

Chair



Centre for ADHD & Autism Support

2nd Floor, Television House, 269 Field End Road, Eastcote, HA4 9XA

Registered Charity Number 1193799

Role Description

Role Title: Chair of the Board of Trustees

Commitment: The successful candidate will initially join as Vice Chair, working alongside our longstanding Chair, whose term ends in November 2026.

Appointment to Chair will be mutually agreed with the Board, on or before that date

Trustee Terms are ordinarily for 4 years, and Trustees can be appointed for a 2nd 4-year term if desired. Chairs will serve within their normal Trustee Terms.

About CAAS

CAAS provides an Autism and ADHD Support Service across the 8 boroughs of NW London from our base in Eastcote and offices around London. We offer information, advice, and support to ADHD/Autistic people, their families, and professionals, with the aim of improving quality of life and building neurodivergent-aware communities.

We are incredibly fortunate to be in a sound financial position, with income of around £1.6m per year, and around 40 staff. We offer 70 different services, including personalised one2one support, social groups, psycho-education courses and specialist workshops. We also have a thriving training and awareness raising service, providing ADHD and autism training to statutory services, schools and voluntary sector organisations across NW London.

We've grown steadily over the last 25 years, and last year we supported more than 9,700 people, across 18,000 attendances. Looking ahead, our priority is making sure everyone who could benefit from CAAS knows we're here for them. We're investing in outreach, inclusivity, and accessibility - breaking down barriers so our support reaches every corner of our community.

In this role, you will be leading the established (and lovely) Board of Trustees, who provide operational governance for the charity, determine its strategic direction, and help shape a positive, sustainable future for CAAS and the communities we serve.

Most importantly, you will be contributing towards our impact intention, which is that ADHD and autistic individuals, and those who support them, have improved mental wellbeing, are better able to engage with home-life, school, or work, and need less support from NHS/statutory services. Ultimately, we want to help people to thrive.

Support • Educate • Empower

Centre for ADHD and Autism Support, 2nd Floor TV house, 269 Field End Road, Eastcote, HA4 9XA, Charity No. 1193799
Call 0208 429 1552. Email enquiries@adhdandautism.org. Visit adhdandautism.org

About The Role

Charities like CAAS can only exist with the help of Trustees, and we are hugely grateful to everyone that volunteers to take on this role. The Chair plays a unique role in guiding the Board, leading strategic discussions, supporting and challenging the CEO, and fostering a culture of inclusion, transparency, and good governance.

We work hard to ensure the Chair is supported effectively to discharge their responsibilities and feel a sense of pride – and of enjoyment – in leading the Board of CAAS.

As Chair, you will work closely with fellow Trustees to ensure the Board fulfils its responsibilities, and with the CEO to provide support, oversight, and thought partnership. This is a rewarding opportunity to help shape the future of a thriving, impactful organisation, and to champion the rights and wellbeing of neurodivergent people across NW London.

We know that every Chair is unique, and bring their own range of skills, experience, and perspectives to support the organisation's leadership and development. We are therefore looking for someone who has a passion for what CAAS is trying to achieve and a willingness to commit to attending our meetings and leading our discussions. You don't need to have chaired a Board before. We're looking for someone who can lead with integrity, listen well, and help us make thoughtful, inclusive decisions.

Having a Diverse Board

CAAS recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equity and challenges discrimination. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds, and we are particularly seeking applications from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities, from disadvantage socio-economic backgrounds, and from people who identify as being autistic or having ADHD.

We have recently completed a skills audit of the current Trustee board, and as well as looking to increase the diversity of our board, we would also particularly welcome applications from those who identify as having particular skills in the areas of HR & legal, digital & IT, statutory services provision, or marketing & communications.

Please don't be put off applying if you don't have one of these skills or attributes or are worried that you don't meet all of the points noted in this role description. Every trustee who joins will receive a comprehensive induction and training package, and be supported by current trustees, so there will be lots of opportunity to learn 'on the job' for the right candidate.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Governance

- Provide leadership to the Board, ensuring effective governance and strategic oversight.
- Chair Board meetings effectively, ensuring all voices are heard and decisions are made collectively and transparently.

Role Description – Chair

- Ensure the Board operates within its Terms of Reference and complies with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Support the development and implementation of the charity's strategic plan and monitor progress against agreed objectives.
- Take urgent decisions between Board meetings where necessary, in line with delegated authority and in consultation with trustees
- Ensure the Board regularly reviews its own performance and effectiveness
- Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the charity's governance and culture.

Support and Mentoring

- Act as a mentor and support to the CEO, providing guidance and challenge as appropriate.
- Facilitate strong working relationships between trustees and the senior leadership team.
- Act as Vice Chair during the transition period, supporting succession planning, continuity, and building relationships with the Board and CEO.

Representation and Advocacy

- Represent CAAS externally, where appropriate, including at events, meetings, and with key stakeholders.
- Act as an ambassador for the charity's mission, values, and strategic priorities.

Board Development

- Lead on trustee recruitment, induction, and development, ensuring the Board has the necessary skills and diversity.
- Conduct annual Board performance reviews and support continuous improvement in governance practices.

Board Participation

- Attend and actively participate in quarterly Board meetings and relevant sub-committees or working groups.
- Prepare for meetings by reading papers and contributing to discussions.
- Participate in Board development activities, including training and annual reviews.
- Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the charity's governance and culture.

Person Specification

Essential

- Demonstrable leadership experience, ideally within a governance or strategic context.
- Passion for CAAS work
- Capacity to attend meetings, and willingness to devote the time and commitment required.
- Strong understanding of charity governance and the role of trustees.
- Commitment to CAAS's mission, values, and strategic pillars.
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills.
- Ability to build consensus and manage differing views constructively.

Role Description – Chair

Desirable

- Lived or professional experience of ADHD or autism.
- Being from a disadvantaged socio-economic background, or from a minority ethnic background
- Previous experience as a trustee or Chair.
- Understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion principles and their application in governance.

Commitment

The Board meets 8 times a year, mostly by video call, and Board meetings are usually around 2hrs in length. Once a year we meet for a longer session, in person, to consider strategic items in more depth, plus the AGM for 2 hours one per year virtually.

All Trustees will be asked to read a few papers in advance of the meeting, which could take 1-2hrs each meeting.

All Trustees are also encouraged to engage with the organisation between meetings, for example attending events, meeting staff, or supporting specific initiatives.

The Chair will need to take on additional responsibility for preparing for Board meetings, in conjunction with the CEO, supporting through transition periods and strategic planning cycles, or representing CAAS at external events. As such, the total time commitment for a Chair is around 1 day per month.

Exclusions

Please note that Section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 disqualifies anyone who:

- has been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is spent
- is an undischarged bankrupt
- has previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the court or the Charity Commissioners
- is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986

It is an offence to act as a charity trustee while disqualified unless the Charity Commission has given a waiver under section 72(4) of the Charities Act 1993.

CAAS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS disclosure.

Role Description – Chair