



This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school trustees and trustees at Esher Church School. By signing this code, trustees confirm their understanding of the role of trustee and its legal context, and their commitment to working effectively together in the best interests of the school, its pupils and staff, and the community.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law, the school's articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

The Trustee Board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting, and ensuring clarity of, the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the CEO/Headteacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

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



I understand that by taking on the role of trustee, I am part of a team, which includes both trustees and senior leaders, who take a shared responsibility for the success of the school. We all work hard to drive improvements in the school, create and deliver on a compelling vision and strategy, and ultimately make sure pupils achieve their potential.

I know that I have an individual part to play, and will be fully committed and engaged throughout my time as a trustee.

I understand that I am expected to attend a minimum of 3 full board meetings per year, at least 3 committee meetings per year, and to visit the school at least once per term to develop understanding of key areas of governance focus.

Role & Responsibilities

- I understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Headteacher.
- I accept that I have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given me delegated authority to do so, and therefore I will only speak on behalf of the governing board when I have been specifically authorised to do so.
- I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that I will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- I have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as I have responsibility for staff, I will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- I will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- I will consider carefully how my decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- I will always be mindful of my responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. My actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school, I will follow the procedures established by the Trustee Board.
- I will actively support and challenge the Headteacher and senior leaders.
- I will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that I work collectively for the benefit of the school.
- I will respect the role of the head teacher and senior leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the school and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- I agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in my governing role I will ensure my comments reflect current school policy even if they might be different to my personal views.
- When communicating in my private capacity (including on social media) I will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school.

Commitment

- I acknowledge that accepting office as a trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- I will involve myself actively in the work of the governing board, and accept my fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- I will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where I cannot attend explain in advance why I am unable to.



- I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve myself in school activities.
- I will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the head teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- I will consider seriously my individual needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- I accept that in the interests of open governance, my full name, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of trustee and the body responsible for appointing me will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency, as a trustee of a Single Academy Trust, I accept that information relating to trustees will be collected and logged on Companies House and on the DfE's Get Information About Schools (GIAS) website

Relationships

- I will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all my communications with other trustees, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- I will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- I am prepared to answer queries from other trustees in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and I will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- I will seek to develop effective working relationships with the head teacher and senior leaders, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

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

Conflicts of interest

- I will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people I am connected with) that I have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting I will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- I accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- I will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- I will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

Ceasing to be a trustee

- I understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a trustee leaves office



Breach of this Code of Practice

- If I believe this code has been breached, I will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the Trustee 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 chair that I believe has breached this code, another trustee, such as the vice chair will investigate.

Trustees will review, approve and sign (using GovernorHub) the Code at the first Trustee Board meeting of each school year.



Undertaking:

I confirm **my understanding of the core strategic functions** of the governing body (set direction, ensure accountability, provide financial oversight) and **my commitment to working effectively with other members in accordance with the above expectations** on roles and responsibilities, commitment, relationships, confidentiality and conflicts of interest, and The Seven Principles of Public Life.