



## **SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD ACADEMY TRUST**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

In law the Academy Trust is a corporate body (company), which means that there are a number of guiding principles which apply to the conduct of the Trustees and, by association, Local School Board members and Members of the Trust.

This code applies to all levels of governance and sets out the expectations and commitment required from members of the Local School Board and Trustees for effective workings of Governance within South Gloucestershire and Stroud Academy Trust and the community.

The Trustees have the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the Trust
- Ensuring each School has an development/ improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Head Teacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Overseeing the Performance management of the Head Teacher
- Engaging with stakeholders

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

The purpose of the Local School Board:

The LSB together with the Trustees are all responsible for the conduct of the Academy and for promoting high standards. To assist continuity the Chair of the LSB may also sit on the Board of Trustees. The Local School Board's role is outlined within its Terms of Reference.

and aims to ensure that students are attending a successful School, which provides them with an excellent education and supports their well-being.

The LSB supports the work of the SGS AT Board in the following ways:

- Through Local School Board Lead Roles and Quality Assurance Activities, advising the SGS AT Board of the effectiveness of key areas/activities in the School and to assist and inform decision making of the SGS AT Board
- Ensuring Engagement Activities are undertaken with parents, students, staff, local community, employers and University sponsors for the UTC.
- supporting SGS AT and School through involvement in any panels required for Exclusions, Complaints or Admissions processes

As individuals involved in Governance within SGS AT we agree to the following:

#### General

- We understand the purpose of the Trust Board, of the Local School Board and the role of the Head Teacher.
- 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 Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board of Trustees (or its delegated agents) and of a Local School Board on which we serve. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Board or Local School Board 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 encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- Elected Local School Board members (by parents or staff), will be mindful that their governance role is representative and not as delegates and will act accordingly, raising any concern or need for clarification with the Chair of the LSB or Clerk in the first instance.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting a school or the Trust we will follow the procedures established by the Board of Trustees.
- We will actively support and appropriately challenge the Executive/Head Teacher.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life.

#### 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.

## Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Trustee or Local School Board Member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Board of Trustees or Local School Board, 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 attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and Local School Board members will respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Local School Board members will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Local School Board and Trust Board and agreed with the Head Teacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing body, category of governor, body responsible for appointing us and attendance at meetings will be published on the Trust/school's website and certain details

provided to the Education Skills and Funding Agency (via Get Information About Schools) on appointment to role.

### 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 School Board members, Trustees, Head Teacher, School Leadership, staff and other stakeholders. As Trustees or School Board members we will not behave in a way detrimental to the effective working of the Trust/School Board or that is disrespectful to staff, stakeholders or others involved in governance.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct and behaviours both at meetings and at other times of engagement with the Trust, its Schools, staff and stakeholders.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Trustee/Local School Board members 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 Head Teacher, staff and parents, the local authority as appropriate and other relevant agencies and the community.

### 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.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a Board of Trustee or Local School Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Board of Trustees or Local School Board meeting vote.

### Conflicts of interest

- 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 Board of Trustees or Local School Board 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. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school and Trust website.
- 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 and school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the Board of Trustees or Local School Board.

### Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this Code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair of the Local School Board / Board of Trustees and the Chair will investigate.
- Should it be the chair of the Board of Trustees of a Local School Board that that is believed to have breached this code, another Trustee or School Board member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.
- Breaches of this Code shall be addressed in accordance with the Trust’s constitution, its Standing Orders and (where necessary) with company law including, if necessary, removal as a Trustee/Local School Board member. The Board of Trustees will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more restorative ways.

**Declaration**

I understand the roles and responsibilities invested in a Member/Trustee/Local School Board member and will do all I can to execute these responsibilities as outlined above.

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

|                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Originator:            | Clerk to the Board of Trustees |
| Date of latest review: | June 2021                      |
| Date of last approval: | 14 July 21                     |
| Approved by:           | Board of Trustees              |
| Review interval:       | Annually                       |
| Next review due by:    | July 2022                      |