



THE
NEW GUILD
TRUST

Code of Conduct Trustees

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors, trustees and individual school academy committee members in order for every level of governance to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community.

The code of conduct is adapted from the NGA (National Governance Association) model 2021, and is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The code is also aligned with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour in schools and trusts.

By agreeing to this code of conduct as governors and trustees we agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

Selflessness

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

We will be truthful.

Leadership

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law for academies found in the academies financial handbook (ESFA), the articles of association and scheme of delegation.

The Board of Trustees has the following 3 strategic functions:

1. Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction by:
 - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the Trust.
 - Agreeing the Trust school improvement strategy with priorities and targets.
 - Meeting statutory duties.
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff by:
 - Appointing the Chief Executive Accounting officer.
 - Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets.
 - Performance managing the CEO and individual school Headteachers.
 - Engaging with stakeholders.
 - Contributing to school self-evaluation.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent by:
 - Approving 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.

The New Guild Trust recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard by:
 - Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results.
 - Reaching out to the school's wider community and inviting them to play their part.
 - Using the views of stakeholders to shape the school's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures.

As Individuals on the Trust Board We Agree to the Following:

Fulfil our Role & Responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. **For those working within a multi academy trust: We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our [Scheme of Delegation](#).*
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school/s.
4. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school/s.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school/s and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. **We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.*

Demonstrate Our Commitment to the Role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school/s and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
8. We accept that in the interests of open governance, 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.
9. In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get Information About Schools).

Build and Maintain Relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. *We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect Confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare Conflicts of Interest and be Transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school/trust website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information About Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

****New statement added in 2021***

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Adopted by: NGT Trust Board on [date]

Signed: [Chair of Board]

The **NGT Trust Board** agree that this Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the Full Governing Board.
