

Code of Conduct for Trust Members, Trustees, Committee and Local Advisory Board members

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all those involved in the governance arrangements of the Eden Academy Trust (the Trust) to follow.

By creating this code of conduct, we aim to ensure that our Members, Trustees, Committee and Local Advisory Board (LAB) members carry out their roles with honesty and integrity, and help us to ensure that the:

- Trust and its various schools is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect
- Achievement and well-being of our pupils is at the heart of what we do
- Governance expectations are met, and
- The reputation of the Trust and its schools are maintained.

The code is based on [the Governance Handbook](#). It should be read alongside our constitutional documents, the Articles of Association and Governance Charter, including the scheme of delegation.

All Members, Trustees and LAB/Committee members will be required to review and commit to the Code of Conduct on an annual basis in the autumn term (or on appointment for new appointees).

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in action being taken, as set out in section 12.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, Members, Trustees, Committee and LAB members will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the Trust/school and its pupils.

2. The 7 Nolan principles of public life

As Members, Trustees, Committee and LAB members, we will follow these [principles](#) set out by the government at all times. They apply to anyone who holds a public office:

- **Selflessness** – we will act in the public interest
- **Integrity** – we will not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare any conflict of interests
- **Objectivity** – we will act and take decisions impartially, fairly, and on merit. We will use the best evidence and avoid discrimination or bias

- **Accountability** – we understand that we are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions. To make sure of this, we will be scrutinised where necessary
- **Openness** – we will act and take decisions openly and transparently. We will not withhold information from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so
- **Honesty** – we will be truthful
- **Leadership** – we will actively promote and support the above principles and will challenge poor behaviour wherever it happens

3. Our responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of Members, Trustees and Committee/LAB members are set out in the Governance Charter.

To do these roles effectively, as individuals we will:

- Understand and respect the distinction between the role and responsibilities of the Members, the Board and those of the Cabinet and School Leaders.
- Set and maintain an ethos of high expectations for everyone in the school community, including in the conduct and professionalism of the Board and its LABs/committees.
- Preserve and develop the character of the Trust and of its individual schools
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Operate and make decisions in the best interests of pupils, informed by the views and needs of our key stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, the local community, the local authorities and ESFA)
- Follow the Trust's and schools' policies and procedures, and the procedures of the Board as set out in relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and the Trust's constitutional documents
- Take responsibility for our self-evaluation, regularly reviewing our Board, Committees and LABs performance, constitution and skillset.
- Take part in any training or development required to fill any gaps in the skills we need for effective governance.
- Understand that where responsibility has been delegated, the Board remains accountable and that important decisions relating to core functions will be made by the full Board.

- Comply with relevant guidance and legislation and our funding agreement that sets out how we must manage our Trust's money and procure goods and services.
- Act with integrity and transparency when making financial decisions and understand that our financial management and decision-making will be scrutinised and audited.
- Declare all gifts worth more than £50 and record them on the gifts and hospitality register. We will not accept bribes.
- We will work to actively identify and manage risks to the Trust and its schools.

4. Working with others

We will:

- Support and strengthen school leadership by providing constructive challenge to leaders and holding them to account (Trustees only).
- Respect the role of the Cabinet and School Leaders and avoid routine involvement in operational matters.
- Respect each other's views.
- Work together as a board to develop effective relationships with stakeholders.
- Engage meaningfully with the communities we serve and understand that we are answerable to these stakeholders.
- Follow the [Equality Act 2010](#), and apply the principles of fairness and equality in everything we do.

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5. Commitment to governance

We:

- Will attend all meetings where possible. Where we cannot attend, we will explain our valid reason and give suitable notice.
- Understand and accept the time and workload commitments of the role.
- Understand that work should be shared and that all Members, Trustees, Committee and LAB members are expected to take an active role.
- Will [prepare ahead of meetings](#) to ensure we make informed contributions.

- Will, as LAB members, participate in regular pre-arranged school visits in accordance with the LAB's agreed school engagement arrangements.
- Will attend any training or development activity needed to ensure the Board, Committee or LAB has a wide range of skills and expertise.

6. Openness and transparency

Conflicts of interest

To ensure our Board and delegated committees takes impartial decisions and our committees/LABs offer advice without bias, we will:

- Publish an up-to-date register of business and pecuniary interests of all Members, Trustees, Committee and LAB members including associate members.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting and withdraw from the meeting for the relevant item of business and not vote on the matter.

Publishing information

To ensure our governance arrangements are transparent and open to the communities we serve, we will make certain information publicly available.

We accept that the following [information will be published on the academy website](#) to ensure transparency in accordance with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2019:

The Trust must also publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a readily accessible format, including:

- The structure and remit of the Members, Board of Trustees and its Committees (the trust's scheme of delegation for governance functions), and the full names of the chair of each
- For each member serving at any point over the past 12 months their;
 - full names
 - date of appointment
 - date they stepped down (where applicable), and
 - relevant business and pecuniary interests including governance roles in other educational institutions
- For each Trustee serving at any point over the past 12 months, their;

- full names
 - date of appointment
 - term of office
 - date they stepped down (where applicable)
 - the appointing body
 - email address
 - relevant business and pecuniary interests including governance roles in other educational institutions, and
 - attendance records at Board and Committee meetings over the last academic year.
- For LAB members, their names and relevant business and pecuniary interests will be published on the school website.
 - We accept that the information about Members, Trustees and Committee members will be published on [Get information about schools](#) and/or Trust/school website(s) as necessary/appropriate.
 - We accept that the information about Trustees will be published on [Companies House](#).
 - We accept that the approved Board minutes and any agenda and papers considered at a meeting will be made available to any interested person, with minutes published on the Trust's website. Approved LAB minutes will also be published on the individual schools' website. Confidential minutes and papers will not be made publicly available.

7. Confidentiality

We are sometimes privy to sensitive information in the course of our role. We will [observe confidentiality](#) when discussing this information, and will not publicly disclose:

- Information about sensitive matters.
- Information about named individuals such as staff, pupils and their parents.
- Details of individual Members, Trustees, Committee or LAB members' contributions in meetings or how they may have voted.

Confidential information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority.

- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others.
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for.

Our commitment to confidentiality does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

We will continue to observe confidentiality after we have left office.

Breaches of confidentiality

In the event of a breach of confidentiality, we will inform the relevant Chair as soon as possible who will investigate the matter further.

Trustees, Committee and LAB members understand that if they breach confidentiality, they may be suspended or removed from their position.

8. Data protection

We will follow the Trust's [IT and online safety](#), [ICT Usage](#) and [data protection](#) policies when using, storing, sharing and disposing of personal data.

Our commitment to data protection does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

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Personal data breaches

We will inform the Trust's data protection officer immediately if we believe that there has been a personal data breach.

9. Social media

We will abide by any requirements set out in the Trust/School's social media policy including:

- Upholding the reputation of the Trust and schools.
- Maintaining a professional presence online and carefully consider how we interact with the school community.
- Reviewing privacy settings regularly to make sure we are happy with the information about us that is publicly available.
- Reporting any incidents of harassment, we experience, or see towards Members, Trustees, Committee or LAB members to the Chair of the Board and to the Chair of the LAB and Headteacher (for LAB members).

We will **not**:

- Accept friend requests from pupils. Any parent with a child at an Eden school who is involved in the governance arrangements (Member, Trustee, LAB or Committee member) will exercise due caution if receiving friend requests or invitations to join any private parent groups associated with the Trust or one of its schools. No other Member, Trustee, LAB or Committee member will accept such invitations or join such groups.
- Disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection principles.
- Make comments online about any Member, Trustee, Committee or LAB member, any staff member of pupil or their parents, or member of any other school community.
- Post [any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media](#) that may bring The Trust or one of its schools into disrepute.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This code of conduct will be reviewed and ratified annually by the Board of Trustees, upon significant changes to the law, or as deemed appropriate.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links with our other policies including:

- [Safeguarding](#)
- [Gifts and hospitality](#)
- [IT and online safety](#)
- [ICT Usage](#)
- [Data protection](#)
- [Scheme of delegation](#)

12. Failure to comply with the code of conduct

Where it is suspected that a Member, Trustee, Committee or LAB member has breached the code of conduct, or there is cause for concern about an individual's conduct, the following procedures will apply.

Stage 1

The designated Chair (see table below) will investigate and, if appropriate, hold a meeting with the Member, Trustee or LAB/Committee member to discuss the issue. The outcome of any such meeting may include reminding the individual of expectations based on this code of conduct and support, mentoring or training.

Stage 2

If the breach is considered sufficiently serious or there is no improvement in the individual's behaviour, then the matter will be escalated to the Chair of Trustees or Chair of Members as appropriate. The outcome of any such escalation may include:

- A further resetting of expectations;
- Additional support, mentoring or training;
- A further review under stage 1 or stage 2 as appropriate after an agreed timeframe;
- A mutual decision to stand down from their position; or
- Removal of the individual from their position.

The Chair of Trustees will decide on any removal of a LAB or committee member, in conjunction with the relevant LAB or Committee Chair, CEO and Headteacher/Head of School (for LAB members). Details for the removal of Member or Trustees are set out in the Articles of Association.

Designated Chairs

Individual	Designated Chair	Escalation or where issue relates to the designated Chair
Member	Chair of the Members	Chair of Trustees ¹
Trustee	Chair of Trustees	Chair of the Members
Committee member	Committee Chair	Chair of Trustees
LAB member	LAB Chair	Chair of Trustees

¹ Only where the issue relates to the Chair of the Members

13. Declaration

I have reviewed and agree to abide by the Eden Academy Trust's Code of Conduct for Academy Members, Trustees, Committee and Local Advisory Board members. I declare I will carry out my role(s) with honesty and integrity, and help to ensure that the:

- Trust and its various schools are an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect;
- Achievement and well-being of our pupils is at the heart of what we do;
- Governance expectations are met; and
- Reputation of the Trust/school is maintained.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

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Note: This declaration will be made online via the Trust's Governance Compliance Portal