



Model code of conduct Sep 2022

For Local Academy Committees (LAC)

Local Academy Committee should use a code of conduct alongside individual role descriptions (please see LAC Handbook) to ensure all members understand what is expected of them.

The NGA model code of conduct is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The code is also aligned with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour in schools and trusts.

The model code has been updated for 2022. The content of the code is largely unchanged; however, the Nolan Principles are now included. Three new statements have also been added to the code. These are marked (*) to help you review the updated code.

How to use the model code

The NGA model code of conduct is suitable for boards in all types of school or trust. However, it is designed to act as a template and should be adapted to reflect:

- your specific board and organisation
- your board's delegated responsibilities
- specific policies that you must follow (such as your [policy for academy monitoring visits](#))
- constitutional documents (such as your [articles of association](#))

Reviewing your code of conduct

Boards should review and approve their code of conduct annually, ideally at the first meeting of the autumn term. When reviewing your code, reflect on the events of the previous year and consider if any changes are required as a result.

Boards should also review their code of conduct upon any significant changes to the law or school/trust policy. NGA recommends that boards publish their code of conduct on their school/trust website.

Using your code to support induction and development

When [recruiting new volunteers](#), we recommend that boards refer candidates to their code of conduct (and role description). This will help ensure new members have a good understanding of expectations before being appointed. New members should agree to the board's code of conduct on being appointed as part of their [induction programme](#).

Chairs may also use their code of conduct to support discussions such as annual LAC Member performance reviews. In doing so, the code of conduct becomes a tool to help boards and individuals develop their governance practice.

Using your code of conduct to support effective teamwork

Effective governance requires effective teamwork: working collaboratively as colleagues with a solid understanding and respect for each other's roles.

NGA's [Effective teamwork](#) guidance sets out an approach to dealing with conflict or tension using a measured and conciliatory approach. The guidance advises that the most direct way to clarify the expectations of those governing is through a code of conduct.

Further reading

- [What governing boards and school leaders should expect from each other](#)
- [Governing board skills audit](#)
- [Model role descriptions for chairs, governors, trustees and governance professionals](#)
- [Effective teamwork](#): a guide for governing boards

NGA model code of conduct September 2022a

Once this code has been adopted by the Local Academy Committee, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

Selflessness

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

We will be truthful.

Leadership

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

We will focus on our core governance functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

As individual local academy committee members, we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our [scheme of delegation](#).

3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our academy.
4. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the academy.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the academy and local academy committee.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the academy and trust if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the academy's and trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the local academy committee, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on sub committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the academy and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe academy, local academy committee and trust protocol.
6. When visiting the academy in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with local academy committee and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each local academy committee member's contributions are valued equally.
4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the local academy committee and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of academy when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any local academy committee vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the local academy committee's business, and these will be recorded in the register of business interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the academy's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the academy and trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the local academy committee, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of LAC Member and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the academy website.
7. We accept that information relating to local academy committee members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Adopted by: Birchills CE Primary Academy on [date]

Signed: Chair of the local academy committee

The local academy committee agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the local academy committee.
