



Candidate Information Pack

Chair of the Governing Board

November 2025



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Welcome from Chief Executive Officer, Lorraine Davidson

Promoting Choice, Diversity and Excellence in Scottish Education

As the Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) I am proud to represent a diverse and progressive school sector. Our members include fee paying schools and specialist schools. Our specialist schools support some of the most vulnerable pupils within the Scottish education system. What all our schools have in common is a desire to help all learners reach their potential and to make a valuable contribution to the wider education community in Scotland. A range of innovative projects are being undertaken by our schools.

These include:

- Offering courses and online teaching to thousands of pupils who do not attend independent schools
- The development of publicly available resources for parents
- Advice on University applications.

But the sector is keen to listen to others in the education community to find out what more we can do to benefit as many learners in Scotland as possible. The independent sector does not have all the answers, but it is motivated to use the expertise and resources it has to greater effect whether that is through our knowledge of supporting children with complex needs or homework mentoring programmes.

SCIS is looking for a Chair who is experienced at building consensus, and who can help the organisation realise its ambitions to play a greater role in supporting all learners and to make our education community a strong and collaborative one. I'm sure you'll agree that is a prize worth dedicating time and energy to delivering.

If you have a passion for education and for young people, and you will bring the gravitas and leadership skills required for this challenging and rewarding role, we would be delighted to hear from you. I look forward to your application.

L. Davidson

**Lorraine Davidson,
Chief Executive Officer**

Who We Are

Making a significant contribution to education in Scotland, the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) is an educational charity representing and promoting the interests of more than 70 independent schools across the country. The sector provides a setting and educational offer to suit the needs of almost 30,000 pupils from a range of backgrounds and 82 countries, offering modern facilities and the latest in technology. Our schools are at the forefront of the digital revolution, ensuring pupils are equipped for the modern workplace.

SCIS promotes choice, diversity and excellence in our schools and across education. At its heart, the independent sector has always opened its doors to children from all backgrounds.

Our schools are taking a pro-active approach to ensure bursary support is directed towards those in genuine need of support. Currently, there are 3,000 pupils in this position benefiting from the opportunity to attend an independent day or boarding school. Our primary role is promoting advancing and supporting education within Scotland, in partnership with others where appropriate, as well as keeping independent schools abreast of educational developments, training opportunities and legislative change.

We take on multiple roles representing the sector by providing authoritative research and intelligence about the sector to policymakers, making an active contribution to curriculum development, the training of teachers and the development of teaching skills. For example, many teachers in independent senior schools work as markers for the SQA public exam system. In these and other ways, the independent school sector in Scotland shares its experience and expertise, to advance education across the country. This is underpinned by our representation on a range of public bodies and groups, including the SQA Advisory Board, Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

Our Aims

- To advance education via curriculum development and the training of teachers
- To communicate and negotiate with the Scottish Parliament, the Government, and public and private bodies on behalf of the independent sector
- To contribute positively to the Scottish education system and work in partnership with state schools for the benefit of all pupils
- To advise member schools and their governing bodies on educational developments and legislation affecting independent schools (e.g. education, taxation, welfare, health and safety).

The Role

The role of SCIS Chair is to be an ambassador for the independent school sector in Scotland. The Chair will be expected to be visible and highly credible with SCIS members, and their main stakeholders.

In this role you will work closely with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to ensure the smooth operation and proper governance of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS). You will take the lead with the CEO in setting the strategy and identifying the key objectives for the organisation to ensure it continues to play a leading role in the education sector in Scotland.

In this role you will:

- Chair the full SCIS Board meetings plus any additional meetings that may be arranged from time to time
- Ensure proper and efficient conduct of Board Meetings and work with the CEO in setting agendas
- Chair the online AGM
- Take the lead with the CEO on the recruitment of Board Members and their induction by finding trustees/directors most suitable to help SCIS achieve its objectives, ensure diversity and provide for Chair succession
- Have overall responsibility for governance alongside the CEO
- Work with the CEO on giving direction to SCIS policy making, encourage discussion on setting strategy and the setting of priorities
- Communicate regularly with the CEO to discuss strategy, staff performance and wellbeing
- Attend the SCIS Annual Conference.

About you:

- Have experience of being a board director, possibly as a Chair
- Possess clear values and be values-driven
- Be a compelling and clear communicator
- Have a positive approach and outlook
- Have a genuine interest and passion in connecting
- Have wide educational experience
- Have an understanding of Scottish politics and culture
- Have an understanding of the breadth of membership, and the meaning of independence in the context of SCIS

- Be available to meet/communicate with the CEO as and when required
- As SCIS is a charity, having proven governance within the charitable sector would be advantageous.

Background:

- The successful applicant is unlikely to be a current school bursar, head teacher or serving school governor as our trustees/directors have to be drawn from these backgrounds
- Could have been a school governor or education leader in the past.

Open to all: SCIS is committed to equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Person Specification

Interpersonal and Communication

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both verbal and written
- Capable of developing trusting, collaborative and effective relationships across an organisation
- Experienced at building consensus and can help the organisation realise its ambitions to play a greater role in supporting learners from all backgrounds
- A passion for education and improving the life chances of young people.

Strategic thinking

- The ability to identify opportunities and ensure the organisation benefits all its member schools
- Demonstrable experience of capturing key information and using it effectively to influence change both in education and the wider political landscape, both at Holyrood and Westminster
- Skilled at working in evolving situations, and able to think laterally to help SCIS achieve its objectives.

Flexibility and Eligibility

- Able and willing to work flexibly, including some evening and occasional weekend work
- Able and willing to travel for work within Scotland, with access to transport for getting to areas not served by bus/rail.

How to Apply

To apply for this post, please send your tailored CV and a cover letter, no longer than two pages, by email to joanne.devey@scis.org.uk

Scottish Council of Independent Schools is committed to equality of opportunity and to no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, age, sex, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, transgender status, pregnancy or maternity.

Should you require any modifications or wish to speak with a member of our team to discuss any particular circumstances, please email the above address.

Timescales

Closing date for applications: 31 December 2025.

Interviews

The recruitment panel has scheduled Friday 16 January 2026 for in person interviews.