



Department  
for Education

# **Chair - Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB)**

## **Candidate Information pack**

**Closing date:  
11th September,  
10.00am**



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# Introduction

**The Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB)** is a national board that has been jointly developed by Government, Local Authorities, and the voluntary sector.

I am looking to secure a high-quality individual to chair this active and dynamic board and take forward the aspirations that the Department has for ensuring we improve the life chances of every child. I am passionate about giving every child the best possible start in life and see adoption and special guardianship as an integral and crucial means by which this can be achieved.

The adoption and special guardianship landscape has changed recently with the introduction of Regional Adoption Agencies but the Board's overall purpose remains. They are in place and supported by my Department to help ensure that children in care who cannot live with their birth parents are placed with an alternative permanent family that provides stable and high-quality care. The Board has the following key aims:

- Decisions about adoption and special guardianship for children in care are made in a consistent way and informed by the evidence about what is in the best interests of the child;
- Those children are then matched and placed without delay with suitable and well-prepared adopters or special guardians; and
- Once placed, children and families are given the support they need to thrive.

The Board interacts with individual adoption agencies from both the local authority and voluntary sectors, including through membership organisations such as the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies (CVAA). Underneath the National ASGLB, there is a network of Regional Adoption Boards and Regional Adoption Agency Leaders, which help to drive improvement locally.

The Board is collectively accountable to the Secretary of State and is required to provide regular updates to Ministers. The Chair will represent the Board to a range of stakeholders, including the media and the public.

If you believe as passionately as I do about adoption and special guardianship I would welcome your application for this challenging but incredibly rewarding position. You will get the opportunity to work alongside a wide range of like-minded and committed professionals, all of whom share in this passion.

My Department is focused on equality of opportunity and I am committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. I particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP,  
Secretary of State for Education**



# Your Work

The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for education and children's services. Its vision is for a highly educated society in which opportunity is more equal for children and young people, no matter what their background or family circumstance.

The Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) has been jointly developed by the DfE and the local authority and voluntary adoption sectors. Its remit is to drive significant improvements in the performance of adoption and special guardianship services in England. Board members include senior figures from key organisations within the system.

The DfE is seeking to recruit a replacement for the outgoing independent Chair to provide strong leadership to the ASGLB. The new Chair will do this by:

1. proactively shaping and driving forward the strategic agenda of the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) by
  - ensuring that the ASGLB operates as an effective and efficient mechanism for reforming adoption and special guardianship services in England, liaising with other Children's Services leaders as appropriate;
  - providing critical challenge and support to sector leaders to ensure a high performing and efficient system;
  - ensuring the ASGLB delivers its aims and objectives, including through swift, corrective action where necessary;
  - ensuring join up where appropriate with other Boards, such as the Family Justice Board;
2. acting as figurehead for the ASGLB and a champion for adoption and special guardianship, representing it to a range of stakeholders including the media; and ensuring transparent communications to the public;
3. providing strong leadership to the ASGLB including through effective Chairing of meetings;
4. reporting to the Secretary of State for Education at agreed intervals on the ASGLB's progress and latest trends and issues facing the adoption system; and advising on any changes needed to its focus.



# Who We're Looking For

Applicants will be assessed against the following criteria. In your covering letter **you should demonstrate clearly how you meet each of the following requirements of the post.** For those invited to interview, your responses will be further developed and discussed.

## Essential Criteria

- Ability to provide strategic leadership at national level, including influencing Government policies and programmes.
- Track record in influencing and gaining commitment from senior leaders in a complex political environment.
- Ability to drive action and deliver performance improvement in adoption and special guardianship services, including through the use of data and evidence.
- Strong chairing skills and proven ability to build consensus amongst board members, including through conflict resolution.
- Knowledge of the care system and in particular adoption and special guardianship services in England and an understanding of those people affected by the system.
- Ability to act as a public figurehead, with proven ability to convey complex and sensitive messages simply and to a range of audiences including media.



# Board Diversity

**The Department is focused on equality of opportunity and is committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. We particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.**

The Department for Education has a strong culture of inclusion and diversity and it wants to encourage applications from people with a diverse range of backgrounds and educational routes. In 2018 we launched a five year strategy to create a department where everyone is able to bring their whole self to work and where honesty, challenge and innovation are encouraged and valued. We are recognised by leading diversity organisations for promoting diversity in the workplace.

We want to ensure any appointee to the Department's arm's length bodies is committed to promoting diversity, in its broadest possible sense.. This will include embedding a commitment to the principles of levelling up and championing opportunity for all across the organisation, helping to ensure that the organisation is one which a genuinely diverse range of views can be expressed, without fear or favour.

## **CHAMPIONING SOCIAL MOBILITY**

The Department champions social mobility in all of its policies and is committed to opening up opportunities for people from all backgrounds, all socio-economic classes and all regions of the UK. We are committed to embedding this principle into our recruitment and public appointments and expect all our leaders, including in arm's length bodies, to take action to attract and retain staff from all backgrounds, while also supporting them to progress within their careers.

## **DISABILITY CONFIDENT**

We are a member of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and have achieved Disability Confident Leader status, signifying our role as champions of the scheme. We use the Disability Confident symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability.

We ask that all applicants complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for gathering data only in order to ensure departments are recruiting from the widest possible pool. The information you provide is held by the Public Appointments team and not shared with the selection panel.



# How to Apply

**The closing date for applications is 11th September at 10.00am.**

Information on the timetable for this campaign, selection process, requisite security clearance, and the Advisory Assessment Panel can be found on the Centre for Public Appointments website:

<https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>

Please submit the following documents by email to:

[PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk)

1. A covering letter not exceeding two sides of A4 paper. (Arial size 12).
2. A CV.
3. Candidate application form.
4. Diversity form.

Please include the vacancy title in the subject box and submit each application document as a separate attachment.

We are happy to accept applications in alternative formats from applicants who, for reasons of disability, may find it difficult to fill in our standard form. If you would like to have a chat with us about reasonable adjustments please contact us at:

[PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments.APPLICATIONS@education.gov.uk)

**Please note the following:**

- **we cannot accept applications submitted after the closing date;**
- **applications will be assessed solely on the documentation provided; please refer to the advert and checklist above to ensure you have provided everything requested;**
- **applications will be acknowledged upon receipt;**
- **feedback will only be given to candidates unsuccessful following interview.**

# Terms of appointment

## Location

Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board meetings will be held in central London. Occasional travel to other locations may be required.

## Time requirement

Time commitment may vary depending on the work programme and will be up to 40 days a year, including preparation time for meetings. This will include but be not exclusive to:

- full attendance at ASGLB meetings (held in London at approximately quarterly intervals).
- attendance at meetings with senior managers in DfE and other organisations to promote, raise awareness and gain commitment to the work of the ASGLB.

## Term

The successful candidate will be appointed initially for a period of two years. There may be opportunity for reappointment, but there is no presumption of this and any decision will be subject to a satisfactory review.

## Remuneration

£550 per day.

## Expenses

Reasonable travel (under Departmental policy expectation is that travel will be via 2<sup>nd</sup> class unless there are specific and justifiable reasons) and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed. In addition, some funding will be available for procurement of administrative support to the Chair, to be agreed with the Department for Education on appointment.

## Pension

The post is not pensionable.

# Terms of appointment

## Other

The appointment of the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board Chair is made by the Secretary of State in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments and established best practice.

There is no employment relationship with the Department for Education or with the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board.

The Chair's performance will be appraised by a nominated Department for Education representative .

Members are expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and are required to adhere to the code of conduct for board members and demonstrate a sound understanding of and commitment to the principles of public life, both of which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>.

# Complaints

Please contact the Department for Education’s Public Appointments Team if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at:

[PublicAppointments.DFE@education.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments.DFE@education.gov.uk)

We will acknowledge your complaint upon receipt and respond within 15 working days.

If you are not content with our response please contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments at:

[publicappointments@csc.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointments@csc.gov.uk)

Further information on complaints can be found on the Commissioner for Public Appointments’ website:

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

