than 100 countries. Our schools – three in the Greater London area, are all non-sectarian and co-educational.

At the heart of our approach is the idea of readiness – we empower our students with the skills and knowledge to thrive in a world that is changing fast. Our world-renowned curriculum includes all International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes, and top US programmes including Advanced Placement (AP) courses and the AP Capstone and International Diplomas from the College Board.

Our students leave ACS as well-rounded global citizens with the academic and emotional intelligence to empathise and engage with tomorrow's big issues, turning compassion into action as they stand ready for a future full of opportunity.

We currently enrol over 2,500 students across our three schools and employ in excess of 750 staff with almost 400 substitute staff, coaches and specialists. ACS has developed a close understanding of the needs of our students and their families, and our key corporate clients. We are experts in assisting families in their relocation and transition to their new environment. ACS is also increasingly orienting its activities to attract new audiences and markets.

Our academic success is based on dedicated people leading educational programmes within outstanding facilities. This is underpinned by successfully generating and reinvesting our surplus year after year, which is essential to our role as an operator of premium international schools.

Our strong conviction is that our **"one organisation: three schools"** structure means that ACS is strengthened both at individual school and group level. This is reinforced by the collective experience, talent

and knowledge of ACS staff who collaborate across the group and who are supported by the professional expertise of our Education, Marketing, Fundraising, Finance, HR, IT, Facilities and Estate functions.

ACS is a fully registered charity. Prior to this we operated on a not-for-profit basis, reinvesting all our annual surpluses back into the development and expansion of our educational offering. Recognising this and in keeping with the wishes of the now deceased founder, we decided to convert to charitable status and this was completed in 2018. The conversion has not only formalised the not-for-profit nature of the organisation but has also enabled us to expand our bursary and scholarship programmes, and build upon the public benefit that we provide to the wider community.

Further information about ACS is available on our website at www.acs-schools.com

The ACS Story

Over 50 years ago our Founders, Mr Manos Poularas and Mr Gordon Speed, made a reality of their vision to create an inspirational learning environment for London's expanding global community. The first school opened in 1967 in London and through a deep understanding of the needs of expatriate families the schools grew in size and number, increasingly also attracting local parents who recognised the advantages of an international education.

ACS soon became established and has since maintained and built upon a reputation for excellence, investing in new facilities and searching for best practice to secure and build upon our status as a group of leading international schools. This strategy enabled the growth of ACS, thus opening a further five schools in quick succession in the London area.

By 1975, the existing schools were unable to increase capacity to meet the needs of the growing expatriate community; so two further properties were purchased and developed. The first of these is the present Cobham campus site and the second is the current Hillingdon (Middlesex) campus. Once these two schools were developed and operational, the other schools moved from the smaller central London sites.

In 1995, to meet the increasing demand, ACS opened a third school in Egham, Surrey, which has now grown to over 550 students. Investment in the facilities and the physical environment of the campuses, alongside our people, has always been of paramount importance, a fact truly evident when visiting any of the campuses.

In 2011 ACS opened its first school outside the UK, in Doha, Qatar. The school has been successful in establishing our reputation in a new territory and has attracted strong enrolment. Due to a change in our strategy, this school was divested in January 2024, and we are currently exploring other international growth opportunities.

The schools were known originally as the Overseas School of London, then American Community Schools reflecting the then mainly American student body. In 2004 ACS updated its identity to ACS International Schools reflecting both the growth in student and staff nationalities and the shift in the market.

Strategic Vision and Values

Becoming a charity in 2018 secured our legacy and prompted us to look to the future, to consider our place in the world and our charitable aim of advancing education.

Our purpose is to inspire the world's next global thinkers and doers. The idea of readiness lies at the heart of an ACS education. We envision alumni embracing the future as effective, confident and caring individuals who are ready to act, lead, care and change the world and our students to be ready to ask new questions and demand better answers.

These purpose, vision and values align with our core strategies for education, people, partnerships and growth.



Our offer to students and their families

Our educational programmes are based on international research, learning standards, principles and practices. We are committed to maintaining high standards of scholarship and citizenship, and student-centered learning.

The curriculum includes the acclaimed International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes: Primary Years (PYP), Middle Years (MYP), Career-related (CP) and Diploma (DP). We offer an American-style high school diploma for all students who complete our programme of study, accredited by NEASC.

With a broadly-selective admissions policy which accepts a wide range of abilities, the schools achieve top-tier academic results, and our high school graduates enter many of the most esteemed universities in the UK and worldwide.

Our policy of reinvesting our surplus has enabled the organisation to build high quality facilities at all campuses with a commitment to continue to grow enrolment, programmes and facilities further, adding incremental capacity in our current portfolio of schools.

Education Strategy

ACS's Education Strategy describes general intentions which reflect the desired position for our schools. Its principal objective is to increase the unique quality and value of the ACS educational experience. Through the strategy's implementation, we will position the group to respond directly and creatively to geopolitical volatility in our markets and uncertainty in the premium independent international school sector.

The strategy aims to deepen an already solid foundation, driving key innovations that set a stage from which we can choose how to extend our impact into the future.

Our Education Strategy intends to deliver significant change, including:

- a sharper focus on inspirational teaching that continually improves student learning results;
- demonstrated public benefit and global competence through a greater range of educational experiences;
- an expanded and carefully-monitored notion of what it means to belong to a healthy international learning community;
- equitable, distinctive, and systematically implemented support for all students to achieve challenging educational goals;

Details of our Education Strategy are available at <https://www.acs-schools.com/about/education-strategy>.

Our offer to our staff

ACS International Schools offer prestigious and rigorous academic programmes that give our staff an opportunity to develop their skills both in terms of subject area and teaching.

The IB programmes, Advanced Placement and our High School Diploma programmes are recognised for their quality. The development of our staff, both in the academic and non-academic division of the ACS Group, is central to this success, and ACS has a reputation for offering quality professional development opportunities.

Our campuses are purpose built in desirable locations in the UK South East/Greater London. Our schools are well resourced and offer a premium working environment for our people.

Our People strategy sets an ambitious path to deliver an enhanced employee proposition which can appeal to, develop and retain the quality of staff that our premium position demands.

Our offer as a charity

Being a charity offers ACS the opportunity to further our charitable purpose to advance education (see Appendix for more on our charitable purpose).

Through bursaries and scholarships, it enables us to provide financial assistance to many more students whose families cannot afford to fully fund their education. It enables us to raise additional funds to be used for financial assistance and innovative teaching and learning spaces through exciting capital projects. It also allows us to partner with local schools and community organisations to the benefit of ACS, and our partners, staff and students. This could be through mentoring, exchange programmes, joint activities or sharing facilities.

ACS has 3 successful partnerships hubs based around our 3 campuses with over 100 partner schools that work with us on a regular basis. We have 5 full time partnerships staff who work daily on opportunities to extend educational provision for our students and those in our partner schools. This enables us to formalise the not-for-profit nature of the current organisation, securing this status for the benefit of present and future generations. It also presents an exciting opportunity to participate in building a culture of philanthropy and engaging parents and staff in fundraising, as well as participating in alumni engagement events with our 26,000 Alumni and Friends of 100 different nationalities.

Our future fundraising campaigns will also allow wider investment in teaching programmes and capital development projects to enhance and improve our schools and the positive impact on our students' learning and development.



The role

We are looking to recruit and develop two trustees to serve on our Board. One role will have particular focus on Safeguarding whilst the additional role will have a more commercial focus. We are particularly interested in candidates who can offer knowledge, skills and commercial experience in the corporate and/or charity sector. While previous experience in the education sector and in-depth knowledge of safeguarding regulations is of added interest, we are looking primarily for people with previous Board level / C-suite experience who can add diversity of thinking and high calibre, thoughtful critical challenge. We also welcome candidates who are able to contribute greater diversity of representation to our Board. The appointees will enjoy the opportunity to further develop our charitable purpose strategy and programmes.

The Board delegates specific powers to the ACS Leadership Team and works with them to deliver agreed goals and outcomes in accordance with the organisation's strategy and governance. The Board has a key role in maintaining effective oversight and acting as a "critical friend" to senior ACS leadership.

The Role of the Board

The prospective Trustee will be able to contribute effectively to the work of the Board which:

- Provides entrepreneurial leadership of the Group;
- Sets the Group's vision, values, educational philosophy and standards of business conduct, ensuring that obligations to stakeholders are understood and met;
- Approves and monitors the Group's strategy, business plans, budgets and key performance indicators;
- Approves the nature of the schools' educational offer, including programmes, accreditation and external qualifications, and associated fees;
- Monitors the effectiveness of the Group's governance arrangements, including appointments to the Board and its Committees, the use of corporate assets, related party transactions, and the management of risks and conflicts of interest;
- Oversees the process of external disclosure and communications including the development of the brand and the management of the Group's reputation;
- Reviews the performance of management and determines the Group's remuneration policy;
- Appoints the Chief Executive to manage the day-to-day activities, operations and resources of the Group, and contributes to the appointment of other senior leadership positions within the schools and Head Office.

Person specification

Trustee positions are strategic non-executive roles focused on ensuring the success of ACS International as an education provider, a charity and a large business operation. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a strong commitment to the vision and values of ACS International Schools.

Skills and Knowledge

- Ability to contribute as a non-executive to a broad range of board topics based on experience and intellect;
- Ability to think, plan and operate strategically;
- Leadership style – consensual, inspirational and firm;
- Holding to account – achievement focus;
- Ability to work closely with all key stakeholders at both national and international (multicultural) levels;
- High level and broad networking;
- High level communication skills;
- Strong interpersonal skills.

Personal Attributes

- Presence and gravitas;
- Enthusiasm and passion for the role;
- Necessary tact and diplomacy;
- Strength of character and resolve; resilience in times of challenge;
- The ability to put together well-reasoned arguments;
- Commitment and ability to devote sufficient time to ACS International Schools and the role.



Terms of appointment

The new Trustees will be expected to commit a minimum of 12 days per year to their role in addition to preparation and reading time. We typically hold 6 board meetings per year and expect each Trustee to participate in or chair at least one of the Board's sub-committees (Education, People and Audit & Risk) that typically meet 3 times per year. In addition, there are opportunities to participate in important school events (e.g. graduation).

As ACS International holds charitable status, this position will be unremunerated.

ACS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and as a Trustee of ACS you are expected to share this commitment. The protection of our students' welfare is the responsibility of all within ACS International Schools and individuals are expected to conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to ACS International Schools on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **FBNQB**. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring form. The form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

The closing date for applications is midday on **Friday 28th February 2025**.

KCSIE online checks

In line with the latest KCSIE guidance, Saxton Bampfylde will conduct a search of online records that are publicly available on shortlisted candidates. These checks are used only to meet the intended purpose of the KCSIE's recommendation in relation to whether an applicant is suitable to work with children and young people. All data will be held in line with data protection regulations.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Appendix

Powering Change Through Education & Partnerships

Who We Are - ACS International Schools is more than an education charity—we are a movement. A movement that fuels **innovation, social mobility, and global impact** through transformative partnerships. Rooted in **excellence, inclusivity, and internationalism**, we equip students with the skills and confidence to shape a brighter future.

Our Commitment to Education & Public Benefit

- **1 Million hours** of student learning by 2025
- **£3m** invested in transformative student Bursaries
- A **service-learning curriculum** that nurtures global citizens
- **Real-world experiences** through corporate collaborations & community projects

Key Partnerships & Impact

We don't just talk about change—we create it. Through dynamic collaborations with **universities, businesses, and charities**, we're driving education forward.

- Partnership Hubs – Uniting 100+ state schools for shared success
- Digital Innovation – 100k digital users expanding learning through AI & Tech
- Teaching Excellence – 180K+ hours of teacher training to elevate education
- International Service – Transforming lives in Nepal, Namibia, Kenya, Vietnam, and beyond

ACS doesn't stop at the classroom. We drive equity, empower students to lead social change, and support disadvantaged learners through scholarships and career programs.

Our Reach: Local, National & Global Impact

- Locally – Supporting local student bursaries and also a network of state schools with specialist resources, mentorship & extracurriculars
- Nationally – Shaping UK education policy & inspiring student-led social initiatives
- Internationally – Partnering globally with charities & schools

Join the Movement

Our mission is bold, our impact is real, and our partners are game-changers. Together, we are **creating community innovators and shaping the future of education to inspire the world's next global thinkers and doers. Want to know more?**

- ✦ **Explore Our Work:** [Website link here.](#)
- ✦ **Watch Our Impact:** [YouTube Channel](#)
- ✦ **Join Our Events:** **STEAM 2024 at Thorpe Park | Night at the West End**
- ✦ **Let's Talk:** Graeme Lawrie MBE – Glawrie@acs-schools.com

Thank you for being part of this journey—together, we are transforming education!

Saxton Bampfylde



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