



**Code of Conduct for Members, Trustees and  
Local Governing  
Boards**

**September 2023**

**Approved by the Trust Board on: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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## 1. Introduction:

This code sets out the expectations on, and commitment required from, members, trustees and local governing boards in order for Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT) to properly carry out its work within the schools and the wider community. Each has their own roles and responsibilities, but all are expected to respect and uphold the following 7 Principles of Public Life as defined by the Nolan Committee:

### **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.

## **2. Scope**

The Code of Conduct sets out in particular the expectations on trustees and local governors who both have key responsibilities to ensure the effective and successful day-to-day running of DDAT and its schools.

**The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the articles of association, trustee committee terms of reference and the agreed scheme of delegation to local governing boards. The code does not override the content of any of those documents**

**As individuals on the Trust Board or local school governing board we agree to the following:**

**3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the Trust Board/Local Governing Board and the role of the executive leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Trust Board/Local Governing Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust Board/Local Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board/Local Governing Board. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust Board/Local Governing Board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for DDAT/school staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect DDAT and schools within the Trust.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of DDAT/school and wider community. Our actions within the DDAT/school and the wider community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board/Local Governing Board.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will hold to account leaders to ensure that all relevant health and safety, health and well-being and safeguarding procedures are implemented.
- We will hold to account leaders to ensure that provision is in place for those students who have additional needs.
- We will evaluate the effective use of spend specifically allocated to support students with additional needs as well as those in receipt of the pupil premium.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Trust Board/Local Governing Board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of DDAT and schools.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of DDAT/schools and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to DDAT/school rules and policies and the procedures of the Trust Board/Local Governing Board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.

- When formally speaking or writing in our trustee/governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current DDAT/school policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of DDAT/school.

#### **4. Commitment**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Trustee/local governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust Board/Local Governing 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 do so. If a Governor / Trustee misses two meetings during the academic year and they either do not send apologies or their apologies are not accepted, then the Chair will have to establish their future intentions in relation to the role. If a Governor / Trustee again fails to attend then a motion may be made to remove from the Board, subject to Trust Board or Member approval.
- We will get to know DDAT/school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in DDAT/school activities.
- We will visit the school(s), with all visits arranged in advance with the CEO/Headteacher/Executive Headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust Board/Local Governing Board.
- When visiting a school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a Trustee/local governor.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the Trust Board/Local Governing Board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of trustee/local governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the DDAT/school website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to local governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors ('Get Information about Schools').

## **5. 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 members, other trustees/local governors, the clerk to the Trust Board/Local Governing Board and DDAT/school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the trust board/local governing board chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Trustees/Local Governing 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 DDAT, CEO, Headteachers/Executive Headteachers, staff, parents, the local authority, other relevant agencies and the wider community.

## **6. Confidentiality**

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of DDAT/school staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding DDAT/school business arise outside a Trust Board/Local Governing Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust Board/Local Governing Board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

## **7. 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 Trust Board/Local Governing 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 DDAT/school 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 DDAT/school as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

#### **8. Ceasing to be a Trustee/Local Governor**

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Trustee/Local Governor leaves office.

#### **9. Breaches of this Code of Conduct:**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Trust Board/Local Governing Board chair and the chair will investigate; the Trust Board/Local Governing Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the Trust Board/Local Governing Board chair that we believe has breached this code, another Trust Board/Local Governing Board member, such as the vice chair, will investigate.

#### **10. Role of DDAT Members:**

DDAT members hold the trust board to account for the effective governance of DDAT. They have no day-to-day role in running DDAT, but members will be expected to observe and respect the principles underpinning the Code.

The role of members in running DDAT can be summarised as follows:

- Sign the memorandum and articles of association (and agree any subsequent changes).
- Determine the name of the Trust (Derby Diocesan Academy Trust).
- Appoint members and trustees.
- Appoint and remove the auditors.
- Receive a copy of the Annual Accounts and Report.
- Ensure success of DDAT.
- Meet at least once a year, usually at an annual general meeting.
- Dissolve DDAT.



