



ATHENA
LEARNING TRUST

Athena Learning Trust Trust-wide Trustee and Governor Code of Conduct

Review

Reviewed on: 31st October 2022

Reviewed by: Board

Review Period: 3 years





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Members of the Trust, Trustees, non-Trustee members of Trust committees and panels, local governors and non-governor members of local governing body committees must abide by the Nolan Committee's seven principles of public life and act in accordance with this code of conduct and the procedures and policies of the local governing body and Athena Learning Trust, whenever they act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting in that capacity, or represent, claim to represent, or give the impression that they are representing the governing body.

Herein: 'Governor' means any Member of the Trust, Trustee, non-Trustee member of a Trust committee or panel, local governor or non-governor member of a local governing body committee or panel. 'Governing body' means the local governing body, in relation to local governors and non-governor members of local governing body committees; OR the Board of Trustees, in relation to Members, Trustees or non-Trustee members of a committee of the Board. 'Trust' means the Athena Learning Trust. 'Principal' means the Principal or principal of the school or CEO of the Trust, as appropriate.

We will conduct ourselves in the following way:

General Principles

- We will respect, maintain and promote the ethos of the school and the Trust, and the principles of this Code, by leadership and by example.
- We understand and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix.
- We will abide by the governance procedures and the Articles of Association of the Athena Learning Trust and the procedures, policies and rules adopted by the school and the Trust.
- We understand the role of the governing body and the senior staff within the organisation.
- We will strive to ensure that all our decisions are focused upon what is in the best interests of the pupils and the school.
- We believe that all governors have equal status and a common purpose.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents and will not speak against majority decisions outside the meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and to demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity in principle, policy and practice.
- We will encourage open government and will act accordingly.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect other schools in the Trust and in our community, parents, children and the wider community.
- We will ensure that our behaviour and conduct, both personally and within our communities, will not bring the school, governing body or Trust into disrepute.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body and/or the Trust.



Role of Governors

- We will not act individually or speak on behalf of the governing body, except where the governing body has given us specific authority to do so.
- We will observe collective responsibility by supporting the corporate decisions of the governing body and not speaking against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We recognise the need for governors who have been so authorised by the governing body to act on behalf of the governing body in urgent situations.
- In carrying out any role as a member of the governing body we will take account of the views of other governors and answer their queries, and report back to the governing body in relation to delegated functions.
- We recognise and respect the Principal's responsibility for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and the implementation of the curriculum.
- We will abide by and actively encourage all policies and practices that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, attend regularly and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- We will get to know the school and take opportunities to involve ourselves in the life of the school.
- When we visit the school on governing body business we will comply with any governor's visit policy and protocols the governing body and/or Trust has adopted.
- We will, where appropriate, seek and consider information, advice and guidance to inform our decision-making.
- We will seek to develop and maintain our skills and knowledge, and will participate in appropriate skills audits, training and development activities.

Relationships

- We will strive to work cooperatively as a team.
- We will act in a way that is fair and unbiased and treat everyone equally, with courtesy and respect.
- We will give our views openly and honestly and encourage the open expression of views at meetings.
- We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed by anyone taking on a particular role or carrying out a delegated function on behalf of the



governing body.

- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring that the functions of the governing body are conducted appropriately.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Principal, staff and parents, and with the Trust and its various stakeholders.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality in any matters where the governing body decides it is necessary or that concern specific individuals, inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

Interests

- We will abide by the Athena Learning Trust Declaration of Interests Policy.
- We will declare any personal or business interest or any duty to any person or body that may be relevant to the school or the governing body and seek to resolve any conflict arising from these in the interest of the school / governing body.
- We will declare any prejudicial interest in a matter under discussion that may conflict with our duty to act solely in the interests of the school or the governing body and will leave the meeting during its discussion.
- We will act in the best interests of the school and the Trust as a whole, and not as a representative of any group.

Safeguarding

- We will abide by the Athena Learning Trust Safeguarding Policy.
- We recognise our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of all children in the care of the Trust and its schools, and to protect children from harm.
- We will at all times take responsibility for our own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question our motives or intentions.
- We recognise our responsibility to identify and report child welfare concerns and will report any safeguarding concern relating to a child at any Athena Learning Trust school or on the school roll, a member of staff, paid or unpaid, a volunteer or contractor at any Athena Learning Trust school or anyone visiting or using any Athena Learning Trust school premises to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the school and Trust Safeguarding Procedures.



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Data Protection and Information Security

- We will abide by the Athena Learning Trust Data Protection Policy and relevant ICT Usage Policy.
- We will take all reasonable precautions to protect information stored electronically on personal devices (e.g. laptops or tablets) and in paper format stored at home and in transit to and from school.
- We will report any lost or stolen information or documentation to the Athena Learning Trust Data Protection Officer.

Breach of this Code

- If we believe this Code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair of the governing body, the clerk to the governing body or the Clerk to the Board.
- We understand that any breach of the Code may be referred to a disciplinary committee of the Board of Trustees and may lead to suspension or removal from the governing body.

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed at least every 4 years.



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APPENDIX

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.