



Governance – Code of Conduct

FOR ATTENTION OF: All Trustees and Governors
DATE: September 2023

Introduction

At OAK we ask all Trustees and Governors to read and sign the relevant Code of Conduct at the start of each academic year. A copy of these Codes are provided below.

We believe in demonstrating irreproachable governance in our schools. It is the cornerstone of how ethos to supporting our young people and is synonymous with our ethics.

We recognise the huge time commitment that all involved in governance at OAK give, and we remain ever thankful for the willingness of so many people to give of their time, effort and expertise to support our work in schools. We do not take that for granted, but we also set high standards, and our Code of Conduct is part of holding ourselves to account.

Jane Doughty
Chair of Trustees

Code of conduct for Trustees

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Trust and individual Trustees and Governors will operate.

The Trust accepts the following principles and procedures:

General

- We have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the Trust operates.
- We have responsibility for maintaining UK GDPR compliance across the Trust.
- We accept that all Trustees have equal status, and although appointed by Members and/or Trustees, our overriding concern will be the welfare of the schools and the Trust as a whole.
- We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so.
- We have to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all the legal expectations as, or on behalf of the employer.
- We will consider carefully, how our decisions may affect the Trust and schools.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a director involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.

- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust, attend regularly and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- We will get to know the Trust well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Trust activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development.
- We acknowledge that non-attendance at meetings for six months without prior consent may lead to disqualification from the role of trustee.
- We acknowledge that mandatory training needs to be completed on appointment and each year thereafter, within four weeks of the first meeting of the new academic year. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the role of trustee.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the CEO, Trust Executive Team and other relevant agencies and the community.

Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board or its delegated agents.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Trust Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting

the Trust we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.

- Our visits to the Trust or schools will be undertaken within the framework established by the Trust and Local Governing Bodies; and agreed with the CEO and/or Principals/Heads of School.
- In discharging our duties, we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our Trust and its schools.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the Board, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the Trust or school arises outside of the Board.
- I understand that all Trustees have a duty not to discuss any item of Trustees' business outside the meeting.
- I understand that if a director is found in breach of his or her duty of confidentiality to the Trust, school, staff or to the pupils, the Board can decide to remove the Director.

Additionally, the Trust requires Trustees to observe the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life (Appendix 1)

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Code of conduct for LGB Members

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which LGBs operate.

The LGB accepts the following principles and procedures:

General

- We are responsible for promoting standards in school, providing the supportive scrutiny which supports high standards in school.
- We will work with the Trust Board to help to deliver against OAK Academies Trust vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- We have responsibility for maintaining UK GDPR compliance across the School.
- We will provide support to the Principal and other senior leaders in their work to improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, contributing to the school's self-evaluation and understand it's strengths and weaknesses.
- We will engage with key stakeholders, promoting the academy's standing within the community.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that a role as an LGB member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Academy, attending meetings regularly and accepting our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.

- We will get to know the Academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Academy activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development.
- We acknowledge that non-attendance at meetings for six months without prior consent may lead to disqualification from the role of governor.
- We acknowledge that mandatory training needs to be completed on appointment and each year thereafter, within four weeks of the first meeting of the new academic year. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the role of governor.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and other relevant agencies and the community.

Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board or its delegated agents.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Trust or academy when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Trust or academy we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and

reputation of the Trust and member schools

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the academy arises outside of the LGB.
- I understand that all LGB members have a duty not to discuss any item of confidential business outside the meeting.
- I understand that if an LGB member is found in breach of his or her duty of confidentiality or other duty to the Trust, school, staff or to the pupils, the Board can decide to remove the member.

Additionally, the Trust requires Governors to observe the Nolan Principles for conduct in public life (Appendix 1).

Signed:

Name:

Date:

The Seven Principles of Public Life

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. 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.