Trustee Handbook

SPRINGBOARD OPPORTUNITY GROUP

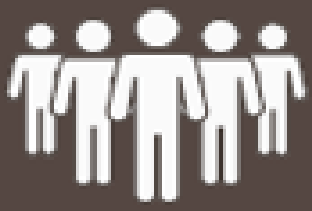
SINCE 1986

Selflessness · Integrity · Objectivity · Accountability · Opernss · Honety · Leadership

The Essential Trustee

6 main duties

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

Ensure your charity is accountable

Manage your charity's resources responsibly

Act with reasonable care and skill

Trustee Recruitment Handbook

Contents

Section One: Core Responsibilities and Recruitment Overview

- Trustee Recruitment Guidance
- Trustee Selection Flowchart: Define → Attract → Appoint

Section Two: Trustee Roles and Person Specifications

- Trustee Role Description - Treasurer
- Trustee Role Description - Safeguarding
- Trustee Role Description - Grants & Fundraising

Section Three: Pre-Election and Application

- Pre-Election Information
- Trustee Application Pack

Section Four: Induction and Conduct

- Trustee Induction Information and Checklist
- Trustee Code of Conduct
- Trustee Appointment Flowchart: From Expression of Interest to Election

SECTION ONE

Trustee Selection Flowchart: Define → Attract → Appoint

PHASE 1 DEFINITION

- Clarify what is needed.
- Identify skills, experience and perspectives required.
- Review Board: composition and succession planning.
- Update role description and person specification.
- Confirm eligibility requirements.
- Agree recruitment timeline and responsibilities.

PHASE 2 ATTRACTION

- Reach and engage suitable candidates.
- Promote opportunities through targeted channels.
- Provide clear information packs.
- Invite informal conversations with Chair/CEO.
- Offer visits to Springboard settings.

PHASE 3 APPOINTMENT

- Select and onboard Trustees.
- Application, skills audit, and references.
- Eligibility checks (DBS, OFSTED, Companies House, Charity Commission)
- Board approval and election/co-option.

SECTION TWO

Trustee Recruitment Overview

1. Purpose of this Document

This policy sets out how Springboard Opportunity Group recruits, selects, appoints and inducts Trustees. It ensures that:

- Recruitment is transparent, fair and inclusive.
- Trustees collectively bring the skills, experience and diversity needed.
- The process aligns with Charity Commission expectations.
- Conflicts of interest, including Connected Persons, are identified and managed.
- New Trustees receive a structured and supportive induction.

This document applies to all prospective and current Trustees.

2. Our Recruitment Framework: The 3-Phase Model

PHASE 1: Definition	PHASE 2: Attraction	PHASE 3: Appointment
○ Clarifying what we need. ○ Identify skills, experience and perspectives required. ○ Review Board: composition and succession planning. ○ Update role description and person specification. ○ Confirm eligibility requirements. ○ Agree recruitment timeline and responsibilities.	○ Reaching and engaging suitable candidates. ○ Promote opportunities through targeted channels. ○ Provide clear information packs. ○ Invite informal conversations with Chair/CEO. ○ Offer visits to Springboard settings.	○ Selecting and onboarding Trustees. ○ Application, skills audit, and references. ○ Eligibility checks (DBS, OFSTED, Companies House, Charity Commission) ○ Board approval and election. ○ Structured induction programme. ○ Allocation of link roles and sub-committee membership.

3. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Springboard is committed to building a Board that reflects the communities we serve. Recruitment processes will:

- Encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- Use inclusive language and accessible formats.
- Focus on skills, lived experience and values.
- Make reasonable adjustments throughout the process.

4. Eligibility Requirements

Trustees must meet the legal requirements set out by the Charity Commission and Companies House. Key guidance:

- Charity Commission: *The Essential Trustee* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3
- Trustee eligibility and disqualification rules https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-disqualification

Springboard will check:

- Disqualified Directors Register
- Register of Removed Trustees
- DBS status
- OFSTED Director registration requirements

5. Connected Persons & Conflict of Interest Clause
Springboard Opportunity Group is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and transparency. All Trustees must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

Definition of Connected Persons
A *Connected Person* includes (as defined by the Charity Commission):

- A spouse or civil partner
- A child, stepchild or parent
- A sibling
- A close family member
- A business partner
- An organisation in which the Trustee or a connected person has a financial interest.
- Any person or body with whom the Trustee has a close personal or professional relationship that could influence decision-making.

Trustee Responsibilities
Trustees must:

- Declare all conflicts of interest on appointment and annually.
- Update declarations whenever circumstances change.
- Withdraw from discussions or decisions where a conflict exists.
- Never use their position for personal benefit or the benefit of a connected person

Failure to declare a conflict may result in removal from the Board.

6. Recruitment Roles & Responsibilities

Chair of Trustees	CEO	Finance Manager	Board of Trustees
- Oversees recruitment and succession planning. - Meets prospective Trustees. - Recommends candidates to the board of trustees.	- Provides organisational insight to candidates. - Supports induction and onboarding.	- Coordinates checks (DBS, OFSTED, Companies House.) - Maintains recruitment records.	- Approves appointments. - Ensures recruitment aligns with strategic needs. - Supports induction.

7. Data Protection

All personal data collected during recruitment will be managed in accordance with Springboard's Data Protection Policy and UK GDPR requirements.

8. Review Cycle

This guidance will be reviewed by the trustee board every **two years** or sooner if legislation or organisational needs change.

SECTION THREE

Pre-Election Information

Welcome and Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Springboard Opportunity Group. Trustees play a vital role in shaping our strategic direction, ensuring strong governance, and championing the needs of the children and families we support.

This pack provides the information you need to understand Springboard, the responsibilities of a Trustee, and the process leading up to election or co-option. You are warmly encouraged to ask questions at any stage.

About Springboard Opportunity Group

Springboard is a well-established, continually evolving charity supporting children with additional needs and their families. We operate across North Somerset, working in partnership with families, local authorities, health professionals and community organisations.

We are a voluntary sector daycare provider in North Somerset. To learn more about our work, please explore our website: www.springboardweb.org.uk.

As a charity, Springboard Opportunity Group is committed to high standards of governance and public accountability. Our Trustees are expected to uphold the Nolan Principles of Public Life - *selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership* - which guide the way we work and make decisions.

Springboard Opportunity Group is a charitable company limited by guarantee. This means that all Trustees of the charity are also Directors of the company and therefore have legal duties under both charity law and company law.

What Trustees Do

Trustees are responsible for the strategic oversight, governance and financial stewardship of the charity. They work collectively to:

- Set and monitor strategic direction
- Ensure compliance with charity and company law
- Oversee financial sustainability
- Support and challenge the CEO
- Safeguard Springboard's values and reputation
- Champion inclusion, equity and high-quality early years support

For a full overview of trustee responsibilities, please read: **The Essential Trustee (Charity Commission)**

Time Commitment

Trustees typically contribute **4–6 hours per month**, which includes:

- Reading papers and preparing for meetings
- Attending Board and sub-committee meetings
- Occasional visits to Springboard settings
- Participation in training or strategic planning sessions

The time commitment is not uniform throughout the year. Some months may require significantly more involvement**,** while others may be lighter. Trustees are also expected to maintain appropriate visibility at key fundraising events throughout the year, supporting Springboard's profile and community engagement.

Before Election

Before you and the Board decide whether this role is right for you, you will be invited to meet:

- **Jenie Eastman**, Chair of Trustees
- **Ruth Glover**, Chief Executive Officer

This meeting will cover:

- Your application form and skills audit
- Springboard's organisational structure and governance
- Board membership and sub-group structure
- Our governing documents and limited liability of members
- Strategic aims, objectives and current priorities
- Relevant policies and expectations of Trustees

You may also be invited to:

- Visit a Springboard setting to meet staff and volunteers
- Observe a Full Board meeting so you can experience how we work in practice. Because these meetings naturally involve confidential and sensitive information, we will ask you to sign a short confidentiality agreement beforehand. This is a normal and widely used step across the charity sector to ensure everyone can participate openly and safely.

Useful Background Reading

You are encouraged to familiarise yourself with the following resources:

- Charity Commission guidance for trustees
- Springboard Opportunity Group website

Election to the Board

If both you and the Board agree to proceed, you may be appointed as a Trustee at a full Board meeting. **Appointment will only take place once your Ofsted registration is fully complete and your DBS check has been cleared.** Your appointment will take effect immediately following the Board's decision, and you will then be formally introduced to the membership at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Conditions of Appointment

Your election is conditional on completing the following within **one month** (or sooner where possible). You will be supported by the Chair of Trustees, CEO and Finance Manager.

Prior to election, you must:

1. Provide two satisfactory references
2. Register as a Springboard Director with OFSTED and complete an enhanced DBS check. For charities that run Ofsted registered provision, trustees are considered part of the "registered persons" responsible for the organisation. That means Ofsted must confirm your suitability first (via the Ofsted EY2 form and an Ofsted-linked DBS).

Springboard will:

- Check your name on the Disqualified Directors Register
- Check the Register of Removed Trustees
- Ensure that you are registered as a Director with Companies House (within 14 days of election) and add you as a Trustee with the Charity Commission. Both of these will only be actioned once Ofsted has confirmed your suitability.

Relevant links:

- Companies House
- Charity Commission
- OFSTED

Connected Persons & Conflicts of Interest

All prospective Trustees must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including those involving *Connected Persons* (family members, close associates, business partners, or organisations with which you have a significant relationship). You will be asked to complete a Declaration of Interests before appointment.

Trustees as Directors: Co-Option, Resignation and Re-Election Rules (Article 42)

Springboard is a charitable company limited by guarantee. This means all Trustees are also Directors of the company and must follow both charity law and company law. Under Article 42 of the Articles of Association, the Board may appoint (co-opt) Trustees at any time during the year to fill vacancies or add needed skills. Any Trustee appointed mid-year must step down at the next AGM and may then stand for election by the membership. This resignation is in addition to the usual one-third of Trustees who retire by rotation each year. Article 42 also limits the number of co-opted Trustees to no more than one-third of the number of elected Trustees.

Being a Trustee

Becoming a Trustee is a rewarding opportunity to contribute to a charity that makes a profound difference to children and families. Trustees bring diverse skills, perspectives and lived experiences — and we value each contribution.

We look forward to getting to know you and exploring how you might support Springboard's mission.

Trustee Principles	*Selflessness* *Integrity* *Objectivity* *Accountability* *Openness* *Honesty* *Leadership*

Trustee Application Pack

Springboard Opportunity Group

This pack contains the documents required for individuals applying to become a Trustee. It supports a fair, transparent and consistent recruitment process.

Contents

- ☐ Application Form
- ☐ Skills Audit
- ☐ Reference Request
- ☐ Eligibility and Connected Persons Declaration

Application Form

Personal Details

Full Name	
Address	
Post Code	
Email	
Contact Number	

About You

Why are you interested in becoming a Trustee of Springboard Opportunity Group?

What skills, experience or perspectives would you bring to the Board?

What do you hope to gain from the role?

Do you have any lived experience relevant to Springboard's work (optional)?

Governance and Availability

1. Are you able to commit approximately 4–6 hours per month? YES/NO
2. Are you willing to undertake induction, training and occasional visits to Springboard settings? YES/NO
3. Are you currently serving as a Trustee or Director elsewhere? If yes, please provide details. YES/NO

Conflicts of Interest

1. Do you have any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest? YES/NO
2. Do you have any Connected Persons who may create a conflict? (You will also complete a full declaration later) YES/NO

Trustee Principles	*Selflessness* *Integrity* *Objectivity* *Accountability* *Openness* *Honesty* *Leadership*

Skills Audit

This audit helps Springboard understand the strengths and experience you would bring to the Board. Many skills are transferable. You may have gained relevant experience through your professional role, volunteering, community involvement, or lived experience.

Please rate each area based on your overall confidence, not only on formal job titles or charity-specific experience.

1: No experience 2: Some experience 3: Competent 4: Significant expertise

Leadership and Strategy	
Strategic Planning and Vision	
Charity Governance	
Risk Management	
Technical and Operational	
Finance and Accounting	
Fundraising (e.g. grants, digital, community, partnership	
Marketing, PR and Communication	
Digital and IT	
HR and Employment Law	
Property / Facilities Management	
Sector Specialisms	
SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)	
Early Years Education	
Safeguarding (Child Protection)	
North Somerset Council / Social Care Systems	
Lived Experience	
Parent/carer of child with SEND	
Local Community Knowledge	

Are there any additional skills, experiences, or perspectives you feel would be valuable to Springboard that are not captured in the list above?

Referees

Please provide details of two referees who you are happy for us to contact (not family members):

	Referee One	**Referee Two**
Name		
Relationship to you		
Email Contact		
Phone Contact		

SPRINGBOARD OPPORTUNITY GROUP

Trustee Principles	*Selflessness* *Integrity* *Objectivity* *Accountability* *Openness* *Honesty* *Leadership*

Eligibility and Connected Persons Declaration

All Trustees must meet legal eligibility requirements and declare any conflicts of interest or relationships that could influence decision-making. Please read the statements below and confirm your position.

Eligibility (Charity Commission Requirements)
Please confirm that:

☐ I am not disqualified from acting as a Trustee.

☐ I am not an undischarged bankrupt.

☐ I have not been removed as a Trustee by the Charity Commission.

☐ I am not disqualified from being a Company Director.

☐ I am willing to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

☐ I am willing to register as a Director with OFSTED and Companies House.

Connected Persons & Conflicts of Interest
A *Connected Person* includes: a spouse or civil partner, a parent, child or sibling, a close family member, a business partner, a close personal or professional associate, any organisation in which you or a connected person has a financial interest.

Please declare:

1. Any relationships that may create a conflict of interest.

2. Any organisations you or a connected person are involved in that may overlap with Springboard's work.

Signature

I confirm that the information provided is accurate.

Name: Signature:

Date:

SECTION FOUR

Trustee Induction Information and Checklist

1. Purpose of the Induction Pack

This pack supports new Trustees as they begin their role with Springboard Opportunity Group. It provides essential information, key documents, and a structured induction process to ensure every Trustee feels confident, informed and able to contribute effectively. The induction is designed to be completed within **two months** of election.

2. Election Requirements

A prospective Trustee *cannot* be elected until both of the following are fully completed and cleared:

1. Ofsted Director Registration (EY2) – Approved
2. Enhanced DBS Check – Cleared

Springboard can then register the Trustee with

- **Companies House** (within 14 days)
- **Charity Commission**

This order is essential for legal compliance. Only once these checks are complete can the Board formally elect the individual as a Trustee.

3. Election to the Board

Once Ofsted and DBS clearance is confirmed, and both the Board and the candidate wish to proceed:

- The individual may be appointed at a full Board meeting.
- The appointment takes effect immediately.
- The new Trustee will be formally introduced to the membership at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).

If you joined the Board mid-year through co-option, Article 42 requires that you step down at the next AGM and stand for election if you wish to continue. This is a normal procedural requirement and does not reflect on your performance.

4. Induction Objectives

By the end of your induction, you will:

- Understand Springboard's mission, values and strategic priorities
- Be familiar with our governance structure and legal responsibilities
- Understand the role of the Board, sub-committees and link roles

- Know how to access key documents and policies
- Have met key staff, volunteers and fellow Trustees
- Understand responsibilities relating to safeguarding, finance and risk
- Be aware of conflicts of interest and Connected Persons requirements

5. Key Documents to Read (within first month)

A. Governance & Legal
- Articles of Association
- Charity Commission: *The Essential Trustee*

B. Strategy & Operations
- Strategic Business Plan
- Annual Report and Accounts
- Organisational structure chart

C. Policies
- Safeguarding Policy
- Critical Incidents Policy
- Dignity Policy
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Financial Controls

6. Meetings and Introductions (first month)

You will meet with:

- **Chair of Trustees or Link Governance Trustee** – governance, expectations, link roles
- **Finance Manager** – DBS, Ofsted, Companies House

7. Systems and Practical Information

You will receive access to the trustee area of Google Drive to access board papers and document storage.

8. Conflicts of Interest & Connected Persons

All Trustees must have completed a **Declaration of Interests** as part of their application. Trustees must:

- Declare all actual, potential or perceived conflicts
- Update declarations annually or when circumstances change

- Withdraw from discussions where a conflict exists

9. Trustee Induction Checklist

To be completed within two months of application being accepted.

A. Meetings

[ ] Meeting with Chair of Trustees/Link Governance Trustee
[ ] Meeting with Finance Manager

B. Documents Read

[ ] Strategic Business Plan
[ ] Annual Report and Accounts
[ ] Organisational structure
[ ] Safeguarding Policy
[ ] Data Protection Policy
[ ] Financial Controls
[ ] Dignity Policy
[ ] Health & Safety Policy
[ ] Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
[ ] Conflict of Interest Policy

C. Compliance

[ ] Enhanced DBS check cleared
[ ] Ofsted Director registration approved
[ ] Companies House registration completed
[ ] Added to Charity Commission register
[ ] Declaration of Interests completed
[ ] Connected Persons declaration completed

D. Practicalities

[ ] Access to Board papers and systems via Google Drive
[ ] Meeting schedule received
[ ] Contact list received
[ ] Link role agreed

10. Trustee Appointment and Onboarding Checklist (Internal Use)

A. Actions for the New Trustee
[ ] Application Form submitted
[ ] Skills Audit submitted
[ ] Two references provided
[ ] Eligibility & Connected Persons Declaration completed
[ ] Proof of identity provided for DBS/Ofsted

B. Compliance Requirements (prior to election)

[ ] Ofsted Director registration
[ ] Enhanced DBS check completed
[ ] Eligibility confirmed under Charity Commission rules

C. Induction Activities

[ ] Meetings completed (Chair/Link Governance Trustee, Finance Manager)
[ ] Governance documents read
[ ] Declaration of Interests completed

D. Actions for Springboard (Chair of Trustees to be informed when all completed; this must be prior to election)

Governance & Registration

[ ] Check Disqualified Directors Register
[ ] Check Register of Removed Trustees
[ ] Register Trustee with Companies House
[ ] Add Trustee to Charity Commission Register
[ ] Update internal governance records

E. Actions for Board of Trustees

Systems & Access
[ ] Provide access to Board papers via Google Drive
[ ] Share annual meeting schedule
[ ] Add Trustee to relevant email groups

Induction Support
[ ] Meet with the Chair of Trustees/Link Governance Trustee
[ ] Provide key policies
[ ] Provide Strategic Business Plan and Annual Report
[ ] Introduce to sub-committee (if applicable)
[ ] Confirm link role
[ ] Offer training opportunities

SPRINGBOARD OPPORTUNITY GROUP

Trustee Principles	*Selflessness* *Integrity* *Objectivity* *Accountability* *Openness* *Honesty* *Leadership*

Trustee Appointment Flowchart: Expression of Interest to Election

Step 1: Expression of Interest

↓

Step 2: Application Form + Skills Audit + References

↓

Step 3: Eligibility + Connected Persons Declaration

↓

Step 4: Start Compliance Checks
Enhanced DBS + Ofsted EY2 Director Registration

↓

Step 5: Ofsted Approval + DBS Clearance RECEIVED

↓

Step 6: Springboard Registers Trustee
Companies House (within 14 days) + Charity Commission

↓

Step 7: Board Meeting + Election of Trustee
Companies House (within 14 days) + Charity Commission

↓

Step 8: Induction Period (2 months)
Read key documents, access systems, meetings with key people

↓

Step 9: Completion of Induction Checklist
Read key documents, access systems, meetings with key people

↓

Step10: Trustee Fully Active in Role

Trustee Code of Conduct

As a Trustee of Springboard Opportunity Group, you play a vital role in supporting our mission and ensuring that the charity is safe, effective and well-governed. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all Trustees and helps us maintain a positive, respectful and transparent culture.

1. Acting in the Best Interests of Springboard

Trustees agree to:

- Put the interests of Springboard Opportunity Group above any personal or professional interests.
- Make decisions that support the wellbeing and development of the children and families we serve.
- Use their skills and experience to advance the charity's purpose.

2. Upholding the Nolan Principles of Public Life

Trustees are expected to demonstrate the following principles in all aspects of their role:

- **Selflessness**: Acting solely in the charity's best interests
- **Integrity**: Avoiding obligations or influence that could compromise judgement
- **Objectivity**: Making decisions impartially and fairly
- **Accountability**: Being answerable for decisions and actions
- **Openness**: Being transparent wherever possible
- **Honesty**: Being truthful in all matters
- **Leadership**: Modelling these principles through behaviour

3. Responsibilities as a Trustee

Trustees commit to:

- Ensuring the charity complies with its governing document and legal obligations
- Safeguarding the charity's assets, reputation and beneficiaries
- Contributing actively to strategic discussions and decision-making
- Preparing for and attending meetings wherever possible
- Respecting collective decisions once made
- Supporting the Chair, CEO and staff team appropriately
- Maintaining clear boundaries between governance and operational management

4. Conflicts of Interest

Trustees must:

- Declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest
- Declare any Connected Persons who may give rise to a conflict
- Withdraw from discussions or decisions where a conflict exists

This ensures decisions remain objective and transparent.

5. Confidentiality

Trustees will have access to sensitive information about children, families, staff and the charity's operations. Trustees agree to:

- Treat all information shared in meetings as confidential
- Use information only for the purposes of fulfilling their Trustee role
- Not disclose information externally unless authorised

This protects the charity and the people we support.

6. Conduct at Meetings

Trustees agree to:

- Listen respectfully to others
- Allow space for all voices to be heard
- Challenge constructively and accept challenge in return
- Keep discussion focused on strategic matters
- Avoid dominating or disrupting discussion

A positive meeting culture supports good governance.

7. Working with Staff and Volunteers

Trustees recognise that:

- The Board sets strategy and oversees governance
- The CEO and staff team manage day-to-day operations

Trustees will maintain appropriate boundaries, offering support and challenge without stepping into operational management.

8. Commitment to Learning

Trustees agree to:

- Participate in induction and training
- Keep their knowledge up to date
- Seek advice when needed

Good governance relies on continuous learning.

9. Upholding This Code

By joining the Board, Trustees agree to follow this Code of Conduct. Any concerns about conduct will be addressed by the Chair in a fair, supportive and proportionate manner.