



Academy Trust Local Governing Board Code of Conduct

Date code of conduct last reviewed: July 2026

Signed by:

J. Tedds

01.09.26

Chair of trustees

Date:

P. King

CEO of trustees

Date:

01.09.26

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Aim of this code of conduct

At OWLS Academy Trust Schools, we recognise and value the effort taken by members of the local governing boards who contribute towards the governance of the trust's academies. We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many of the academy's activities and processes would be at risk if it were not for your help. As a result, we want to make sure that your time spent as part of the local governing board is productive and enjoyable.

This code of conduct outlines what is expected from members of local governing boards and sets out the code of conduct which all members are required to comply with.

1. Core functions of governance

Members of the local governing board will focus on the three core functions of governance:

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

The local governing board will ensure it understands and meets the following key features of effective governance:

1. Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy
2. Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance
3. People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
4. Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
5. Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
6. Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

All local governors are required to fulfil their duties in line with the law, the 'Governance handbook' and 'The 7 principles of public life'. In addition, all governors will be expected to be:

- Committed
- Confident
- Curious
- Challenging
- Collaborative
- Critical
- Creative

2. Standards for conduct, behaviour and practice

All local governors will agree to meeting the standards outlined in this section.

1. Undertake the roles and responsibilities of a local governor

All local governors will:

- Accept that their role is strategic and, therefore, focus on the core functions of the governing board rather than the day-to-day management of the school.
- Respect the role of the headteacher and senior leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, never acting in a way that could undermine such arrangements.
- Accept that they have no legal authority to act individually, except when they have been given delegated authority in writing to do so.
- Act fairly and without prejudice.
- Apply the Equality Act 2010 in all governance matters.
- Ensure the board has a diverse composition which, as far as possible, reflects the composition of the local community.

- Encourage open governance.
- Accept collective responsibility for decisions made by the governing board.
- Stand by decisions that the governing board makes as a collective.
- Be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school.
- Consider how decisions may affect the community.
- Where decisions and actions conflict with 'The 7 principles of public life' or may place pupils at risk, bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- Actively support and challenge the leadership of the school.
- Follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- Only speak on behalf of the governing board when they have been specifically authorised in writing to do so.
- When formally speaking or writing in a governing role, ensure their comments reflect current school policy even if that may differ from their personal views.
- Fulfil their duties as an employer, acting in a manner that is expected of a good proprietor.
- Adhere to the school's rules and policies, and the procedures of the governing board in accordance with the relevant governing documents and law.
- Provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

The board of trustees will consider any concerns expressed about the delegated functions of the local governing board and will answer queries from local governors regarding their role.

2. Demonstrate commitment to the role

All local governors will:

- Undertake mandatory training and access the additional training and support available to fully understand their role, including safeguarding and child protection (including online, and filtering and monitoring systems) training at induction.
- Undertake further training appropriate to their area of monitoring or responsibility – this can be online.
- Be committed to the amount of time and energy the role involves.
- Be actively involved in the role and accept their fair share of responsibilities within the governing board.
- Give full effort to the attendance of meetings. Where a governor cannot attend a meeting, they will contact the clerk to governors in advance to give their apologies and the reason for their non-attendance.
- Come to meetings prepared, including having accessed and read the paperwork prior to the meeting.
- Visit the school to undertake agreed monitoring or participate in school events, with visits being arranged beforehand with the headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- Be prepared to support and to challenge when needed.

3. Behave appropriately

All local governors will:

- Pay due regard to their position of public office and adhere to 'The 7 principles of public life':
 - Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership
- Acknowledge the time, effort and skills demonstrated in the execution of delegated functions by other members of the local governing board.
- Take into account any concerns expressed about their delegated function and be prepared to answer queries from other governors regarding their role.
- Act in the best interests of the trust, its academies and its pupils – local governors will not act in a manner that will bring disrepute to the trust or its academies.

4. Build relationships

All local governors will:

- Seek to develop open, honest and effective working relationships with the board of trustees, the academy trust central team, headteacher, staff members and parents at the academy, as well as any other relevant bodies, such as the LA.
- Continuously strive to work as a team.
- Express their views openly, in a courteous and respectful manner.

5. Maintain confidentiality

All local governors will:

- Maintain complete confidentiality both inside and outside the academy when matters discussed between local governors are deemed confidential, or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils.
- Exercise the greatest care and caution when partaking in discussions regarding trust or academy business outside of local governing board meetings.
- Not reveal details of a local governing board vote, except to the board of trustees.
- Operate in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Maintain confidentiality even after they leave the governing board.

6. Be transparent

All local governors will:

- Accept and consent that, in the interests of open and transparent governance, their full name, dates of appointment, details of who appointed them, term of office, roles in other educational organisations, attendance at local governing board meeting records, and any conflicts of interest will be published on the trust's and the academy's website.

- Provide, with consent, information relating to them, as members of the local governing board, to be logged on 'Get information about schools' (GIAS), the DfE's national database. The trust will provide GIAS with the information provided by local governors.

7. Declare conflicts of interest

All local governors will:

- Act in the best interests of the trust and its academies at all times and will not act in the interest of, or as a representative of, any group or individual.
- Declare and record, in the Conflicts of Interest Register, any business, personal or other interests that they might have in connection to the business of the local governing board or board of trustees. The interests of those related or closely connected to a local governor will be declared on the Conflicts of Interest Register.
- Declare any interest they may have in an item of business on the agenda and will immediately remove themselves from the meeting while it is under discussion. Any conflict of interest will be declared at the start of any meeting, should the situation arise.

3. Breaching the code

If a member of the local governing board breaches this code of conduct, the issue will be raised with the chair of the board of trustees, who will make arrangements for the concern to be investigated by the chair of the local governing board. In the event that it is believed the chair of the local governing board has breached this code of conduct, the chair of the board of trustees will arrange for a trustee to undertake the investigation.

The board of trustees will only suspend or remove a local governor from their post as a last resort. The board of trustees will attempt to resolve any difficulties or disputes in a constructive manner before suspension or removal is considered. If the need arises to suspend a local governor, the board of trustees will ensure a fair and objective process by implementing the following procedure:

- A resolution to remove a governor from office will be included on an agenda of a meeting of the board of trustees and circulated to all members of the trust board.
- A meeting of the trust board will be held and the resolution to remove the local governor from office will be fully explained.
- Trustees will give due and careful consideration to the reasons given to remove the governor from office.
- The local governor, whom it has been proposed to remove from the local governing board, will be given the opportunity to make a statement in response to the resolution to remove them from office.
- Trustees will consider the proposal to remove the local governor and make a decision without unnecessary delay.
- The local governor will be informed of the board of trustees' decision in writing within five working days.
- Any elected staff or parent governor who has been disqualified from their role and removed from office will be disqualified from serving as a governor and holding office for a period of five years. This period is taken from the date immediately after the day

they were disqualified from their elected role. Given the consequence of the five-year disqualification period, the governing board's power to remove an elected parent or staff governor will only be used in exceptional and serious circumstances which may include the following:

- Serious misconduct
- Repeated serious incompetence
- Engagement in conduct which aims to undermine fundamental British values
- Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the governing board
- Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the school

4. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the board of trustees and any changes made will be communicated to all local governors and relevant members of staff.

All local governors are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this document is July annually.

Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form

Name of local governor:	
Role on the local governing board:	
Year of appointment:	
Length of appointment:	

Please tick the appropriate box once you have read and understood the following documents:

Behavioural Policy	
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	
Health and Safety Policy	
Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
Data Protection Policy	
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	
Complaints Procedures Policy	
'Keeping children safe in education'	

I hereby acknowledge the terms detailed within the Academy Trust Local Governing Board Code of Conduct and agree to abide by this code whilst I am an acting member of the local governing board. I understand that the role is of a voluntary nature and, therefore, I will not receive payment for my duties. Any expenses I claim will be in line with the Trustee Expenses Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

OWLS Academy Trust: a company limited by guarantee

Company registration number: 8537140

Registered office: LE19 4BF.