



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

# The Diocese of Chelmsford

## Vine Schools Trust

### Local Governance Code of

### Conduct Policy

This policy is a mandatory policy for all Vine Academies and must be implemented with no amendments.

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This policy applies to all Vine Governance and therefore includes the Trust Board, Local Boards, Local Governing Bodies, and Executive Boards.

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from directors, governors and academy committee members in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the academy/s and the community. Unless otherwise stated it applies to all levels of governance.

## 1 Core Strategic Functions:

- 1.1 Maintaining the historic Christian Character of the Vine/Academy as part of the Diocese of Chelmsford with:
  - 1.1.1 Reference to the Vision of the Diocesan Board of Education.
  - 1.1.2 Reference to the Vision and Values of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust.
  - 1.1.3 Reference to the historic foundation of the academy.
- 1.2 Establishing the strategic direction, by:
  - 1.2.1 Upholding and modeling 'Christian values' of the trust/academy along with the requirement to ensure the promotion of British Values.
  - 1.2.2 Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the trust/academy.
  - 1.2.3 Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets.
  - 1.2.3 Meeting statutory duties.
- 1.3 Ensuring accountability, by:
  - 1.3.1 Local Governors assisting the Vine Trust Board in the appointing of the Executive Headteacher /Headteacher.
  - 1.3.2 Monitoring progress towards targets.
  - 1.3.3 Local Governors assisting the Vine Trust Board in performance managing the Executive Headteacher / Headteacher.
  - 1.3.4 Engaging with stakeholders.
  - 1.3.5 Contributing to the strategic development plan and self-evaluation.
- 1.4 Ensuring financial probity, by:
  - 1.4.1 Local Governors setting a proposed budget to the Vine Board for approval.
  - 1.4.2 Monitoring spending against the budget, ensuring spending is within budget.
  - 1.4.3 Ensuring value for money is obtained.
  - 1.4.4 Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed and recorded on the risk register.

## 2 As individuals on one of the above bodies we agree to the following:

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## 2.1 Role & Responsibilities

- 2.1.1 We understand the purpose of the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Executive Board and the role of the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher.
- 2.1.2 We accept that all members have equal status the central concern must be the welfare of the Vine Schools Trust and each academy as a Church of England academy.
- 2.1.3 We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/Executive Board has given us delegated authority to do so and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- 2.1.4 We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board meeting.
- 2.1.5 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 is expected of a good employer.
- 2.1.6 We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- 2.1.7 We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other academies, schools and/or trusts.
- 2.1.8 We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Diocese of Chelmsford, Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust, other Vine academies and our academy. Our actions within the Trust, academy and the local community will reflect this.
- 2.1.9 In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Vine/academy we will follow the procedures established by the Vine Trust Board.
- 2.1.10 We will actively support and challenge the senior executive officer (CEO/Executive Headteacher/Headteacher).

## 2.1 Commitment

- 2.2.1 We acknowledge that accepting office as a director/local governor/academy council member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- 2.2.2 We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- 2.2.3 We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- 2.2.4 We will get to know the Trust/Academies in the Trust/Academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Trust/Academy activities.
- 2.2.5 We will visit the Trust/Academies in the Trust/Academy, with all visits arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust

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Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Academy Council/Executive Board and agreed with the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher.

- 2.1.6 We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- 2.1.7 We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board, category of director/governor/academy council member and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the Trust/Academy website.
- 2.1.8 In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to directors/governors/academy council members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase or its successor).
- 2.1.9 As well as adhering to the Nolan Principles (see below) the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/Executive Board will ensure that Christian values underpin the relationships between governors and others. These core values based on the Beatitudes may be summarised as follows:
- Faithfulness and integrity
  - Dignity and compassion
  - Humility and gentleness
  - Truth and justice
  - Forgiveness and mercy
  - Purity and holiness
  - Tolerance and peace
  - Service and sacrifice

## 2.2 Relationships

Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ and striving to develop effective working relationships with all stakeholders we:

- 2.2.1 Will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- 2.2.2 Will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other directors/governors/ members and the clerk.
- 2.2.3 Will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- 2.2.4 Are prepared to answer queries from other directors/governors/ members 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.
- 2.2.5 Will seek to develop effective working relationships with other stakeholders.

## 2.3 Confidentiality

- 2.4.1 We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside our academy.

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- 2.4.2 We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding trust/academy business arise outside of a Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ /Executive Board meeting.
- 2.4.3 We will not reveal the details of any Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Executive Board vote.
- 2.5 Conflicts of interest
- 2.5.1 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 Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body /Executive Board business 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/Academy website.
- 2.5.2 We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- 2.5.3 We will act in the best interests of the trust/academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Executive Board.
- 2.6 Breach of this code of conduct
- 2.6.1 If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Executive Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- 2.6.2 Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another director/governor/academy council member will investigate.

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 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.

## 7 'Nolan Principles' of public life

## Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions 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.

Adopted by the Trust Board/Local Board/Local Governing Body/ Academy Council/Executive Board of [name of academy] on [date].

