



## **Members, Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct – 2021\_22**

This code sets out the expectations on, and commitment required, from Members, Trustees and Governors, in order for the Members, Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law, the Trust Articles of Association, agreed Scheme of Delegation, the Trust's Governors Handbook and Conflict of Interest Policy.

Members of the Trust are similar to the 'shareholders' in a company and are responsible for strategic oversight. They also appoint Trustees and must attend an Annual General Meeting.

The Board of Trustees (Governing Board) and Local Governing Bodies (LGB) have the following strategic functions:

***(The points shown in bold italics apply to the Local Governing Body)***

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school(s)/Trust;
- ***agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets;***
- ***meeting statutory duties.***

Ensuring accountability, by:

- appointing the lead executive/Headteacher (where delegated);
- performance managing the lead executive/Headteacher (where delegated);
- ***monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets;***
- ***engaging with stakeholders;***
- ***contributing to school self-evaluation.***

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- setting the budget;
- monitoring spending against the budget;
- ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained;
- ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.

**As individual Members, Trustees or Governors we agree to the following:**

### **Role & Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the Members, Board of Trustees, the Local Governing Body / Bodies and the role of the Executive Leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal 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

Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.

- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Members, Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body meetings.
- 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 governance and will act appropriately.
- 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 school/group of 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 Board of Trustees.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the 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 Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body, as set out by the relevant governing 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 organisation.

## **Commitment**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor/Trustee/Academy Committee Member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Board of Trustees or 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 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 Senior Executive Leader/Headteacher, and undertaken within the framework established by the Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e., as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor/trustee/academy committee member.
- 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 Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body, 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 Governors/Trustees/Academy Committee Members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (GIAS – Get information about schools).

### **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, the Clerk to the Board of Trustees or Clerk to the Local Governing Body, 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 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 executive leaders, 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 Members, Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Members, Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body 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 Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body's business in the Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will deal with the conflict in line with our Conflict of Interest Policy and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests will be published on the school/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 a Member or elected to the Board of Trustees or Local Governing Body.

### **Social Media**

With regard to social media, we will:

- uphold the reputation of the Trust/school at all times;
- maintain a professional presence online and carefully consider how we interact with the Trust/school community;
- review privacy settings regularly to make sure we are happy with the information about us that is publicly available;

- report any incidents of harassment we experience, or see towards Members/Trustees/Governors to the Chair of Board of Trustees/appropriate Chair of Local Governing Body and the Headteacher.

We will not:

- accept friend requests from pupils, and not join any private parent groups associated with the school;
- disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection principles;
- make comments online about any Members, Board of Trustees, Local Governing Body or school community;
- post any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media that may bring us or the school into disrepute.

### **Ceasing to be a governor/trustee/academy committee member**

We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor/trustee/academy committee 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 (Chair of Board of Trustees, in the case of a Trustee, and Chair of the applicable Local Governing Body, in the case of a Governor); they 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, another Trustee or Local Governing Body member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

### **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.

**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.

**Objectivity** – Holders of public office must act and take decisions 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.

**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 doing so.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful.

**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.

**The Marches Academy Trust adopted this Code of Practice on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.** Trustees and Governors will sign the Code at the first full Local Governing Body meeting of each school year.

**Undertaking:**

**As a Member, Trustee or Governor, I will always have the wellbeing of the children and the reputation of the Trust/school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the Trust/school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the schools, the Local Governing Body, the Headteachers, or the Marches Academy Trust.**

**I confirm I have no new criminal records (including convictions, bindovers, cautions, reprimands, and judgements) or any pending since my last DBS check was carried out or accepted by the Trust. If this is not the case, I have disclosed full details to the Trust.**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	