

# Code of Conduct - The Aspire Educational Trust

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.

**The Members, Trustees and governors of the Local Academy Committees have the following strategic functions as set out in the Scheme of Delegation:**

### **Establishing the strategic direction, by:**

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the Trust / School(s);
- Agreeing the School and Trust improvement strategy with priorities and targets;
- Meeting statutory duties.

### **Ensuring accountability, by:**

- Appointing the lead executive in each school and for the Trust and holding them to account for the performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff;
- Monitoring the educational performance of the Trust / schools 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.

**Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard** (*NGA recognise that this is the fourth core function of governance*)

## As governors we agree to the following:

### Fulfilling Roles & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the Members / Trustees and LAC governors 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 Members / Trustees and LAC governors when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Members / Trustees / LAC governors or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the meeting.
- 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 not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- 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.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other Academies.
- 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 in the policy.
- We will actively support and challenge the Executive Leaders.
- We will fulfil our roles and responsibilities as set out in the scheme of Delegation.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Members / Trustees / LAC governors, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;
- We accept that our roles are strategic and so 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 / Trust's rules and policies and the procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different from 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.

## Demonstrate Our Commitment to the Role

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Member/Trustee/ LAC governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Members / Trustees / LAC governors, 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 we will explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- 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/ Principal and undertaken within the framework established.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a Member/ Trustee/ LAC governor and continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- 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, 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.

## Build and Maintain 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 Members/ Trustees/ LAC governors.
- We will support the Chair of the Members / Trustees and LAC in their roles of ensuring appropriate conduct both inside and outside of meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries in relation to delegated functions and consider 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 LA and other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.

## Respect 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/ Trust.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school/Trust business arise outside a meeting.

- We will not reveal the details of any votes.
- We will ensure all confidential papers and data held in technology are held and disposed of appropriately.

### Declare Conflicts of Interest and be Transparent

- 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 Trust / school business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time and for any vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the Trust’s / school website.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 Trust / school as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

### Ceasing to be a Member / Governor / Trustee / LAC Governor

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Member / Trustee / LAC governor leaves office

### **Breach of this code of conduct**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the relevant Chair and the Chair will investigate.
- We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions. Suspension/removal will always be used 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 Member / Trustee / LAC governor, will investigate.

Signed ..... Printed

Name .....

Date: .....

**I certify that I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and by ticking the box in Trust Governor have digitally signed this document.**

