



Code of Conduct for
Trust Members, Trustees and
Local Academy Committee Governors

2022/23

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Document Control

Document version numbering will follow the following format. Whole numbers for approved versions, eg 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 etc. Decimals will be used to represent the current working draft version, eg 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc. For example, when writing a procedural document for the first time the initial draft will be version 0.1.

The table below provides details of the changes made to this document, to inform those reviewing and approving the document.

Document Edition	Section	Details of Change
1	All	New policy to meet best practice for Trusts
2	All	Updated in line with legislation and NGA guidance

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This code aims to set out and maintain the expectations and commitment required from Members, Trustees and Local Academy Committee (LAC) Governors in order for the governance to be properly effective within the Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust').

By creating this code of conduct, we aim to ensure that our Members, Trustees and Governors carry out their roles with honesty and integrity and help us to ensure that:

- The Trust and all schools within the Trust provide an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect
- The achievement and wellbeing of all our pupils is at the very heart of what we do
- Governance expectations are met, and
- The reputation of the Trust and its schools is maintained.

This code is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and aligns with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) (see Appendix 1), which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour. This code is also based on the [Governance Handbook](#) and should be read alongside our constitutional documents, [Articles of Association](#) and Scheme of Delegation.

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

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in action being taken, as set out in section 13.

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

2. The Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life

As Members, Trustees and LAC governors, we will abide by the 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 an 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 above principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

***We will apply the highest standards and will:**

- Act within our powers
- Promote the success of the Trust

- Exercise independent judgement
- Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Not accept benefits from third parties
- Declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

We will focus on our core governance functions:

- Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

3. Our roles and responsibilities

3.1 Members

Members have the following core functions:

Members are the custodians of the Trust's Objects, which are set out in the Articles of Association, to advance for the public benefit, education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice, to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a school that offers a broad and balanced curriculum.

3.2 Trust Board

The Trust Board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the Trust
- Agreeing the Trust improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the CEO
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the CEO
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

3.3 Local Academy Committees (LACs)

The Local Academy Committees have the following core roles:

Monitoring the effectiveness of school policies, the ethos of the school and the behaviour of the pupils.

Scrutinising performance data at a local level, ensuring that all groups of students are making good progress and attainment.

Evaluating the implementation of the school improvement plans and seeking evidence of impact.

Communicating with key stakeholders, including trustees, staff, pupils and parents to ensure that the local voice is heard by the trust board.

Challenging and supporting the Trust Board to ensure that the Leading Edge Academies Partnership achieves its vision and abides by its values.

Five Islands Academy LAC

As a Church school, the key roles of the Local Academy Committee at Five Islands Academy (in addition to those listed above), are to:

- Develop and uphold the Christian distinctiveness of the school and promote high standards.
- Ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with the founding Trust Deed.
- Challenge and support the school and off-island schools by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating progress and ensuring good financial management of the school/off-island schools.
- Ensure accountability of the executive leaders/headteacher and executive principal (primary and secondary) and staff to the Trust Board/LAC by ensuring they are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate.

3.4 Core values

As individuals we will ensure that the core values of the Trust remain at the centre of how we behave and approach our role:

Excellence

Evolution

Equity

As individuals we agree to:

Fulfil our roles and responsibilities. To do this effectively, we will:

- Accept that our role is strategic and will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
- Understand and respect the distinction between the role and responsibilities of the Members, the Board, LAC and CEO.
- Set and maintain an ethos of high expectations for everyone in the Trust community, including the conduct and professionalism of the Board and its committees.
- Preserve and develop the character of the Trust and its individual schools.
- Uphold 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 decision in the best interests of pupils, informed by the views and needs of our key stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, the local community, local authorities and ESFA).
- Take responsibility for our self-evaluation, regularly reviewing our Board, committees and the performance, constitution and skillset of the LACs.
- 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 £25 and record them on the gifts and hospitality register. We will not accept bribes.
- Work to actively identify and manage risks to the Trust and its schools.
- ***Trustees:** Will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust and the Academies within it. Our actions within the local community will reflect this.
- Strive to uphold the Trust's reputation in our private communications (including social media) to ensure the Trust or school is not brought into disrepute.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Trust or school, we will follow the procedures established and agreed.
- ***Have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.**
- ***LAC governors:** Will act as the local ambassadors for our Trust.

4. Working with others

In building and maintaining relationships, we will:

- Develop effective working relationships with the CEO, executive leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local communities.
- ***LAC governors:** Champion the voices of our school community and stakeholders.
- ***LAC governors:** Establish effective working relationships with Trustees.
- ***Trustees:** Engage with and be accountable to those governing at local level.
- Express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- Work to create an inclusive environment where the contributions of each board member are valued equally.
- Answer queries from others in relation to delegated functions and take account of any concerns expressed and acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- Support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.
- Actively support and challenge the CEO and school leadership.

5. Commitment to the Role

We:

- Acknowledge that accepting office in governance involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- Will each involve ourselves actively in the work of governance and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including serving on committees or working groups where required.
- Will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- Will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- Will get to know the Trust and its schools well and welcome opportunities to be involved in school activities.
- Will visit the school(s) and when doing so will make arrangements with the relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
- Will, when visiting a school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development and will undertake relevant training.
- Will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

6. Openness and transparency

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest we have in connection with the board's business and these will be recorded in the [register of business interests](#).
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- 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.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the Trust's website.
- *We will act as a trustee/LAC governor; not as a representative of any group.
- We accept that in the interest of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the trust board, attendance records relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the Trust website.
- 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.

7. Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality where matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff, pupils or families, both inside and outside the Trust/school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Trust/school business arise outside of a governance setting.

- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will continue to observe confidentiality even after we have left office.

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

7.1 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.

Any breach of confidentiality may result in suspension or removal from the Board/LAC.

8. Data protection

- We will follow the Trust's ICT and Internet Acceptable Use and Data Protection policies when using, storing, sharing and disposing of personal data.
- We understand that 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.
- We will inform the Trust's Data Protection Officer immediately if we believe there has been a personal data breach.

9. Social media

We will adhere to any requirements set out in the Trust's social media policy, including:

- Upholding the reputation of the Trust and its 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 or Governors to the Chair of the Board or Chair of the LAC and Headteacher (as appropriate).

We will not:

- Accept friend requests from pupils. Any parent with a child at any of the Trust's schools who is involved in the governance arrangements (Member, Trustee or LAC governor) will exercise due caution if receiving friend requests or invitations to join any private parent groups associated with the Trust or any of its schools. No other Member, Trustee or LAC governor will accept such invitations or join such groups.
- Disclose any information that is confidential or would breach data protection principles.
- Make comments online about any Member, Trustee or LAC governor, staff member, 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 any of its schools into disrepute.

10. Maintaining the reputation of the Trust

We will ask prospective Members, Trustees and Governors for explicit confirmation that there is nothing in their professional or personal life that would damage the reputation of the Trust and to consent to a basic open source check, which would involve looking at Google and any common social media (eg Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn).

Those joining as LAC governors will also be asked as part of the appointment process, to confirm that there is nothing in their professional or personal life that would damage the reputation of the Trust or school.

Following appointment, all those who serve in any of our governance groups are asked to notify the Chair of the Trust Board, Chair of the Members, LAC Chair or Headteacher, as appropriate, in the event of any issue occurring that they feel may fall into this category during their tenure. Further advice can be sought from the Trust Governance Professional and Director of People.

11. Monitoring arrangements

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

12. Links with other policies

This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Gifts and Hospitality
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Usage
- Data Protection
- Social Media

13. Failure to comply with the code of conduct

Where it is suspected that a Member, Trustee or LAC governor has breached the code of conduct, or there is cause for concern about an individual's conduct, we will raise the issue with the Chair and the following procedures will apply:

13.1 Stage 1

- The designated Chair (see table at 13.3 below) will investigate the matter and if appropriate, hold a meeting with the Member, Trustee or LAC governor to discuss the issue. The outcome of any such meeting may include reminding the individual of the expectations based on this code of conduct and support, mentoring or training. Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another Member, Trustee or LAC Governor, such as the Vice Chair, will investigate.

13.2 Stage 2

If the breach is considered sufficiently serious or there is no improvement in the individual's behaviour, the matter will be escalated to the Chair of the Trust Board or Chair of the 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 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 the Trust Board will decide on any removal of a LAC governor in conjunction with the relevant LAC Chair, CEO and Headteacher. Details for the removal of a Member or Trustee are set out in the [Articles of Association](#).

13.3 Designated chairs

Individual	Designated chair	Escalation or where issue related to the designated chair
Member	Chair of the Members	Chair of the Trust Board ¹
Trustee	Chair of the Trust Board	Chair of the Members
LAC Governor	LAC Chair	Chair of the Trust Board

14. Declaration

I have reviewed and agree to abide by the Leading Edge Trust’s governance code of conduct. I declare that 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 wellbeing of our pupils is at the heart of everything we do
- Governance expectations are met and
- Reputation of the Trust/school is maintained

Signed: Date:

Name (*please print*):

**New statement added or updated by the NGA in 2022*

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

Appendix 1 – Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

SELFLESSNESS | School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.

INTEGRITY | School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.

OBJECTIVITY | School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.

ACCOUNTABILITY | School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

OPENNESS | School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

HONESTY | School and college leaders should be truthful.

LEADERSHIP | School and college leaders 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. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do.

Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

TRUST | Leaders are trustworthy and reliable
We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.

WISDOM | Leaders use experience, knowledge and insight
We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.

KINDNESS | Leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper
We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.

JUSTICE | Leaders are fair and work for the good of all children
We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.

SERVICE | Leaders are conscientious and dutiful
We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

COURAGE | Leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people
We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.

OPTIMISM | Leaders are positive and encouraging
Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.



FRAMEWORK FOR
ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
IN EDUCATION