

# Wadebridge School

## Code of Conduct for Trustees and Members

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### 1. Corporate Governance

- 1.1 Governance at Wadebridge School operates on the principle of everyone – regardless of their role – accepting collective responsibility for decisions taken.
- 1.2 As Wadebridge School is an Academy Trust the main responsibility for governance is held by the Board of Trustee who are the accountable body. They in turn are supported by a group of independent Members who oversee the effectiveness of governance.
- 1.3 Any delegated authority to make decisions as an individual, board or committee are defined in Terms of Reference or recorded in formal minutes.

### 2. Application of this Code

- 2.1 This Code applies to all Trustees and Members of the school when exercising any of the Trust Board's powers delegated to them under the articles. Every reference to Trustee will also apply to a Member unless specifically stated.
- 2.2 By accepting appointment to the Trust Board, each Trustee agrees to accept the provisions of this Code together with the Trust's Articles of Association.
- 2.3 Trustees will sign the Code when appointed and annually as part of their annual declaration form.
- 2.4 The Governance Professional will be responsible for ensuring that this Code is reviewed annually.

### 3. Responsibilities of a Trustee

#### 3.1 Commitment

- We are aware of and will comply with the Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life (Appendix A) and the Good Governance Standards for Public Life (Appendix B)
- We are aware of and will comply with our duties as a Charity Trustee as defined by the [Charity Commission](#)
- We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Our actions within the school, the local community and when using any form of communication – including social media - will reflect this
- We will comply with any protocols regarding attending and participating in governance meetings – either in person or virtually
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the School we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy including reading emails and papers, responding to requests, attending meetings and training sessions
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher
- We agree to undergo an enhanced disclosure DBS Check and will resign immediately if any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings are disclosed which conflict with our role as a Trustee

### *3.2 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
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher and staff, Trustees and the community, other trusts and relevant agencies.

### *3.3 Confidentiality and Data Security*

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or individual schools
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding School business arise outside a governance meeting. Official statements to the media should go through the Chair or the Headteacher
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust Board vote
- We will only use the allocated School email account for governance-related communications and adhere to all relevant School procedures and policies in relation to ICT and data security

### *3.4 Conflicts of Interest*

- We will follow the principles and procedures laid out in the school's Conflicts of Interest policy
- We will act in the best interests of the School as a whole and not as a representative of any group or school

### *3.5 Change of circumstances*

- We will inform the Governance Professional as soon as possible should any changes to our circumstances occur during our term as a Trustee, including if:
  - there are any changes to the interests which have been declared
  - we become, or cease to be, a company Trustee, board member or Trustee of another company or charity
  - we become a Trustee or Member of another school or Academy Trust
  - our occupation changes
  - we move house
  - we become employed by the School or a local authority

## **4. Breach of this Code**

4.1 Every Trustee is under a duty to report any breach of this Code or any grounds for believing that a breach of the Code has occurred to the chair (and if the allegation is about the Chair, to the Governance Professional).

4.2 Failing to report a breach of the Code is itself a breach of this Code.

4.3 Any breach of this Code will be treated extremely seriously by both the Trust Board and the School and may result in suspension or removal from the Trust Board.

4.4 In the event of a breach of this Code each Trustee agrees to participate fully in any investigations procedure instigated by the Trust Board and to abide by any sanction that may be imposed on them by the Trust Board for such breach.

**The Trust Board adopted this Code of Conduct on 7 September 2021.**

***Individual undertaking:***

As a member of the Trust Board I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the School at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the School, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the School, the Trust Board, the Headteacher or staff.

**Appendix A: The Seven Principles of Public Life**

*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.

## **Appendix B: Good Governance Standard for Public Services**

The standard prepared by The Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services in 2005 comprises six core principles of good governance, each with its supporting principles. Set out below is an extract of these core principles.

By accepting appointment to the Trust Board, each Trustee agrees to accept the provisions of this Code.

*Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users. We will:*

- be clear about the Trust's purpose and its intended outcomes for citizens and pupils
- make sure that pupils receive a high quality education
- make sure that taxpayers receive value for money

*Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles. We will:*

- be clear about the functions of the board
- be clear about the responsibilities of non-executives and the executive, and making sure that those responsibilities are carried out
- be clear about relationships between Trustees and the public

*Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour. We will:*

- put organisational values into practice
- behave in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance

*Good governance means taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk.*

*We will:*

- be rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken
- have and use good quality information, advice and support
- make sure that an effective risk management system is in operation

*Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the Trust Board to be effective. We will:*

- make sure that appointed and elected Trustees have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well
- develop the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluate their performance, as individuals and as a group
- strike a balance, in the membership of the board, between continuity and renewal

*Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real. We will:*

- understand formal and informal accountability relationships
- take an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public
- take an active and planned approach to responsibility to staff
- engage effectively with institutional stakeholders