



## Governance code of conduct

September 2019

Published date: September 2019	Next review deadline: September 2021	Non-statutory	Executive Lead at ATT: Andy Gannon Head of Corporate Affairs
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Associated documents:	
Links to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ethical leadership statement</li><li>• Whistleblowing policy</li></ul>	

## **Our Vision – Transforming education: Transforming performance: Transforming lives**

*Putting children and young people at the heart of all that we do.*

We will ensure that all our children and young people, regardless of their background, fulfil their educational potential. We will do this in safe, supportive and ambitious environments, ensuring we maximise life chances for them all.

### *Our values*

- We will work inclusively within our communities, embracing the varied localities we serve while sharing our common vision and values.
- We will develop the very best leaders of the future, working to improve education and transform lives.
- We will adhere unwaveringly to the ‘Nolan Principles’ of Public Service, which is made clear in our commitment to Ethical Leadership.

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 ATT values the commitment and energy of all those who contribute to its governance. We believe it is important to behave professionally at all times and to ensure that we afford respect to all those with whom we come into contact.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct applies to:
  - 1.2.1 Trust Members
  - 1.2.2 Trustees
  - 1.2.3 Members of Local Academy Committees (LACs).
- 1.3 This Code of Conduct is deemed to have been accepted and agreed by anyone who agrees to serve within any part of our governance.
- 1.4 Governance is a collective responsibility – hence the use of ‘we’ throughout section 3. However, we also believe that those involved in governance are individually accountable for their behaviours and urge everyone covered by this Code of Conduct to also familiarise themselves with the Trust’s full suite of policies relating to aspects of professional conduct, available on the Governance Portal.

## 2 The ‘Nolan’ principles

- 2.1 All those involved in governance within ATT are expected to be aware of, and conduct themselves in accordance with, the Framework for Educational Ethical Leadership, developed by the Ethical Leadership Forum and referenced in our Ethical Leadership statement, which is available on the Governance Portal.
- 2.2 This makes explicit the expectation to conduct oneself in accordance with the seven ‘Nolan Principles’ of public life, summarised below.

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership** – Holders of public office 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.

### **3 Code of Conduct**

#### *Roles and responsibilities*

- We understand the purpose of Trust governance and the role of the executive leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of Trust governance when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside meetings.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how decisions may affect the community.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust. Our actions in respect of any one academy will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the executive and non-executive lines, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including online and on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.
- We will not respond to external events or influences on an individual basis and will always work with executive leaders to determine the most appropriate response.

#### *Commitment*

- We acknowledge that accepting office involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of governance, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including active engagement both in and outside of meetings.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will engage with Trust communication systems, including email addresses and the Governance Portal in an effort to maintain professional and environmentally friendly communication.
- We will get to know the academy/ies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in activities.
- When working with the academy in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

- 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, attendance records and relevant business and pecuniary interests will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to us will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get Information About Schools).

#### *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 both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Trust Board, with executive leaders, staff and parents, with other relevant agencies and with the community.

#### *Confidentiality*

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

#### *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 business of governance 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 Trust's or the academy's 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 Trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

#### *Ceasing office*

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after leaving office.

#### *Breach of the Code*

- If we believe this Code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair (or the Vice Chair if the allegation is against the Chair) will investigate and seek guidance from the Trust's Head of Corporate Affairs.

- We understand that, as a last resort, the Trust Board reserve the right to remove someone from office for serious or repeated breaches of this Code.