

Pickwick Academy Trust



Local Governing Body

Code of Practice

September 2017

Pickwick Academy Trust



“Working together to provide the best schools and outcomes for our children”

Code of Practice for Academy Governors

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the local governing body to properly carry out its work in accordance with the direction of Pickwick Academy Trust and the community it serves.

The purpose of the local governing body of an academy school operating as part of Pickwick Academy Trust – a multi academy trust

The local governing body is the school’s accountable body and reports to and takes direction from the Trust Board. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The local governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with an excellent education and supports their well-being. Over the past decade the responsibilities of governing bodies have grown which has meant academies are now accountable for aspects of children’s health and wellbeing in the community and for a wide range of extended services provision out of school hours.

The local governing body, operating under the Pickwick Academy Trust scheme of delegation:

Embeds the corporate direction of the Trust by:

- Implementing the corporate values, aims and objectives and developing and implementing local arrangements
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- Setting statutory targets
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure

Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:

- The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework – both local and corporate
- Progress towards targets

The implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy:

- The budget and the staffing structure
- The financial performance including any response to local and corporate pressures.

Ensures accountability by:

- Signing off self-evaluation
- Responding to professional recommendations and Ofsted reports when

necessary

- Holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school
- Ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- Making information available to the community

Supports corporate development by:

- Enabling local staff engaged in school business to be released to support corporate development and/or delivery of corporate business designed to limit incurring central costs.

Supports the CEO and Trustees undertaking the performance management of the Headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report accordingly to the local governing body.

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The role of a governor

In law the local governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- No governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full local governing body;
- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, community, etc), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

General

- We understand the purpose of the local governing body, how it fits as part of the Trust and the role of the Headteacher as set out above. We will also respond to requests made through the clerk.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life (see appendix.)
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the local governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the local governing body when we have been

specifically authorised to do so.

- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that would be expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the local governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the local governing body meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other academies.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school and positively promote it and the Trust. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the local governing body.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the local governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the local governing body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.
- We are committed to the business and the direction of the Trust.

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 other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we

will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.

- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies.
- We will actively engage with parents and the community to foster good relationships and where necessary reduce the burden of challenges placed on staff by parents/carers.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside the school;
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a local governing body meeting. This will include refraining from communicating local governing body matters, or personal concerns, to each other or to the wider community (including letters, phone calls, e-mails, social media applications and conversations) inappropriately;
- We will not reveal the details of any local governing body vote.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the local governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will 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.

Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the local governing body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- If we believe this code has been breached by the Chair, the vice-Chair will investigate as above.
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the local governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the local governing body or dismissal.
- In any case where an investigation is in progress, this will be reported to the Board to be added to the agenda of the next meeting or in serious cases, immediately reported to the Chair or vice-Chair of the Trust Board.

- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a academy governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualifications from the role of academy governor (held as a separate document)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-governance-regulations-2013>

Governors will sign the Code at the first local governing body meeting of each academic year.

Undertaking:

As a member of the LGB I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of Pickwick Academy Trust and the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the Trust, the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the Trust, the school, the local governing body, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed:

Printed name:

Date:

PLEASE PASS BACK TO THE CLERK OF GOVERNORS

Appendix A: 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).

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act 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 seek to 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.

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 B: Code of Conduct

1	No governor has individual authority or power by being a member of the Local Governing Board (LGB), unless it has specifically been delegated; only the LGB as a whole can take actions or decisions in accordance with the scheme of delegation, unless agreed otherwise and formally minuted.
2	No governor should use his or her position to gain advantage in other relationships with the academy or community (e.g. as a teacher, employee, or parent).
3	The LGB recognises that it administers a public Board funded by local and national taxation. It therefore recognises the need to ensure that its proceedings are open to public scrutiny. Minutes of the most recent LGB and committee meetings will be displayed in a public part of the academy, and requests to observe meetings will be considered with regard to the importance of the accountability of the LGB to the local community (while recognising the need to retain confidentiality where individuals are under discussion).
4	All governors, however appointed or elected, recognise that they are individually accountable to certain bodies or constituencies. All governors, therefore, have a duty to consider the significance of LGB discussions and decisions during their appointment. Elected governors undertake to report to their elective bodies regularly, and to initiate methods of gathering views on matters likely to be brought before the LGB, where these are of a general nature or interest connected with the welfare of the academy. Appointed governors will consider ways in which the reason for their appointment may be reflected in their contributions.
5	No governor may be mandated by his or her elective or appointing board under any circumstances, although (s)he should report any views expressed by members of that board.
6	All governors are of equal standing, unless specifically delegated.
7	All governors are appointed, and should act, for the good of the academy, whatever their constituency.
8	Many governors have other relationships with the academy, such as employee or parent. They should be particularly careful to ensure that these relationships are conducted in a proper and ethical manner, and that their standing as a governor is not compromised or open to misinterpretation.
9	Governors will attend meetings punctually and be well prepared as far as possible, having read supporting material and considered the contributions they may make on agenda items.
10	Governors will not use any material learned at meetings for other purposes, and no item designated as confidential will be discussed outside the LGB.
11	Governors accept corporate responsibility for the decisions of the LGB.

12	Governors accept corporate responsibility for the decisions of the LGB. Governors will treat other governors, staff, children, parents and anyone else they may come into contact with in the course of their work with respect. There will be no behaviour in the workplace which might be seen as bullying, victimisation or harassment.
13	Governors will consider what individual skills, personal qualities and knowledge they possess, and put them to use for the good of the academy. They will be prepared to engage in appropriate continuing professional development throughout their period of office.