



Triumph Learning Trust

Aspiration - Collaboration - Innovation

Governance Code of Conduct

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Scope of Policy	3
3. Responsibilities	3
4. The Governance Role	3
5. Code of Conduct	4
Commitment	5
Relationships	5
Confidentiality	5
Conduct	6
Training and Development	6
Meetings	6
Visiting the School	7

1. Introduction

The following provides a statement of the broad principles by people acting in any governance role within Triumph Learning Trust schools should operate.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to any employee of the Trust acting in any governance role, such as Trustees, Members and members of Local Accountability Boards.

This policy should be read in combination with the Trust Code of Conduct (TLT-SP-004-I) which equally applies to volunteer roles within the Trust.

3. Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation and delivery of the curriculum.

Trustees and Local Accountability Board members have a responsibility for monitoring and keeping the policies, development plan and procedures within which the schools operate under review, within the specific terms of reference of the board/committee they belong to.

4. The Governance Role

The main aim of the schools is to raise the educational achievement of all its pupils, following the vision and ethos of Triumph Learning Trust.

All Trustees and Local Accountability Board members will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on the Trust's three roles:

- Setting the vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school(s), within the overall vision of the trust;
- Holding the headteacher(s) and senior leaders to account for the educational performance of the school(s), its pupils and the performance management of staff;
- Ensuring investment in educational improvement is value for money and having an impact;

The NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

The central concern of all Trustees and Local Accountability Board members is the success of the school(s) as a whole. All have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times. All Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools both within and outside Triumph Learning Trust; they should encourage open and transparent governance or advisory role and should be seen to act in this way.

Various pieces of legislation define the duties, powers and responsibilities of each Local Accountability Board and Triumph Learning Trust Board and the procedures to be followed

and this code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, in line with their Articles of Association, The Academies Handbook and Scheme of Delegation.

This Code of Conduct is designed to assist members of each Local Accountability Board and the Triumph Learning Trust Board, as well as Headteachers, in the normal conduct of their general responsibilities. It is expected that a balanced view of Governance is maintained, harmony is achieved and unnecessary conflict avoided. It is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which all will operate and can be amended to include specific reference to the ethos of the school. 'School' includes academies, and it applies to all level of school Governance. Once approved by the Local Accountability Board and Trust Board the Code of Conduct will apply to all Members and Trustees within Triumph Learning Trust Board.

5. Code of Conduct

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

- **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.
- **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.

We will:

- act within our powers;
- promote the success of the trust;
- exercise independent judgement;
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- not accept benefits from third parties;
- declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

Commitment

Being a Trustee or Local Accountability Board member involves a level of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on any board/committee of the Trust or its schools.

All Trustees and Local Accountability Board members are required to attend at least four meetings per academic year. It is imperative that as many members as possible of a board or committee attend each meeting. Apologies must be sent to the clerk in advance of the meeting for them to be recorded as received. Apologies not received will be recorded as such.

All Trustees or Local Accountability Board members who miss two meetings in any academic year or who fail to send apologies on two occasions in any academic year will be contacted by the Chair of the board or committee for an initial discussion to ascertain if there is any support that they can provide to enable the member to attend meetings or if they would prefer to step down. Further absence/failure to apologise would mean that the Trustee or Local Accountability Board member does not meet the minimum requirement for the role (four meetings per year). This may result in a request from the chair for the Trustee or Local Accountability Board members to reconsider their position. All Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should involve themselves actively in the work of the boards and committees and accept a fair share of the responsibilities, including service on committees (if any) and accepting link roles. Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should know the school well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in school activities.

Relationships

Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted. Local Accountability Board members should develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents, other relevant agencies and the local community.

Confidentiality

Trustees and Local Accountability Board members must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the respective board/body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Although decisions reached at meetings are normally available through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Any decisions made, whether or not supported individually by you as a Trustee or a Local Accountability Board member, should always be actively supported

once the board/committee has made the decision collectively. Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the board/committee.

Conduct

Trustees and Local Accountability Board members should:

- Express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions, supporting those decisions at all times in public forums.
- Only speak or act on behalf of the board/committee when they have been specifically asked to do so.
- Ensure that all visits to school are undertaken within a framework, which has been established by the trust and agreed with the headteacher.
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, refer to the Triumph Learning Trust Complaints Policy for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.
- Have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community and externally should reflect this
- Record any pecuniary interest they may have connection with the board/committee's business in the register of pecuniary interests. Where an interest is declared, the Trustee or Local Accountability Board members must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.

Training and Development

Attending training and development is important for all Trustees and Local Accountability Board members. It benefits the school and can help to develop effective teamwork. Trustees and Local Accountability Board members are encouraged to undertake appropriate training to further their individual interests and responsibilities within the board/committee and it's work as a whole.

Meetings

Individual Trustees and Local Accountability Board members do not have any authority in school. It is the collective decisions of all the Trustees and Local Accountability Board members together that carry authority. It follows that if a board/committee is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial.

Meetings Principles

As a Trustee/ Local Accountability Board members we expect:

- People to attend regularly and be punctual;
- An agenda and relevant documents to reach me five working days before the meeting;
- An agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;
- A chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point;
- All contributions to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;
- The decision-making process to be quite clear;

- Trustees and Local Accountability Board members to work together and not to be stubbornly partisan;
- Trustees and Local Accountability Board members to take collective responsibility for decisions;
- Minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting;
- As a parent or carer, that the focus remains on the implementation of policy in the school, ensuring views are not influenced by their child, their teacher or their class.

Others can expect Trustees or Local Accountability Board members to:

- Attend regularly and be punctual;
- Read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;
- Bring papers to the meeting (paper or via Governor Hub);
- Make relevant and positive contributions;
- Listen to and consider what other people want to say;
- Accept equal share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that an individual does not personally agree with.

Visiting the School

Local Accountability Board members do not have an automatic right to enter the school. However, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to the school in order to see schools' policies in action and to understand how the school works. In order to avoid misunderstandings arising, every Local Accountability Board is required to abide by the following principles:

- All Local Accountability Board members should visit the school.
- The total number of visits per term should be agreed in advance with the headteacher. Too many visits can be disruptive to pupils' learning.
- The date and timing of a visit should be arranged in advance with the headteacher and other staff involved.
- Visits should have a clear focus, linked to a school policy, a curriculum area or an aspect of the school development plan.
- Local Accountability Board members should understand that their visits do not replace professional inspections or the monitoring role of the headteacher. Local Accountability Board members should not make judgements about the effectiveness of the teaching that they see.
- If Local Accountability Board members are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen, this should be discussed with the headteacher.
- After the visit, the Local Accountability Board members should report back, in writing to the Local Accountability Board. A written report should be discussed with the headteacher before publication.