

## **PDET Code of Conduct for Academy Governance Committees (AGCs) Members**

This code sets out Peterborough Diocese Education Trust's (PDET) (referred to as PDET or the Trust in this document) expectations on and commitment required from AGC members in order for AGCs to properly carry out their work within the academy and the community.

**This Code should be read in conjunction with:**

- ❖ **PDET's Articles of Association;**
- ❖ **The Board's Remit and Scheme of Delegation (incorporating Roles and Functions Overview)** (Scheme of Delegation);
- ❖ **The document entitled 'The Role of the Academy Governance Committee'** (the Role of the AGC);
- ❖ **The Terms of References for Academy Governance Committees (TORs); and**
- ❖ **PDET's Academy Governance Committees' Handbook** (Handbook).

(All these documents can be found on *Governor Hub*).

**As individuals on the AGC we agree to the following:**

### **Role & Responsibilities**

- ❖ We have read the Handbook, Scheme of Delegation, the Role of the AGC and TORs and understand the purpose of the AGC and the role of the Directors and the headteacher.
- ❖ We accept that we have no authority to act individually, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the AGC when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- ❖ We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the AGC. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside AGC meetings.
- ❖ We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- ❖ We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- ❖ We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the Trust, our academy, the community and other academies/schools.
- ❖ We understand the ethos of PDET and will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our academy as a Church of England academy within PDET. Our actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this.

- ❖ In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.
- ❖ We will actively support the headteacher. by acting as a critical friend
- ❖ We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the AGC and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation
- ❖ We will respect the role of the headteacher and their responsibility for the day to day management of the academy and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- ❖ We agree to adhere to the academy's rules and policies and the policies and procedures of the Trust.
- ❖ We will be alert to risks facing the academy and cooperate with the headteacher to mitigate them.
- ❖ We will draw any unresolved and serious concerns to the attention of the Central Executive Team at the earliest opportunity.
- ❖ We will report to the Trust Directors a summary of the activities of the AGC by submitting a report to the TGC annually.
- ❖ When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current Trust/academy policy even if they might be different to our personal views;
- ❖ When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the Trust and the academy

## **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 AGC and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on panels 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.
- ❖ We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in academy activities.
- ❖ We will visit the academy, with all visits arranged in advance with the headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust/academy and agreed with the headteacher.
- ❖ When visiting the academy in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor.
- ❖ We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- ❖ We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the AGC, attendance records, relevant

business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the academy's website and may be published elsewhere.

- ❖ In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (GIAS).

## **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, the clerk to the AGC and academy staff both in and outside of meetings.
- ❖ We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- ❖ We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the TGC any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (*see below*) or which may place pupils at risk.
- ❖ 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 Trust, the local church, 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 the academy.
- ❖ We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding academy business arise outside an AGC meeting.
- ❖ We will not reveal the details of any AGC vote.
- ❖ We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

## **Conflicts of interest**

- ❖ We will record any pecuniary or other interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the AGC's 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 academy/Trust'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 academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the AGC by staff or parents.

### **Ceasing to be a governor**

- ❖ We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office.

### **Breach of this code of conduct**

- ❖ If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the AGC will only recommend suspension/removal to the Directors 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, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

In holding the responsibility of a governor, members of the AGC should conduct themselves in accordance with these seven principles. (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.

**Integrity** – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity** – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness** – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

***Signed by [name of governor]***

***Date [       ]***