



**North Cornwall
Learning Trust**

Working Together for Local Children

Code of Conduct for Trustees and Governors

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Once this code has been adopted by the NCLT Trust Board all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

All Trustees and Governors will read and acknowledge this code on Every annually.

1.0 Introduction

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from Trustees/Governors in order for the Board of Trustees/Local Governing Boards to properly carry out its work across the partnership of schools and the community. Once approved by the Trust Board, the Code will apply to all Trustees/Governors.

2.0 The Role and purpose of the Trust Board

The Trust Board has the following 4 strategic functions:

1. Establishing the strategic direction, by:
 - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the Trust
 - Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
 - Meeting statutory duties
2. Ensuring accountability, by:
 - Appointing the CEO
 - Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets
 - Performance managing the CEO
 - Engaging with stakeholders
 - Contributing to school self-evaluation
3. 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
4. Ensure that other key players with a stake in the organisation get their voices heard by:
 - Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results.
 - Reaching out to the school's wider community and inviting them to play their part.
 - Using the views of stakeholders to shape the school's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures.

3.0 The role and purpose of the Local Governing Board (LGB)

- The LGB, represent the views and aspirations of the community. Governors will focus on those duties delegated to them by the Trust Board. Those duties are set down in the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA). LGBs are primarily concerned with standards (progress, attainment, quality of teaching), safeguarding and stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff and the wider community). Of paramount importance is the child's experience of school and ensuring that a particular school is successful.
- The Trust believes learning should be enjoyable, purposeful and a preparation for living in modern Britain; and schools should be happy, caring and safe places. A well-informed, supportive and challenging LGB is an essential prerequisite for a successful school. The core purpose of the local board is to implement the strategic aims and vision of the school through delivery, monitoring and evaluation of progress of the annual school improvement plan.

3.2 The governing board has the following strategic functions:

- Establishing strategic direction
- Ensuring accountability

- Setting and reviewing the school's annual delegated budget

3.3 The Local Governing Board will:

(a) Hold the Headteacher to account for:

- the educational achievement of all students in the school including progress and attainment of all groups of students
- the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum
- standards of behaviour and attendance
- leadership and management: performance management; staff development; safeguarding
- delivery of the delegated budget

(b) Produce regular reports to the NCLT Board.

4.0 Corporate responsibilities

The Trust Board and Local Governing Board are corporate boards, which means:

- No trustee/governor can act individually, except when they have been given delegated authority to do so
- All trustees/governors accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board and will not speak against majority decisions outside meetings
- The overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole regardless of how they were appointed

5.0 Application of this Code

5.1 This Code applies to all NCLT trustees/governors when exercising any of the board's powers delegated to them under the articles.

5.2 By accepting appointment to their board, each trustee/governor agrees to accept the provisions of this Code together with the Trust's articles of association.

5.3 Trustees/governors will read and acknowledge the Code annually on the Every platform.

5.4 The Trust CEO will be responsible for ensuring that this Code is reviewed annually, or upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed before being approved by the Trust Board.

6.0 Roles and responsibilities of Trustees/Governors

As individuals on the board, we agree to:

6.1 Fulfil our role and responsibility

- We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
- We will fulfil our roles and responsibilities as set out in the SoDA
- We will respect the role of the school leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.

- We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school/s. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law. When formally speaking or writing in our role as trustees/governors we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views
- We will work collectively for the benefit of the school/s.
- We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- We will consider how our decisions may affect the school/s and local community.
- We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
- 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 only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
- We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
- We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
- 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.
- We will actively support and challenge the CEO and school leaders.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication, which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the Trust Board.

6.2 Demonstrate our commitment to the role

- We acknowledge that accepting office as at trustee/governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend 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 respond in a timely manner to emails.
- 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 and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- We will undertake relevant training and complete all safeguarding training promptly.
- There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children (Kofi Annan THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2000)

- We are aware of and will comply with the Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life (Appendix A) and the Good Governance Standards for Public Life (Appendix B)
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Our actions within the Trust's schools, the local community and when using social media and email will reflect this
- We agree to undergo an enhanced disclosure DBS Check and will resign from the LGB immediately if any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings are disclosed which conflict with our role as a governor of the school

6.3 Build and maintain relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents, other relevant stakeholders from our local community/ communities, other Trusts and relevant agencies.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
- We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.
- We will be prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed. We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.

6.4 Respect confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust/Governing Board vote.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a meeting. Official statements to the media should go through the Chair of the Trust or the CEO
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

6.5 Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/Trust's website.
- We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

- 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 and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school’s website.
- We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE’s national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

6.6 Change of circumstances

We will inform the Clerk to the LGB/Trust as soon as possible should any changes to our circumstances occur during our term as a governor, including if:

- there are any changes to the interests which have been declared
- we become, or cease to be, a company director, board member or trustee of another company or charity
- we move house

7.0 Breach of this Code

- Every trustee/governor is under a duty to report any breach of this Code or any grounds for believing that a breach of the Code has occurred to the Chair (and if the allegation is about the Chair, to the Vice Chair).
- Failing to report a breach of the Code is itself a breach of this Code.
- Any breach of this Code will be treated extremely seriously by both the LGB and the Trust and may result in suspension or removal from the LGB.
- In the event of a breach of this Code each trustee/governor agrees to participate fully in any investigations instigated by the Board or LGB and to abide by any sanction that may be imposed on them by the Board or LGB for such breach. The Trust will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

The Trust Board of the **North Cornwall Learning Trust** adopted this Code of Conduct on 27th September 2021

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. As a member of the Trust Board/Local Governing Board, I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school 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 Trust Board/Local Governing Board, the Executive Staff, Headteacher or staff.

Signed: |.....|

Printed name: |.....|

Date: |.....|

Appendix A: The Seven Principles of Public Life

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.

1. Selflessness

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. 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 benefit for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interest and relationships.

3. Objectivity

We will act and take decision impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

4. Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions an action and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

We will act and take decision in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

We will be truthful.

7. 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.

Appendix B: Good Governance Standard for Public Services

The standard prepared by The Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services in 2005 comprises six core principles of good governance, each with its supporting principles. Set out below is an extract of these core principles. By accepting appointment to the board, each governor agrees to accept the provisions of this Code.

Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users. We will:

- be clear about the Trust's purpose and its intended outcomes for citizens and pupils
- make sure that pupils receive a high-quality education
- make sure that taxpayers receive value for money

Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles. We will:

- be clear about the functions of the board
- be clear about the responsibilities of non-executives and the executive, and making sure that those responsibilities are carried out
- be clear about relationships between directors and the public

Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour. We will:

- put organisational values into practice
- behave in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance

Good governance means taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk. We will:

- be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken
- have and use good quality information, advice and support
- make sure that an effective risk management system is in operation

Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective. We will:

- make sure that appointed and elected Governors have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well
- develop the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluate their performance, as individuals and as a group
- strike a balance, in the membership of the board, between continuity and renewal

Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real. We will:

- understand formal and informal accountability relationships
- take an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public
- take an active and planned approach to responsibility to staff
- engage effectively with institutional stakeholders