

## Governance Code of Conduct

### Our Critical Questions

#### Why do we exist?

To challenge educational and social disadvantage in the north.

#### How do we behave?

In our highly professional environment, we:

- work hard – determined to get things done
- behave with integrity and honesty – be good
- show humility and be a positive team player – be nice

#### What do we do?

We establish high-performing non-faith academies which maximise attainment, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital.

#### How do we succeed?

- Aligned autonomy – finding the optimal balance between consistency and self-determination
- Academic rigour – challenging inequality by instilling shared and powerful knowledge
- Talent first – putting people before strategy

### The Seven Principles of Public Life

We shall at all times abide by the Seven Principle of Public Life as identified by The Committee on Standards in Public Life under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan in 1995:

#### 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.

## The Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies share the following core strategic functions as defined in the Scheme of Delegation:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- upholding the mission, values, and objectives of the Trust and its academies
- agreeing the academy improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- appointing the academy Principals
- monitoring progress towards targets
- performance managing the Principal
- engaging with stakeholders
- contributing to academy self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- setting the budget
- monitoring spending against the budget
- ensuring that value for money is obtained
- ensuring that risks to the organisation are managed

## As Members / Trust Board / Local Governors, we agree to the following:

### Role and responsibilities

- We understand the purpose and responsibilities of each level of governance, the Executive and the Principals, as defined in the Scheme of Delegation.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Trust Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore, we will only speak on behalf of the Trust Board or Local Governing Body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board or its delegated agents. Members / Trust Board / Local Governors will support majority decisions outside of meetings.
- 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 governance and will act appropriately.
- 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 academies. Our actions within the academies and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academies, we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.
- We will actively support and challenge the CEO, the Executive and the Principals.

### Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust Board or Local Governing Body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on panels, committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and, where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we were unable to do so.
- We will get to know the academies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in academy activities.
- We will visit the academies, with all visits arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust Board and agreed with the Principals.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.



### 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 Members / Trust Board / Local Governors and staff.
- We will support the Chairs in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will be prepared to answer queries from other Members / Trust Board / Local 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 CEO, the Executive, the Principals, staff and parents 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.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside of meetings.
- We will not reveal the details of any Members / Trust Board / Local Governing Body 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 Dixons Academies Trust's 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 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 as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to a governing body.

### 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. In the first instance, we shall seek to resolve any difficulties or disputes in a constructive way. We shall use suspension or removal in the case of repeated or serious breaches. This applies to all governors no matter how they have been appointed.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, a member of the Trust Board will investigate.

**Adopted by the Members, Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies of Dixons Academies Trust Ltd.**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

