



MAST

Local Governing Body

Code of Conduct 2025 - 2026

Code of Conduct

Approved and adopted by Trust Board:

Date: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

Code of Conduct for MAST Local Governing Body's 2025 - 2026

This Code sets out the expectations and commitment required from local governors for the local governing body to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community.

All members of the local governing body must retain their own signed individual master copy of the trust agreed Code; this will evidence that they have read and understood it; all local governing body members are expected to abide by, and will be held accountable to, the agreed document.

Failure by any individual local governor to sign the Code of Conduct will be counted as a breach of the Code.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the Governance Handbook, relevant law and scheme of delegation.

School Name:

The trust board has adopted the following Code of Conduct for all its local governing body's to follow

Purpose of the local governing board

The purpose of governance is to provide confident and strong strategic leadership which leads to robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The trust board is the key strategic decision-making body in the trust setting the strategic framework and ensuring it meets all its statutory duties. The trust board delegates strategic oversight and assurance to the local governing body's. High quality effective and ethical governance is key to success in our school and for the future of our pupils. Ensuring the best possible outcomes is at the heart of a local governing bodys strategic role; every child has the right to reach their full potential.

The local governing body has the following core strategic functions:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction by:

- Ensuring the school drives towards the trust vision, values, and objectives
- agreeing the school improvement strategy as appropriate including its priorities and targets
- being connected with, and answerable to, the communities we serve, particularly parents/carers
- meeting statutory duties as delegated within the scheme of delegation

Holding headteachers to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff by:

- supporting the trust board with the appointment of the lead headteacher
- supporting the CEO with the performance management of the headteacher
- robust holding to account for improving pupil and staff performance by asking the right questions
- workload consideration
- rigorous analysis of data
- understanding the curriculum offer, its intent, implementation, and impact
- monitoring and evaluating progress towards targets
- contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing the targeted specialist funding of the school and making sure its money is well spent by:

- monitoring spending against the budget
- ensuring value for money is obtained, with the money being well spent in the best interests and outcomes of pupils

Collectively as a local governing body we undertake the following:

- **Organisational purpose** - our board is clear about the purpose of the trust and school and ensures these are being delivered effectively and sustainably.
- **Leadership** - our school/s is headed by an effective local governing body (LGB) board that provides strategic leadership in line with the school strategic aims, values and culture including the values and virtues to preserve the religious character of the school and a commitment to fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. Our LGB bases our effectiveness on the six key features of effective governance: strategic leadership, accountability; people with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity; structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities; compliance with statutory and contractual requirement; and evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.
- **Integrity** - our LGB acts with integrity, adopting values and creating a culture which helps achieve the trust and school/s charitable purpose. Our LGB is aware of the importance of the

public and stakeholder confidence in our school and local governors undertake their duties, accordingly, abiding by the Seven Principles of Public Life (see appendix 1 - Nolan principles) including avoiding placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, local governors must declare and resolve openly **any perceived conflict of interest and relationships**, with our LGB, managing any risk appropriately.

- **Decision making, risk and control** - our LGB makes sure that any delegated decision-making processes follow our required statutory procedures, which act solely in the interest of pupils, are informed, timely, impartial and fair, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias, and that effective delegation, control and risk assessment, and appropriate management systems are set up and monitored. Further, our LGB assesses the risks attached to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare by abiding and role modelling the school and trust culture to encourage pupils to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- **LGB effectiveness** - our LGB works as an effective collective team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions as informed by the competency framework for governance.
- **Diversity** - our LGB's approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership and provides sufficient diversity of perspectives to enable robust decision making.
- **Openness and accountability** - our LGB leads the school in being transparent and accountable. Our LGB and school are open in its working- particularly to ensure transparency of any delegated decision-making.

As individuals on the local governing body, we agree the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the LGB, the skillset required to perform our core roles, and any individual delegated functions, and the role of the lead executive/headteacher.
- We accept and abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (see appendix 1).
- We accept collective responsibility for all delegated decisions made by the LGB or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the LGB meeting.
- When making any delegated decisions we will act objectively, impartially and fairly. We will use the best evidence, and without discrimination or bias, be objective when exercising judgement and analysis solely for the good of the pupils.
- Upon communicating formally within our governing role, we will ensure any comments made reflect the organisation policy even if they differ from our personal views.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- We will encourage open transparent governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how any delegated 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 trust and school/s. Our actions within the school and the wider local community will reflect this.
- We will promote and demonstrate tolerance of and respect for those of different faiths and beliefs, races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- We will demonstrate a professional attitude in all our undertakings as a local governor.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the policies and procedures established by the trust board, acting without discrimination or bias.

- We will actively support the headteacher and senior leadership team but challenge their expectations and respectfully hold them to account for school performance.
- We understand, accept, and respect the differences between the trust board and LGB role and the staff day to day operational and management roles, avoiding actions that may undermine these arrangements.
- We understand, will adhere to, and respect the differences between the strategic local governor role and any other which we may undertake within the school as a parent, professional or volunteer.
- We agree to adhere to the trust rules and the trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law, including complying within the required timeframe to apply for an enhanced DBS check and Section 128 check, and any subsequent checks thereafter as part of the ongoing trust safeguarding procedures.
- We agree to abide by the trust e-safety protocols for social media and when communicating in a private capacity will strive to uphold the reputation of the trust and school. We will always use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither our personal or professional reputation, nor the trust or school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- We agree to use our governance portal and school email addresses for all governance communication both within and outside the school and trust. We recognise this will protect the school and trust from any potential breach of data protection.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a local 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.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings, including any held virtually, and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will attend meetings being fully prepared, having read all papers in advance, being ready to make a positive contribution.
- 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 headteacher, undertaken in accordance and abiding with the monitoring visit policy and schedule as established annually by the trust board with the expectation of visiting the school at least 3 times a year.
- We will demonstrate commitment to our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training to develop the knowledge and skills required to effectively perform our core and individual delegated functions and keep them up to date. We will commit to undertaking training as directed by the trust board and CEO as well as our LGB collective decision.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the LGB, attendance records, relevant business, familial and pecuniary interests, category of local governor and the body responsible for appointing or electing us will be published on the school's website until 12 months after our service has ended.
- We will abide by the trust board agreed staff code of conduct, regarding behaviours and dress code when visiting the school.
- In the interest of transparency, we will commit to declaring at meetings and updating our pecuniary, familial and business interests as soon as possible.
- In the interest of transparency, we accept that information relating to local governor will be collected and logged, until 12 months after our service has ended within governance statutory published requirements.

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 local governors and trustees, the governance professional to the LGB and all school staff.
- We will always support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at and between meetings.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other LGB 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 CEO and headteacher, staff and parents, the trust, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the wider community.

Social Media

- We will abide by the requirements of the trust's Acceptable Use policy with regards to social media.

Confidentiality

- We will ensure we abide by the protocols of our virtual meeting policy and processes to ensure our attendance enables the confidential conditions required.
- 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.
- We will continue to recognise and honour the commitments made in this Code when visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e., as a parent or carer, volunteer)
- We will always exercise the greatest prudence when discussions regarding school and trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any LGB vote.
- We will ensure all confidential documentation including any held electronically, is securely stored, and disposed of appropriately in accordance with the trust data protection policy and procedure and being mindful of the GDPR legislation requirements.
- We will use school email accounts for all email communication in our governance role, for communications both within and outside of the LGB and Trust.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any familial, pecuniary, relationship or other business interest (including those pertaining to people we are related to, connected to or friendly with, and those governing in other schools) in the Register of Business Interests and also declare these at all relevant meetings. If any familial, pecuniary, business or relationship conflict perceived or real arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time and accept the LGB's decision on managing the conflict. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school and trust'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 or appointed by them, to the LGB.

We recognise this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this Code, local governors will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the school, its pupils, and their role in holding public office.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe this Code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair for investigation and reporting back to the LGB and trust board.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this Code, the issue should be raised with the vice chair and CEO for investigation.
- In certain circumstances, e.g., tainting, the CEO will undertake the investigation, then report back to the LGB and trust board.
- The trust board will only use removal (ensuring statutory guidance, procedures and regulations are followed) as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. Removal will be used where serious misconduct has taken place.

Annual Local Governor Declaration

I declare that I am not disqualified from serving as a school local governor in that I do not breach any of the circumstances in which a local governor is disqualified from standing for election, being appointed or continuing in office:

Grounds for disqualification fall into three broad categories:

- general grounds
- grounds that apply to particular categories of local governor; and
- grounds that arise because of particular failings or actions on the part of the local governor.

General grounds

A local governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of election or appointment.

Grounds that apply to particular categories of local governor

A person is disqualified from being a parent governor if they are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours (i.e., for more than one-third of the hours of a full-time equivalent) in any consecutive twelve-month period at the time of election or appointment.

Grounds that arise because of particular failings or actions on the part of the local governor

A person is considered for removal by the trust board from being a local governor of a particular school if they have failed to attend the meetings of the LGB of that school for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend, without the consent of the LGB. This does not apply to the headteacher or to foundation local governors appointed by virtue of their office.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a local governor of a school if, in summary, that person:

- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order; an interim bankruptcy restrictions order; debt relief restrictions order; an interim debt relief restrictions order; or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced
- is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; a disqualification order under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; or an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order)
- has been removed from the office of trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- is disqualified from working with children or from registering for child-minding or providing day care

- is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a governor or since becoming a governor
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has received a prison sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20 years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a local governor
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- has been convicted and fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school or educational premises during the five years ending with the date immediately preceding appointment/election or since appointment or election as a local governor
- refuses a request by the governance professional to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a criminal records certificate.

Anyone proposed or serving as a local governor who is disqualified for one of these reasons must notify the governance professional to the local governing board and trust board.

I have agreed to an application being made for an enhanced criminal record certificate, section 128 check and any other checks deemed necessary.

I agree to abide by the above Code of Conduct and know of no reason from the above disqualification criteria for not continuing to hold the office of local governor.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Failure by any individual local governor to sign this Code of Conduct will be counted as a breach of the Code.

Criminal record certificates

Academy/multi academy trusts

The trust board **must** make sure the following are carried out on members, trustees and local governors with delegated responsibilities within **14 days of appointment or election**:

- Apply for an enhanced criminal records certificate
- A section 128 direction check
- Checks to confirm their right to work in the UK
- Any other checks deemed necessary where the individual has lived or worked outside the UK

Appendix 1

The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

(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.