



Community Inclusive Trust

Trust Board

Role Description and Code of Conduct for Local School Board “Governors”

This document sets out the expectations of and commitment required from those who sit on a Local School Board (LSB) as “governors” in order for the LSB to properly carry out its work within the governance framework of the Trust.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, their Articles of Association and agreed Scheme of Delegation.

The Local School Board has the following functions:

Community

To ensure that the school is at the heart of its community and maximises the potential of what the community has to offer its pupils.

Concerns

To ensure that transparent mechanisms are in place for staff, pupils and parents to express their concerns and, when appropriate, to act as an independent local point of contact for signposting people to the right channels for dealing with their issues. There will always be at least one LSB member on appeal panels.

Celebration

To ensure that celebrating staff, pupils and parents remain a priority for the school. To lead on initiatives to promote and celebrate achievements within the school or more widely.

Communication

To work with staff, pupils and parents to make sure that the school effectively communicates to all stakeholders, so that everyone feels part of school life and has the opportunity to access information and events. This include the presentation of the school website and social media channels

Confidence

To undertake on behalf of the Trust Board a range of independent assurance-related work to provide the Board with the confidence it needs linked to compliance, best practice and effective school improvement.

Culture

To ensure that the school has a positive culture which explicitly reflects the Trust's values and supports student achievement, lifelong learning for all members of its community and strong safeguarding practice.

Code of Conduct

Ethical working

- We work the seven principles of public life (Annex 1) and the framework for ethical leadership in education (Annex 2).

As individuals on the Board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the LSB and its strategic role within the governance framework of the Trust.
- We understand how the role of the LSB differs from and works with others including the Head Teacher and the Trust Board.
- We accept that we have no authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the LSB when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the LSB. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the LSB meetings.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools both within and outside the Trust.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school and other Trust schools. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the LSB and the Trust Board, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the school's executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation, and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.

- We agree to adhere to the school’s rules and policies and the procedures of the Trust Board as set out by the relevant Trust level documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy, even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school and the Trust as a whole.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the LSB.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as an LSB “member” involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the LSB and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including sitting on panels as required.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school at least twice a year, with all visits arranged in advance with the senior executive leader and undertaken within the framework established by the LSB .
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as an LSB “governor” .
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the local school board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of “governor” and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school’s website.
- We accept that, in the interests of transparency, information relating to LSB “members” will be collected and logged on the DfE’s national database of governors (Getting Information About Schools).
- We have read the “Seven Principles of Public Life” (see Annex 1) and will ensure that these principles underpin our conduct as an LSB “governor”.
- We have read “The Framework for Ethical Leadership” (see Annex 2) and will endeavour to use this to support ethical decision making as an LSB “governor”.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other LSB “members”, the Clerk to the LSB and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see Annex 1) or which may place pupils at risk.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the executive leaders, staff and parents and the Trust.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding LSB business arise outside an LSB meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any LSB vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the LSB’s business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school’s website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the LSB.

Ceasing to be a governor/Trustee/academy committee member

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after an LSB “member” leaves office.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe this Code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the LSB will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this Code, a member of the Trust Board will investigate.

Adopted by the Community Inclusive Trust Board on [date].

Annex 1

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

We will make our decisions in the public interest.

Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our families, or our friends.

Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Our decisions will be taken impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

We are comfortable submitting ourselves to external scrutiny.

Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

We will take our decisions in an open and transparent manner.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful.

We will be truthful in our actions, decisions and reporting.

Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

We will demonstrate the highest standards of public life in our individual and corporate behaviour.

The Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

The Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, these aren't just fine words, they are meant to support a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.

1. Selflessness - School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
2. Integrity - School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
3. Objectivity - School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.
4. Accountability - School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness - School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty - School and college leaders should be truthful.
7. Leadership - School and college leaders should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles, and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

- a. **Trust:** *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*
We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.
- b. **Wisdom:** *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*
We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.
- c. **Kindness:** *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper*
We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.
- d. **Justice:** *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*
We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.
- e. **Service:** *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*
We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.
- f. **Courage:** *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people*
We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.
- g. **Optimism:** *leaders are positive and encouraging*
Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.