

“Together in Achievement”



GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

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Governors' Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Code of Conduct sets out the common understanding of broad principles by which the Local Governing Bodies of academies within the Aspire Multi-Academy Trust and individual governors will operate, in order to effectively carry out their work within the school and community.

Every governor will agree to accept the Code of Conduct so that they clearly understand what is expected of them:

- A.** when becoming a governor first – so that they understand what they are taking on
and
- B.** when working as part of the Local Governing Body (LGB) – so that they are able to practice good governance.

The Aspire MAT Board has therefore approved the following principles and procedures for adoption and implementation by all LGBs of academies in the Aspire Multi-Academy Trust (the MAT).

Core strategic roles of the LGB

- a. Establishing the strategic direction by:
 - Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
 - Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
 - Meeting statutory duties
- b. Ensuring accountability by:
 - Appointing the headteacher in conjunction with the MAT
 - Monitoring progress towards targets
 - Performance managing the headteacher
 - Engaging with stakeholders
 - Contributing to school self-evaluation
- c. Ensuring financial probity by:
 - Setting the budget
 - Monitoring spending against the budget
 - Ensuring value for money is obtained
 - Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

DfE requirements for academy websites

The following information about each governor/associate member will be published on the academy's website:

- Full name, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable) and who appointed them (in accordance with the LGB's instrument of government)
- Business and financial interests
- Governance roles in other educational institutions
- Material interests arising from relationships between governors or relationships between governors and school staff (including spouses, partners and close relatives)
- Attendance record at LGB and committee meetings over the last academic year, and
- Details of the structure and responsibilities of the LGB and its committees.

Principles and procedures

The LGB accepts the following principles and procedures:

a. Roles and responsibilities

- We recognise that we are appointed with the approval of the MAT Board to which we are accountable as both individual governors and corporately as members of the academy's LGB.
- We understand the purpose of the LGB and the role of the headteacher.
- We accept that we have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the academy operates. We also have a responsibility for monitoring educational and staff performance.
- We recognise that the headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the academy and the implementation of the curriculum.
- We accept that all governors have equal status, and although having different skills and/or appointed by different bodies (e.g. parents, staff, church), our overriding concern will be the welfare of the academy as a whole
- We that accept we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the MAT Board, through its Scheme of Delegation, has given us authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the LGB when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the LGB or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the LGB meeting, including by the use of any social media.
- We have a duty to 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.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- Our visits to the school will be undertaken within the framework established by the LGB and agreed with the headteacher
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school.
- We recognise the authority of the chair of governors, or the vice chair when appropriate, to act on behalf of the LGB when actions or decisions have to be taken in the interests of the academy.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy we will follow the procedures established by the MAT.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher.

b. Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the LGB, 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 why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in its activities.
- We will visit the academy, with all visits arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the LGB and agreed with the headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our full development, and names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the LGB, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the academy's website.

c. 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.
- 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 governors 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 headteacher, staff and parents, the MAT, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

d. Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside school, including by the use of any social media.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside an LGB meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any LGB vote.

e. 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 LGBs 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 academy's website.
- We will declare any conflict of interest at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the LGB.

Breach of this code of conduct

- LGBs should ensure that prior to appointment, all new governors agree to the expectations for behaviour and conduct, as set out in this code of conduct, and that the governor understands the circumstances in which the LGB and MAT may suspend or remove a governor. The LGB will provide support to a new governor via good induction, training and mentoring and any potential issues will be addressed promptly.
- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate. The LGB and MAT will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. The responsibility for the suspension/ removal of a governor can only be undertaken by the MAT Board or the appointing body in accordance with the regulations and cannot be delegated. The chair will seek advice from the MAT CEO or Governor Services should a governor be considered for suspension/removal.
- Serious breaches the Code of Conduct may result in the removal or suspension of the governor involved – see Appendix 1.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

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.

Undertaking

As a member of the Local Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children, staff and the reputation of the academy at heart. I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the academy, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos. I will never say or do anything publicly (including by the use of any social media), which would embarrass the academy, the Local Governing Body, the Headteacher or staff.

I understand that I must declare business interests and this information will be published on the academy's website along with my name, details of my term of office and responsibilities as a governor. Failure to reveal this information may be judged as bringing the Local Governing Body into disrepute and could lead to my suspension or removal as a governor.

Signed

Printed name

Date

APPENDIX 1

Sanctions in the event of serious breaches of codes

This option will only be considered as a last resort, for having understood and agreed a code of conduct it is assumed that governors will not knowingly breach it.

1. Removal of governors

Appointed parent and co-opted governors can be removed by the MAT Board.

In these cases the governor allegedly in serious breach will be notified in writing of the reasons for proposing their removal and given the opportunity to make a statement in response to the allegations before a vote is taken on the resolution to remove them. The Board's decision to remove any appointed parent or co-opted governor in this way will be confirmed after a second meeting not less than 14 days after the first meeting.

Elected parents or staff governors may be removed in this way after consultation with the electing body.

Foundation governors (where appropriate) may be removed by the Board after consultation with, and approval from, the Diocesan Board of Education.

2. Suspension of governors

The MAT Board can, either independently or on a request from the LGB, can decide to suspend a governor for six months if they are:

- paid to work at the school and subject to disciplinary proceedings
- subject to any court or tribunal the outcome of which may mean they would be disqualified under Schedule 6
- the governor has acted in a way that is against the academy's ethos or has brought or is likely to bring the academy, LGB or his/her office into disrepute
- the governor is in breach of their duty of confidentiality to the academy staff or to the pupils.

In these cases the MAT Board will vote to suspend a governor and record this in the minutes.

A motion to suspend will be specified as an agenda item and at least seven days' notice given to all members of the MAT Board.

The proposer of a suspension will give the reasons and the governor being proposed for suspension will have the opportunity to make a statement in response.

The governor being proposed for suspension must withdraw from the meeting to allow discussion and voting to take place. The maximum period of time for a suspension is 6 months. The suspension period begins from the date of the meeting making the decision to suspend.

Suspended governors will receive papers during the period of suspension and will not be disqualified for non-attendance.