Sutton Grammar School Trustee

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed and updated annually in the autumn term and all those involved in any level of governance will sign a declaration on GovernorHub to confirm that they have read and understood the Sutton Grammar School Trust Code of Conduct; are prepared to make the commitment involved in becoming an active member of their Committee and Trust; will support the Trust in their work and will adhere to the Code below.

We will abide by the 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 apply the highest standards and will:

1. act within our powers
2. promote the success of the Trust
3. exercise independent judgement

4. exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
5. avoid conflicts of interest
6. not accept benefits from third parties
7. declare any interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

We will focus on our core purposes:

1. strategic leadership: defining a vision, fostering a culture and championing the strategy
2. accountability and assurance: providing robust and effective oversight of operations and performance
3. engagement: strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders

As individuals, we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core purposes rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of the Trust.
4. We agree to adhere to Trust policies and procedures.
5. We will fully cooperate with requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as disclosure and barring or right to work checks.
6. We will work collectively for the benefit of the Trust.
7. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account and with the wider school community during any visit to the school~~s.~~
8. We will consider how our decisions may affect the Trust and local community.
9. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
10. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
11. We will only speak or act on behalf of the Board and Committees if we have the authority to do so.
12. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
13. When making or responding to complaints, we will follow the established procedures.
14. We will strive to uphold the Trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
15. We will not do anything, either in undertaking our governance role, or outside this, which brings the Trust or school into disrepute
16. We will have regard to our responsibilities under the Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
17. We will understand the responsibilities of trustees as directors under company law and trustees under charity law.
18. We promise to be the guardian of the charitable objects (the purpose) of the Trust.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups or acting in link roles 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 school well and welcome opportunities to be involved in school activities.
5. We will visit the school and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol. We will also report back to the board in writing to share the knowledge we gain.
6. When visiting a school 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, prioritise mandatory training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community.
2. We will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities, sector bodies and other trusts.
3. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside meetings.
4. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
5. We will use email, messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, and social media responsibly and in accordance with Trust Policies, respecting the same standard of confidentiality expected in face-to-face interactions.
6. We will support the Chair and Chairs of Committees in their role of leading the Board or Committee and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of the Trust when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will practice good ICT security, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance.
3. We will not reveal the details of any board or committee vote.
4. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
5. We will maintain confidentiality during and 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 board's business, and these will be recorded in the Trust's Register of Business Interests.
2. We will also declare any interest at the start of any meeting that is relevant to the matters to be discussed at the meeting, or during the meeting if we become aware of an interest.
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 Trust's website.
5. We will act as a Trustee; 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 trust board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the Trust website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about Schools, GIAS), some of which will be publicly available as outlined in the Governor and Trustee Privacy notice.
8. We accept that, as Directors of the Trust, required information will be published about us by Companies House.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this Code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions including removal from the board as a last resort.

We are aware of the Sutton Grammar School Trusts Whistleblowing Policy and will raise concerns about malpractice or wrongdoing in accordance with that policy.