



## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TRUSTEES

2020- 2021

### GENERAL

- The main aim of the academy trust is to raise the educational achievements of all its pupils. The trustees will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its four roles:
  1. To ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the trust is clearly defined.
  2. To ensure that the Executive Headteacher performs her responsibilities for the educational performance of the trust.
  3. To ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff within the trust.
  4. To ensure the sound, proper and effective use of the trust's financial and other resources.
- Trustees have responsibility for determining; monitoring and keeping under review the policies, plans and procedures within which the academy trust operates. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the Trust and the curriculum.
- All trustees have equal status. Although trustees are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the academy trust.
- Trustees have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, trustees should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Trustees should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools and academies.
- Trustees should encourage open governance and should be seen to do so.
- Trustees do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual trustees have power only when it is delegated specifically to them by the board of trustees.

## **COMMITMENT**

- Being a Trustee involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve on the board of trustees of the academy.
- All Trustees should involve themselves actively in the work of the board of Trustees and accept a fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees
- Regular attendance at meetings of both the full board of Trustees and committees is essential. Trustees are expected where they cannot attend to explain in advance why they are unable to.
- Trustees should know the academy well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in its activities.
- Trustees will confirm their eligibility prior to appointment, to be a Trustee in writing and inform the clerk immediately if there is a change.
- Trustees accept that in this role they need to have an enhanced DBS check and Section 128 check on appointment.
- Trustees accept that in the interests of open governance, full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests will be published on the academy's website.
- In the interests of transparency Trustees accept that information relating to Trustees will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of Trustees.
- Trustees will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the Head(s) of School(s) and undertaken within the guidelines established by the governing body and Head(s) of School(s).
- Training and development for Trustees is important. It benefits both the academy and individual trustees. The Board of Trustees will regularly review their individual and collective training needs and look to Trustees to attend inductions and other relevant training to address these needs.

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

- Trustees should strive to operate as a team in which constructive

working relationships are actively promoted.

- Trustees should develop effective working relationships with the Executive Headteacher, Head(s) of School(s), staff, parents, and their local community.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Trustees must observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff, pupils or parents (both inside and outside school).
- Although decisions reached at Trustees' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- Trustees should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the trustee meetings
- Trustees understand that the requirements of confidentiality will continue to apply after they leave office and will ensure that any information relating to the school is returned to the school.
- Trustees will ensure that confidential and sensitive data is kept securely, both paper and electronic versions.

## **CONDUCT**

- Trustees should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- Trustees should only speak or act on behalf of the board of trustees when they have been specifically authorized to do so.
- All visits to the academies should be undertaken within a framework, which has been established by the board of trustees and agreed with the Head(s) of School(s).
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, trustees should refer to the school's 'Complaints Procedure' for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.
- Trustees have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the academies. Their actions within the school community should reflect this.

- Any pecuniary/business interest that a trustee may have in connection with the business of the board of trustees must be recorded in the register of business interests. The Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- Trustees should withdraw from any meeting in which they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest. It may only be necessary to withdraw for the part of the meeting where the 'item' is discussed.
- A person who is paid to work at the school is not regarded as having a pecuniary interest if his/her interest is no greater than that of other persons paid to work at the school.
- A Trustee paid to work at the school, other than the Executive Head or Head(s) of School(s), must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to the pay or performance appraisal of any individual working at the school. This does not affect discussions about general policy. The Executive Headteacher must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to their own pay or performance appraisal.
- If it is believed that this code has been breached, the issue will be raised with the chair and the chair will investigate; the 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 is believed to have breached this code, another board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## **MEETINGS**

- During the Covid 19 pandemic, Trustees adopted a Virtual Meetings Policy which enables the Chair of Trustees to call meetings virtually as part of this code of conduct.
- Individual Trustees do not have authority within the academy trust. It is the decisions agreed by all the Trustees that carry authority. Activities that Trustees undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for board of Trustees meetings.
- It follows that if the board of Trustees is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial. The Chair, the Executive Head, Head(s) of School(s), the Clerk and all the Trustees must subscribe to the following 'Meetings Charter' to ensure that the board of Trustees will be giving itself the best chance of coming to informed, collective decisions.

### **As a Trustee I expect:**

- People to attend regularly and be punctual.
- The agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before every meeting.
- An agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item.
- A chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point.
- My contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion.
- The decision-making process to be quite clear.
- Trustees to work together and not to be stubbornly partisan.
- Trustees to take collective responsibility for decisions.
- Minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

### **Others can expect me to:**

- Attend regularly and be punctual.
- Read the Agenda, Minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about.
- Bring my papers to the meeting.
- Make relevant and positive contributions.
- Listen to and consider what others say.
- Accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.

## **COMMUNICATION**

All Trustees of Horizons Education Trust take due regard to the Cambridgeshire Governor Services guidance regarding the appropriate use of email, social media and other online systems.

## **MENTORING**

An experienced trustee can act as a mentor to new trustees providing support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the board of trustees.

**The Board of Trustees of Horizons Education Trust adopted  
this Code of Conduct**

We agree to review and re-adopt the code of conduct annually at the first full governing body meeting of the year, and for it to be signed by each trustee.  
Email acceptance in conjunction with the Virtual Meetings Policy for 2020-2021

Name	Signature	Date
Sue Bailey		
Jean Browning		
Keith Strong		
Judy Ward		
David Olney		
Lynda Adams		
Tafadzwa Gidi		
Wayne Palmer		
Kim Taylor		
Rebecca Ward		
Mike Westcott-Rudd		
Mark Williams		
Ilker Hasan Yoney		