

The Good Shepherd Trust Code of Conduct for Governance

This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from all involved in governance and outlines the guiding principles that underpin governance in the Trust. The committees act as committees of the trust board of The Good Shepherd Trust (GST) and all members are appointed by GST in accordance with the articles of association.

All those involved hold a public office and are expected to follow all statutory requirements. In the interests of open governance, full names, terms of office, roles on committees, the body responsible for appointing us, attendance at meetings and relevant business and other interests will be published on the relevant school and/or trust websites, DfE website under Get Information About Schools (GIAS) and Companies House (all as applicable).

As individuals we agree to the following:

Roles and Responsibilities

1. We understand the purpose of our role.
2. We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the committee or board when we have been specifically authorised to do so by the Trust Board.
3. We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the committee or board. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the meeting.
4. We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
5. We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
6. We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the trust, community and schools.
7. We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school(s) and trust. Our actions within school and the local community will reflect this.
8. In making or responding to criticism or complaints, we will follow the procedures established by the trust.
9. We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the trustee directors, trust officers, committee members and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of The Good Shepherd Trust and its pupils.
10. We will respect the role of the senior leadership team(s) and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
11. We agree to adhere to the trust's rules and policies and the procedures, as set out in the scheme of delegation, articles of association, funding agreements and the law.
12. When formally speaking or writing in our role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy, even if they might be different from our personal views and will only communicate using a GST or school email address. Private email addresses will not be used for any trust business.
13. When communicating in our private capacity, including on social media, we will be mindful of and strive to uphold, the reputation of the school(s) and the trust at all times.
14. 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 committee or trust.
15. I am aware of the Christian ethos and vision of The Good Shepherd Trust and will work with other members to uphold the Christian ethos and vision at the school.

Safeguarding

1. At the start of each academic year, or upon induction, we will read Part One and Part Two as a minimum in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education and will record this on Governor Hub to show we have read the guidance. In addition, trustee directors are required to read the document in full and to record this on GovernorHub. Compliance with this action will be monitored by the clerk, DSL and Safeguarding Trustee Director.
2. We will participate in regular safeguarding training, as appropriate.
3. We will follow all policies and procedures in relation to the safeguarding of children.
4. We will report all (including low-level) concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead with immediacy and in accordance with policy.
5. We will help identify any weakness in the school or trust's safeguarding systems.
6. We have read and accept the *allegations of abuse against adults* policy. This includes the management of low-level concerns.
7. We will sign and return a safeguarding self-declaration annually.

Commitment

1. We acknowledge that accepting office involves the commitment of time and energy, beyond meeting attendance.
2. We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the committee or board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on panels if required.
3. We will make full effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we are unable to do so.
4. We will get to know our school(s) well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities, where appropriate and applicable.
5. We will visit the school(s) with all visits arranged in advance with the head teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the trust.
6. If visiting a school in a personal capacity i.e. as a parent or carer, we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a trust committee or board member.
7. We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development and will undertake relevant training within the appropriate timescales.
8. We will complete a declaration of interests annually and will update this within 14 days if there are any changes that have been made.
9. We will read the Academy Trust Handbook annually, taking particular note of the changes.

Relationships

1. We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with others, both in and outside of meetings.
3. We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
4. We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the Trust and, if necessary, other relevant authorities. any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see below) or which may place pupils at risk.
5. We are prepared to answer queries from trustee directors, the Trust executive team or others and consider any concerns expressed. We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.

6. We will seek to develop effective working relationships with others in the trust, staff and parents, the diocese (as applicable) and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

1. 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 both during and after our term of office.
2. We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school/trust business arises outside a meeting.
3. We will not reveal the details of any vote.
4. We will ensure all confidential papers are held securely and where applicable, disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest

1. 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's business in the Register of Interests and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
2. We accept that the register of interests will be published on the school/trust website(s) as applicable.
3. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
4. We will obtain the written permission of the Chair of the Board before engaging in any transactions related to third parties.
5. We will act in the best interests of the trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

Ceasing to be a member of the committee/board

1. We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a member leaves office.

Breach of this code of conduct

2. If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the executive team and the chair will investigate; the trust will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
3. Should it be the chair of a committee that we believe has breached this code, the matter must be reported to the Trust chair with immediacy, or the CEO if it is the Trust chair.

Removal from Office

The Trust Board will, in determining whether to remove a member, consider if:

1. There have been repeated grounds for suspension.
2. Serious misconduct has occurred which either threatens to bring a school, the trust, or governance into disrepute.
3. There has been serious or repeated failure to contribute meaningfully to the effectiveness of governance in the trust, such as non- attendance at meetings, not engaging in training in a timely manner, not adhering to the requirements of this code of conduct or not preparing for and participating in meetings.
4. They have engaged in conduct aimed at undermining the values of the trust and/or British values.

5. The actions of the local committee member are sufficiently detrimental and compromise the operational efficiency, principles, values or ethos of the school and/or trust.

Based on **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*) the Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, these aren't just fine words, they are meant to support a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.

Selflessness - School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.

Integrity - School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.

Objectivity - School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.

Accountability - School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness - School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty - School and college leaders should be truthful.

Leadership - School and college leaders should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

Trust: leaders are trustworthy and reliable

We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.

Wisdom: leaders use experience, knowledge and insight

We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.

Kindness: leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper

We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.

Justice: leaders are fair and work for the good of all children

We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.

Service: leaders are conscientious and dutiful

We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

Courage: leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people

We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.

Optimism: leaders are positive and encouraging

Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.