



## **SAFFRON ACADEMY TRUST**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES**

#### **THE SAFFRON ACADEMY TRUST**

Saffron Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust. It is a charitable company responsible for the strategic direction of its constituent academies. The Academy Trust has two layers of Governance:

- The Members of the Trust
- The Board of Directors/Trustees

#### **MEMBERS**

The members are akin to shareholders and have ultimate control over the direction of the Academy Trust. They ensure the charitable company achieves its objectives, sign off the financial accounts, annual report and appoint some of the Directors.

#### **DIRECTORS**

The Directors are responsible for the three core strategic functions:

- Strategic Direction
- Holding the Chief Executive and Headteacher to account for educational performance
- Overseeing the financial performance of the academies

Directors are company directors and charity trustees. Saffron Academy Trust uses the title “Director” to distinguish the role from members of constituent Local Governing Bodies who are referred to as “Governors”. Directors also ensure compliance with charity and company law and the Academy Trust’s Funding Agreement.

#### **LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES**

The Saffron Academy Trust (SAT) appoints Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) for each of its constituent academies. Each of these LGB’s has a scheme of delegation that defines the responsibilities delegated to the LGB and the responsibilities retained by SAT. These schemes of delegation will vary depending on the needs of individual academies and will be revised from time to time as a result of discussion between the Directors of SAT and the Governors belonging to individual LGBs.

#### **PURPOSE OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES**

The Local Governing Body of a SAT Academy is accountable to SAT for the performance of the functions that have been delegated to the LGB.

The aims of the LGB include:

- Ensuring students are attending a successful academy
- The academy is providing them with a good education, whilst supporting their wellbeing
- Being accountable for students’ health and wellbeing in the academy community

For governing boards to carry out their roles effectively, governors must be:

- prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously
- committed to the key characteristics and behaviours expected of the role, as set out in [A Competency Framework for Governance](#) (DfE 2017)
- acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals
- supported by the appropriate authorities in that task
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance

### **THE ROLE OF A MEMBER OF A LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (A “GOVERNOR”)**

In law, SAT is a corporate body. As the body that appoints constituent LGBs, SAT has resolved that Governors should operate according to the same principles as the Directors of SAT, which means:

- No Governor can act on his/her own without proper authority from the full Local Governing Body
- All Governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made
- Although appointed by virtue of representing different interests, the overriding concern of all Governors has to be the welfare of the academy as a whole

### **GENERAL**

Members of a SAT Local Governing Body agree to:

1. Understand the purpose of the Local Governing Body as set out above and the role of the Headteacher
2. Be aware of, and accept, the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life (see Appendix 1)
3. Accept that they have no legal authority to act individually, except when SAT and the LGB has given them delegated authority to do so and therefore they will only speak on behalf of the LGB when they have been specifically authorised to do so
4. Accept a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and in so far as they have responsibility for staff, fulfil all that is expected of a good employer
5. Encourage open government and will act appropriately
6. Accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the LGB or its delegated agents and committees. This means that they will not speak against majority decisions outside the LGB meeting
7. Consider carefully how their decisions may affect the community and other schools.
8. Always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the academy. Their actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this.
9. In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the academy they will follow the procedures established by SAT and the LGB
10. Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal/professional reputation, nor the reputation of the academy are compromised by inappropriate postings.
11. Promote tolerance of and respect for those of different faiths and beliefs, races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientation
12. Support the Headteacher and senior leadership team but challenge their expectations and hold them to account for school performance
13. They will observe the dress code requirements as set out in the Guidance on Governor Development and in the Academy’s Code of Conduct policy
14. They will adhere to the relevant detailed requirements of the academy Code of Conduct policy

## **COMMITMENT**

1. Acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
2. Involve themselves actively in the work of the LGB and accept their fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups
3. Make full efforts to attend all meetings and where they cannot attend explain in advance why they are unable to do so
4. Get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve themselves in academy activities
5. Arrange visits to the academy in advance with staff and undertake these within the framework established by the LGB and agreed with the Headteacher
6. Consider seriously their individual and collective needs for training and development and undertake relevant training
7. Actively support and challenge the Headteacher within the delegated authorities agreed by SAT
8. We will demonstrate commitment to continually developing our knowledge and skills and keeping them up to date. This includes our ability to understand and interpret educational and financial data
9. We accept that in the interests of openness and transparency, our full names, date of appointment, term 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 personal information will also be published on DfE [EduBase](#) or replacement [Get Information about Schools](#) (GIAS) system. This is to help increase transparency on who governs our schools
10. We accept that we are required to hold an Enhanced Criminal Records Certificate (ECRC)

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

1. Strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
2. Express views openly, courteously and respectfully in communications with other Governors
3. Support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
4. Be prepared to answer queries from other Governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed. Acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved
5. Seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, SAT, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

1. Observe confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or students, both inside and outside the academy
2. We will ensure that we are familiar with, and adhere to, the data protection principals set out in the Data Protection Act 2018.
3. Exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside a LGB meeting
4. Not reveal the details of any LGB vote

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

1. Record any pecuniary or other business interest that they have in connection with the LGB's or SAT's business in the Register or Business Interests
2. Declare any pecuniary interest – or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest – in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time
3. We 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

## **BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. If they believe this Code has been breached, raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate. The LGB should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways
2. Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this Code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate
3. Understand that any allegation of a material breach of this Code of Conduct by any Governor shall be raised at a meeting of the LGB and if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of Governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension by the LGB or SAT
4. Be aware of the provision of Regulations 15 (1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualification from the role of School Governor
5. **Academies:** Any elected or appointed governor/trustee removed from the office by ordinary resolution of the members in accordance with the [Companies Act 2006](#) is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor/trustee of that school

## **ADAPTED FROM THE NGA CODE OF PRACTICE FOR GOVERNORS 2010**

Governors will sign the Code at the first LGB meeting of each Academy year. New Governors joining the Governing Body during the year will sign at the first meeting of the full LGB following their formal admission as a member of the LGB

**The Local Governing Body of Honeywood School has adopted this code of practice.**

**A Constituent of Saffron Academy Trust**

**UNDERTAKING**

As a member of the Local Governing Body at Honywood School I will always have the achievement and wellbeing of the students and the reputation of the Academy at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the Academy, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos

NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **THE SEVEN NOLAN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions 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 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 this.

#### **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.

## Appendix 2

### Data Protection and Information Security – Personal Data

The governing board has a collective and individual responsibility regarding confidentiality in respect of school business. In exercising their functions, governors will on occasion, have access to sensitive personal information about staff and pupils. This may, for example, relate to safeguarding, exclusion, health or conduct issues.

In addition, the nature of a governor's role means that they will often receive, access and process information outside of the school premises – at home or at work. Under the Data Protection Act 2018 it is particularly important that personal and sensitive information is held and handled securely.

We will ensure that we are familiar with, and adhere to, the data protection principals set out in the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into effect on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

We will ensure that personal data:

- is processed fairly and lawfully
- is obtained only for lawful purposes, and is not further used in any manner incompatible with those original purposes
- is accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- is adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purposes for which it is processed
- is not kept for longer than is necessary for those purposes;
- is processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the DPA;
- is protected by appropriate technical and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage and
- is not transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection of the personal information

### Contact details

We will:

- ensure that our correct contact details (home address, phone number and email address) are held by the school to avoid misdirected communications
- ensure that our email addresses are professional and where possible, personal (ie not shared with family members)
- take appropriate steps to prevent others, including family members, from accessing confidential information

### Electronic personal data

We will:

- use encryption software/strong passwords on all electronic devices which may contain personal data. This includes mobile phones, laptops, tablets and USB devices
- password protect files containing personal data
- take all reasonable steps to keep such devices secure (eg not leaving them in cars)
- ensure that family members/work colleague who share devices, cannot access personal data

### Paper-based personal data

We will:

- keep all paper based files securely
- dispose of paper records in a secure manner