

Governors Code of Conduct

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Code of Conduct for BDAT Academy Board and Local Governing Bodies

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from BDAT Governors and Trustees in order for the Multi Academy Trust and local governing bodies to properly carry out its work within the Academies and community.

How does governance work in a MAT?

The legal basis and responsibilities of a MAT are similar to that of a single Academy Trust but may have additional tiers of governance to allow for the size of the Trust.

Roles and responsibilities within a Trust include:

- **Members** – who establish the Trust and set out the constitution of the Academy Trust through signing the memorandum and articles of association and master funding agreement. They can dismiss and appoint governors/directors.
- **Trustees** - who set the strategic direction and are accountable to the Secretary of State for the performance of the schools within it. They are also governors and Trustees but are best described as Directors to distinguish them from members of the LGB.
- **Local Governing Bodies and local governors (LGB)** – who oversee different functions within the Academies within the Trust as delegated to them through the Trust scheme of delegation by the Directors.
- **Chief Executive Officer** – legal role, provides professional and paid for leadership of the Trust.
- **Individual principals or Heads of schools/Exec Principals** – responsible for the day to day running of each Academy in the MAT and who are accountable to the Directors/LGB depending on where responsibility is delegated within the MAT. **BDAT retains MAT level responsibility as the Chair of the LGB is also a Trustee.**

Core functions of the MAT board:

The board of Trustees, led by the Chair of the Trust has three core functions:

Core function	Ofsted criteria for effective governance
Setting Strategic Direction for the Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarity of ethos and vision for the Trust - Engaging stakeholders including schools - Meeting statutory duties
Creating robust accountability to improve school performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using data to provide challenge and hold leaders to account for teaching, achievement, local leadership and governance, behaviour and safety - Performance managing the Head Teachers - Contributing to the school self-evaluation and evaluating GB impact
Ensuring best use of financial resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solvency and effective financial management - Producing consolidated financial accounts - Effective use of pupil premium and other resources to narrow the gap

Core functions of Local Governing Bodies:

The Governors, led by the Chair of the LGB has three core functions:

Core function	Ofsted criteria for effective governance
Establishing the strategic direction for the Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the Academy - Agreeing the Academy improvement strategy with priorities and targets - Meeting statutory duties
Ensuring operational accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring progress towards targets - Performance managing the Headteacher/Principal in partnership with Trust - Engaging with stakeholders - Contributing to school self-evaluation
Ensuring financial probity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting the budget - Monitoring spending against the budget - Ensuring value for money is obtained - Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

Code of Conduct for BDAT Trustees and Governors:-

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the Trust and local governing body and the role of the Headteacher/Principal.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust or governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust or governing body meeting.
- 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.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our Academy as part of the BDAT Trust. Our actions within the Academy and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Academy we will follow the procedures established by the governing body taking into account the Trust Media Handling Policy.
- We will actively support and challenge the Head teacher/Principal.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Trustee or governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust, 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 why we are unable to. A governor shall cease to hold office if she/he is absent without permission of the governors from all meetings held within a period of six months, and the governors resolve that his/her office be vacated.
- We will get to know the Trust and Academies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit schools, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher/Principal.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training and provide evidence of this to the Trust.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing body/Trust board, category of Governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.

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 Trustees and 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 Trustees and 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 headteachers, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

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 school or within the Trust Central Team.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Trust and school business arise.
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust or governing body vote.

Conflicts of interest

- 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 or governing body 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 school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the Trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair of the Trust or chair of the local governing body and the chair will investigate. The governing body 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 we believe has breached this code the CEO of the Trust should be informed and a Trustee of BDAT will lead the investigation.

In addition all Trustees and Governors will operate according to 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.