



The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust

Local Governors' Code of Conduct Policy

Status and review cycle;	Non-statutory and cycle flexible
Responsible group:	The Trust
Implementation date:	September 2016
Next Review Date:	September 2021

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The role of the local governing body is set out in the academy scheme of delegation.

The Diocese of Gloucester Academy Trust recognises and values the effort taken by members of the Trust's local governing bodies who contribute towards the governance of our academies. We encourage your contribution and acknowledge the time, expertise and commitment you offer. As a result, we want to make sure that your time spent as part of the local governing body is productive and enjoyable.

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for all DGAT academies but the day to day governance of each academy is delegated to a local governing body through scheme of delegation. The scheme of delegation for each of our Trust academies sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of the local governing body.

Academy governing bodies are responsible for working with the academy leaders to ensure that high quality outcomes are delivered and the academy is a safe and welcoming place for all. Together with the Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Principal, who is/are responsible for day-to-day management, they oversee the academy and have responsibilities in holding the academy accountable for its work.

Key roles of local governors

- To ensure the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Trust is in place within the school
- To hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its children, and the performance management of all staff
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent

Local governors also carry out a number of other important duties, which include:

- Working in collaboration with the Trust to determine how the school's budget is spent
- Hearing appeals and grievances
- Forming policy other than that directed by the Trust
- Setting standards for children's behaviour and discipline
- Making sure school buildings are welcoming and safe
- Monitoring the school's aims and policies

This code of conduct outlines what is expected from members of the local governing body and is based upon the 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. The Seven Principles of Public Life are:

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

- **Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Signed by:

_____ Chair of the board of trustees Date: _____

As local governors we agree to the following:

Role and Responsibilities

- We will ensure we develop and maintain a collective understanding of the purpose of the board and the role of the lead executive/headteacher.
- We will maintain responsibility for monitoring the implementation of, and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures of the academy as delegated by the Trust board.
- The board of trustees will be responsible for the development of policies across the trust and will seek to engage with local governors when developing and reviewing trust-wide policies.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually or on behalf of the Trust, except when the local governing body has been given delegated authority to do so.
- We will only speak on behalf of the local governing body or Trust when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents and will not speak against majority decisions or discussions outside the local governing body or Trust board meetings.
- We will respect the role of the board of trustees and its statutory responsibilities for the Trust and its academies, never acting in a way that could undermine such arrangements.
- We will respect executive and senior leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Trust, never acting in a way that could undermine such arrangements.
- We will adhere to the Trust's and the academy's rules and policies, and the procedures of the Trust and local governing body, in accordance with the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in a governing role, we will ensure our comments reflect current Trust policy even if they might be different to personal views.

As members of the local governing body we will:

- Always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school/group of schools. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- Consider how our decisions may affect the community, including the wider trust community.
- Actively and professionally support and challenge the leadership of the academy in line with delegated functions.
- Follow the procedures established by the Trust board.
- Only make decisions delegated to the local governing body by the board of trustees and as determined by the Trust's scheme of delegation.

- We understand our duty to will act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer. In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust board.
- We will actively support and challenge the lead executive/headteacher.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a local governor member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the local governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance and provide a reason why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school/s, with all visits arranged in advance with the lead executive/headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- 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 government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing 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.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to local governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools (GIAS)).

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 governors/trustees/academy committee members and the clerk to the governing board.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the lead executive/headteacher, staff and parents, the trust, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

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 school/Trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.

- The details of any vote will not be revealed under any circumstances – the board of trustees is entitled to be informed of the details of all votes and decisions made by the local governing body.
- We will continue to apply the requirements for confidentiality after a governor leaves office.

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 local governing body or board of trustee's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of interest or 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 or individual, even if elected to the governing board.
- Conflicts of interest will be managed in line with the Trust's Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If a member of the local governing body breaches this code of conduct, the issue will be raised with the chair of the board of trustees, who will make arrangements for the concern to be investigated by the chair of the local governing body.
- In the event that it is believed the chair of the local governing body has breached this code of conduct, the chair of the board of trustees will arrange for a trustee to undertake the investigation.
- The board of trustees will only suspend or remove a local governor from their post as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- If the need arises to suspend a local governor, the board of trustees will ensure a fair and objective process by implementing the following procedure:
 - A resolution to remove a governor from office will be included on an agenda of a meeting of the board of trustees and circulated to all members of the trust board.
 - A meeting of the trust board will be held and the resolution to remove the local governor from office will be fully explained.
 - Trustees will give due and careful consideration to the reasons given to remove the governor from office.
 - The local governor, whom it has been proposed to remove from the local governing body, will be given the opportunity to make a statement in response to the resolution to remove them from office.
 - Trustees will consider the proposal to remove the local governor and make a decision without unnecessary delay.
 - The local governor will be informed of the board of trustees' decision in writing within five working days.

