



Erskine Stewart
Melville

*Chair of the Board
of Governors*

Erskine Stewart Melville, Edinburgh



Lead one of Scotland's most ambitious and forward-looking schools

Erskine Stewart Melville is seeking an exceptional individual to serve as the next Chair of the Board of Governors.

Following a period of significant development bringing together two historic Edinburgh institutions into a single, co-educational School for children aged 3-18, we are entering an exciting next phase; deepening educational excellence, strengthening a shared identity and culture, and building a sustainable and ambitious future.

This is a rare opportunity to shape the direction of one of the UK's leading independent schools, and to make a lasting contribution to the lives of almost **2,500 young people, and their wider communities.**



About *Erskine Stewart Melville*

Erskine Stewart Melville is a vibrant and ambitious school community, formed through the coming together of ESMS Junior School, Stewart's Melville College and The Mary Erskine School.

- Almost **2,500 pupils**, from early years through to S6
- A large and talented staff across teaching and support functions
- A strong academic record combined with exceptional co-curricular breadth
- Deep roots in Edinburgh, alongside a modern and outward-looking perspective

The School is characterised by:

- A commitment to **academic excellence and intellectual curiosity**
- A strong emphasis on **pastoral care and wellbeing**
- An inclusive ethos with growing impact in **widening access and partnership work**
- A belief in developing **character, leadership and community responsibility**



A School with Momentum...

We are building strongly on our heritage, with a clear focus on:

- Strengthening a distinctive and compelling all-through educational offering
- Continuing to enhance our academic, co-curricular and pastoral provision
- Expanding opportunities through partnership, innovation and outreach
- Ensuring long-term sustainability and impact as a leading educational charity

The next Chair will help guide and accelerate this momentum, supporting the School in realising their full potential.



The Role of Chair

The Chair will lead the Board of Governors in fulfilling its responsibilities as trustees of the charity-setting strategy, ensuring strong governance, and supporting the continued success of the School.

Working in close partnership with the Principal and Executive Leadership team, the Chair will:

- Shape and steward the long-term strategic direction
- Provide **support, challenge and wise counsel** to the Principal
- Ensure the Board operates with **clarity, effectiveness and cohesion**
- Oversee financial **sustainability and responsible stewardship**
- Champion the Schools' **values and reputation**

The relationship between Chair and Principal will be central, defined by trust, alignment and a shared commitment to excellence.

Governance

The Board comprises individuals with a wide range of professional expertise, reflecting the scale and ambition of the organisation.

The Chair will:

- Lead governance during a period of opportunity and growth
- Chair regular full Board meetings and a structured committee framework
- Have oversight of finance, estates, education, safeguarding and risk
- Work closely with the executive leadership team on key priorities
- Ensure decisions are strategic and support long-term success

Person Specification

Leadership and Governance

- Experience of senior leadership in a **complex organisation**
- A proven ability to **chair boards or committees effectively**
- The confidence to provide **constructive support** and **challenge**

Strategic Insight

- Strong experience in **strategy development and delivery**
- Ability to **balance ambition** with sound judgement

Financial and Analytical Capability

- Understanding of **financial oversight and risk**
- Ability to **interpret complex information** and **guide decision-making**

Communication and Influence

- Outstanding **interpersonal skills**
- Ability to **build trust** across diverse stakeholders

Values and Commitment

- A **deep commitment** to education and young people
- Alignment with the School's **ethos and charitable purpose**
- **Integrity, sound judgement** and **resilience**

Commitment

The role is voluntary but highly impactful.

- Regular Board and committee meetings throughout the year
- Ongoing engagement with the Principal and fellow Governors
- Visibility within the School community

The time commitment is significant but compatible with other responsibilities.



A Final *Word*

We are at a pivotal moment in our School's history, and we are seeking an ambitious and forward-thinking individual to lead us into the next chapter. If you share our vision and drive, we would be delighted to hear from you.



Application Process

Candidates are invited to submit:

If you are excited by this opportunity, please contact Principal@erskinestewartmelville.com and we will arrange a conversation with The Principal and a representative of the Governors to take things forward

Final Panel Meeting

Final candidates will meet with a panel of Governors and a member of the Merchant Company Education Board. This will include:

- A strategic discussion on the future direction of the School
- Opportunity to demonstrate judgement, challenge and partnership style
- Time to meet key members of the Board and leadership team

They will be required to:

- Provide two referees (taken up later in the process)
- Undergo appropriate safeguarding checks in line with trustee responsibilities



Appointment

The preferred candidate will be recommended to the Board for formal approval.

Following appointment, a structured induction programme will be provided, including:

- Governance and charity responsibilities
- Introduction to the School community
- Support to establish an effective Chair-Principal partnership



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Thank you

0131 311 1111 Principal@erskinestewartmelville.com

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