



Code of Conduct for Prince Albert Community Trust's Governing Community, Boards and Sub-committees

2024

Version created - September 2024
Approved by Trust Board – September 2024

1. Introduction

The following Code of Conduct applies to individuals at all levels of Trust/academy governance and promotes effective working practices that are mutually supportive and respectful of roles & responsibilities.

This document should be viewed in conjunction with the Trust's [Governance Charter](#), which provides further details about the Trust's philosophy, vision and ethical operating principles that we aspire to and are relatable to every employee, trustee and partner as well as to our pupils and their families.

2. General

Academy Trustees and Local Academy Committee Representatives (school governors) make an invaluable contribution to the lives of our children. Being a member of PACT's governance community involves significant amounts of time and energy. All those elected or appointed to Governing Boards should fulfil their duties in line with the law, the [Academy Trust Governance Code](#), [DfE's Academy Trust Governance Guidance](#) and enact all activity in complement to the Seven Principles of Public Life (Appendix A).

Where a prospective school governor has been or is already a governor of another school, the Chair should speak to the Chair of the other Governing Board to discuss both the skills of the individual and, where appropriate, their capacity to commit sufficient time to serve effectively on another Governing Board.

PACT monitor and account for the circumstances within which it is genuinely appropriate for any individual to be a governor of more than one school, and give careful consideration as to whether it is in the interests of their school(s) to re-appoint governors and office holders for successive terms. The advice of the National Governance Association (NGA) is that all governors should be restricted to two terms of office (eight years) at the same school and that the Chair should hold office for no more than six years at the same school.

3. Standards of conduct, behaviour and practice

As a Trustee or governor we will play our part in setting an ethos of professionalism and high expectations of the Trust/school governance role. We will:

3.1) Abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are included as an appendix to this Code of Conduct.

3.2) Support the elimination of discrimination and advance equality of opportunity

We recognise that Birmingham is one of the UK's super-diverse cities, made up of a wide range of cultural, faith and other communities. The City benefits from positive community cohesion within this diversity. We publish an [equalities statement](#) and are mindful of our

responsibilities under equality legislation, including recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion.

3.3) Ensure that the Trust/school follows all relevant policies and procedures to ensure that young people in need of protection are effectively safeguarded

We will carry out our functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, have regard to statutory guidance, ensure that we read [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), undertake training and ensure this is regularly updated.

3.4) Remain focused on the strategic vision and public benefit statement of PACT:

‘enabling every child to success in school and in life’

Trustees activity aligns to three core strategic functions (Academy Trust Handbook 1.10):

- **Strategic leadership of the academy trust:** the board defines the trust vision for high quality and inclusive education in line with its charitable objects
 - o It establishes and fosters the trust’s culture and sets and champions the trust strategy including determining what, if any, governance functions are delegated to the local tier

- **Accountability and assurance:** the board has robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the academy trust, including:
 - o The provision of education
 - o Pupil welfare
 - o Overseeing and ensuring appropriate use of funding
 - o Effective financial performance
 - o Keeping their estate safe and well-maintained

- **Engagement:** the board has strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders
 - o The board involves parents, schools and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement

School governors belonging to the Local Academy Committee are responsible for:

- **Knowing, understanding and challenging pupils’ overall progress and attainment.** This means being clear about where the attainment gaps are, what provisions are in place to close those gaps and the impact of those provisions;

- **Monitoring child protection and welfare in the school** including attendance, behaviour, suspensions and permanent exclusions;

- **Hearing any appeals as part of the complaints process and sitting on discipline panels** in relation to suspensions and permanent exclusions;
- **Evaluating their own effectiveness** through the committee action plan, annual impact assessments, skills audits and governance professional facilitated self-evaluation.

3.5) **Conduct the Board/Committee's business in compliance with governance legislation**

3.6) **Attend meetings and fully participate in the work of the Governing Board**

Accepting the office of Trustee or school governor at PACT involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy. Individuals will make full efforts to attend all meetings (send apologies for any absence if unable to attend), get to know the Trust/school well and respond to opportunities to involve themselves in school activities.

3.7) **Demonstrate a professional attitude**

By attending meetings regularly, being punctual and reading all relevant paperwork in advance. Arriving at meetings and visits prepared to make an informed and positive contribution. Observe visit/meeting protocols, including those agreed by the Board/Committee where meetings are held virtually.

3.8) **Act in accordance to the PACT behaviours**

Adopt the PACT behaviours, which describe how we should interact day to day with our colleagues, parents, children, communities and stakeholders and be reflect the Trust's values (**Passion, Aspiration, Collaboration and Trust**):

- **Build positive relationships** – I work to develop positive relationship with children, staff and parents
- **Actively collaborative** – I actively collaborate with others to get the best outcomes for our children
- **Show respect** – I always show respect, including through the little things
- **Embrace innovation** – I embrace innovation and look for creative ways to do things
- **Give support** – I will offer my support and encouragement to staff and pupils and take a genuine interest and appreciate their contribution
- **Bring passion** – I will bring passion and energy to give my best every day
- **Reflective** – committed to evaluating and improving my own performance, and keeping my promises

3.9) **Work as members of a team and promote effective working relationships**

We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher (and/or Executive Leader as appropriate), staff, parents/carers, other relevant agencies and the community. We will always be mindful of our responsibilities to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust/school. Our actions within the Trust/school and the local community will reflect this. In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Trust/school, we will follow the procedures established by the Trustees or governing committee.

We will ensure that we will only speak or act on behalf of the whole governing committee if we have been given authority to do so.

3.10) Express views courteously and be respectful in all communication

This includes being mindful of upholding the Trust/school's reputation when communicating in a private capacity and avoiding, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role as a Trustee/governor.

We will ensure we use social media responsibly and will not submit postings on networking sites which clearly bring the Trust/school or governing board into disrepute.

3.11) Respect lines of demarcation and the role of the Headteacher and/or Executive Leader (as appropriate) to manage the Trust/school

As Trustees/governors we accept that our role is strategic and focused on the core functions referred to in 3.4 of this code. We will not involve ourselves in the day-to-day management of the Trust/school or attempt to micro-manage senior leaders. Any visits that we undertake at any of the Trust's schools or premises will be arranged in advance with relevant staff, be agreed by the Headteacher (and/ or Executive Leader as appropriate) and be within the framework established by the Governing Board.

3.12) Acknowledge majority decisions, except those that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life, the core functions of the Governing Board or may fail to ensure the safety of pupils

We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or which may place pupils at risk.

3.13) Respect the duty of confidentiality to the Trust/school

We will maintain complete confidentiality particularly when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils and families.

We understand that Governing board approved minutes are the formal, public record of meetings which are made available for inspection upon request.

We will ensure that the Governing Board complies with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Should we leave the Governing Board we will continue to uphold the Board's confidentiality and ensure that paperwork relating to the school/academy or Governing Board is returned or disposed of appropriately.

3.14) Undertake induction training as a minimum and any other training that is required to be effective in the role

We will request, and attend, induction training as soon as is reasonably practicable following appointment as new Trustees/governors. We will continually evaluate our performance as a Governing Board and as individuals and undertake any training that is required to enable us to fulfil our statutory duties and be effective in our role.

3.15) Declare conflicts of interest

We recognise that a conflict of interest can arise when an individual's personal or family interests conflict with those of the Trust/school. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the Governing Board, and/or the Trust/school in general for recording in the register of business interests including the following:

- links with individuals, businesses, contractors etc;
- directorships, shareholdings or other appointments where the school may purchase goods or services from or who are directly employed by the school, and
- interests of related persons such as parent, spouse, co-habitee, child or business partners where influence could be exerted by that person over a governor or a member of staff.

We will withdraw, for an appropriate length of time, from any meeting, discussion or vote of the Governing Board when our Trustee/governor colleagues agree that there is a conflict of interest.

3.16) Be transparent

The Governing Board will comply with the constitution as outlined in the Trust's [Articles of Association](#), and in doing so will demonstrate transparency by publishing on the school/academy website, up-to-date details of the overall governance arrangements in place and the declared business interests register.

We will comply with the requirement to provide details about people involved in governance at our school, via the Department for Education's website "*Get information about schools*" and keep the information up to date.

We are committed to publishing an Annual Statement setting out the key issues that have been faced and addressed by the Governing Board over the last year, including an assessment of the impact of the Governing Board on the school/academy.

4. Breach of this Code of Conduct

If, following investigation, it is deemed that this Code of Conduct has been breached by a member of our Governing Board and the matter cannot be resolved in a constructive way, then the Governing Board will consider their suspension or, in some circumstances, removal from the Governing Board.

Adopted by [SCHOOL/GOVERNING BOARD/COMMITTEE NAME] on [DATE]

Signed [CHAIR / INDIVIDUAL]

For clarification or any queries please contact: clerk@the-pact.co.uk

Appendix A

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.