



A Code of Conduct for the Local Governing Body

The local governing body works on behalf of the Directors of the Trust to hold the academy Principal and staff to account. It is responsible for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful academy which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being. There is an expectation that each governor within the Synaptic Trust will work within the parameters outlined below in order to ensure the highest standards of effective governance.

General

- We understand the purpose of the board of governors and the role of the Principal and CEO set out above.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan 7 principles of public life (see appendix)
- We accept that all governors have equal status, and although appointed by different groups our overriding concern will be for the welfare of pupils as a whole.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the board of governors when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for the employment of staff, we will fulfil all that is reasonably expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board of governors or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the board of governors meeting.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Academy we will follow the procedures established by the board of directors.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the trust. Our actions within the trust and the local community will reflect this.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other settings.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy, governors who are not the chair or vice chair should expect to spend between 10-15 hours a month on their role of governor.
- We understand that the minimum time requirement is as follows:-
 - Attendance at least two governor visit mornings during the school year
 - An additional day visit to the academy to meet with your attached Year Leader.
 - Attendance at all of the full board of governors meetings
 - Participation in and attendance at the meetings of least one of the three main committees every term.
 - All meetings will be listed in the annual Governors Calendar

- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the board of governors and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain to the Chair in advance why we are unable to attend.
- It is our responsibility to ensure we are fully briefed prior to the meeting. If there is anything missing or we are not clear, we should contact the Chair or the Clerk before the meeting. Active participation is expected at all meetings. Good corporate governance comes from robust challenge. Should we remain silent on any discussion points, our silence will be deemed to be acceptance
- We will get to know the Academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in the academies activities.
- Our visits to the academy will be arranged in advance with the Academy Principal and undertaken within the framework established by the board of directors and agreed with the CEO.
- We will consider seriously our individual/collective needs for training/development and all governors will undertake **at least one training session** during the year and complete the Trust programme of governor training by attaining at least one course unit a year.
- We will take part in a self- review of the work of the governing body every year to ensure that we are having an impact, supporting change and improvement within the academy.
- **We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Academy Principal and working with the Synaptic Trust to improve the academy.**

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courtesy and respectfully in all communications with other governors and academy staff.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account 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 Academy Principal, staff, parents, the CEO and the Synaptic Trust.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff, parents or pupils, both inside or outside the school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a board of directors meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any board of governor's vote.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary interests that we have in connection with the board of director's business in the Register of Business interests.
- We will declare any personal or pecuniary interest - or personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the board of governors will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. Should the complaint be made about the Chair we will raise the issue with the CEO.
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any director shall be raised at a meeting of the board of governors and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to recommendation of suspension from the board of governors to the directors of the Synaptic Trust.
- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003/7, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor and of Schedule 5 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 (as appropriate) relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor.
- **The office of a Governor shall become vacant when the Governor absents him or herself from two consecutive Meetings of the full Board or Committee held during a period of twelve months with or without seeking leave of absence of the Board. (see 15 d)**
- All governors sign the Code at the first board of directors meeting of each school year, with new directors signing when they commence their term of office during the school year.
- **As a member of the board of governors I will always have the well being of the children and the reputation of the academy at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the board of directors, the CEO or staff.**

