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Members, Trustees and Local Governors Code of Conduct

#GV2

**Last amended 30th September 2025**

**To be reviewed no later than August 31st 2028**

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**Common abbreviations and acronyms**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AA** | Admissions Authority | **HASH** | Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads |
| **AAI** | Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen) | **HBV** | Honour Based Violence |
| **ACM** | Asbestos Containing Materials | **HR** | Human Resources |
| **AFH** | Academies Financial Handbook | **H&S** | Health and Safety |
| **AHT** | Assistant Headteacher | **HoS** | Head of School |
| **AIR** | Attendance Intervention Reviews | **HSE** | Health and Safety Executive |
| **APIs** | Application Programme Interfaces | **ICO** | Information Commissioners Office |
| **BAME** | Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds | **IHP** | Individual Healthcare Plan |
| **BCP** | Business Continuity Plan | **IRMS** | Information and Records Management Society |
| **BFR** | Budget Forecast Return | **IWF** | Internet Watch Foundation |
| **CAMHS** | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | **KCSIE** | Keeping Children Safe in Education |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer | **KS1/2/3/4** | Key Stage 1/2/3/4 |
| **CFO** | Chief Financial Officer | **LAC** | Looked After Child |
| **CIF** | Condition Improvement Fund | **LADO** | Local Authority Designated Officer |
| **CIN** | Child in Need | **LGB** | Local Governing Body |
| **CLA** | Children Looked After | **LLC** | Low-Level Concerns |
| **CMIE** | Child Missing in Education | **LSA** | Learning Support Assistants |
| **COO** | Chief Operating Officer | **MASH** | Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub |
| **COSHH** | Control and Substances Hazardous to Health | **MAT** | Multi-Academy Trust |
| **CP** | Child Protection | **MFA** | Multi-Factor Authentication |
| **CPD** | Continuing Professional Development | **MFL** | Modern Foreign Language |
| **CSCS** | Children’s Social Care Services | **NCSC’s** | National Cyber Security Centres |
| **CSE** | Child Sexual Exploitation | **NPQEL** | National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership |
| **CTIRU** | Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit | **PA** | Persistent Absence |
| **CWD** | Children with Disabilities | **PAN** | Published Admission Number |
| **DBS** | Disclosure and Barring Service | **PECR** | Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations |
| **DDSL** | Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PEP** | Personal Education Plan |
| **DfE** | Department for Education | **PEEP** | Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan |
| **DHT** | Deputy Headteacher | **PEx** | Permanent Exclusion |
| **DSE** | Display Screen Equipment | **PLAC** | Previously Looked After Child |
| **DSL** | Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PP** | Pupil Premium |
| **DPO** | Data Protection Officer | **PSHE** | Personal, Social and Health Education |
| **EAL** | English as an Additional Language | **PSED** | Public Sector Equality Duty |
| **ECT** | Early Career Teacher | **PTFA** | Parent, Teacher and Friends Association |
| **EHA** | Early Help Assessment | **RIDDOR** | Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations |
| **EHCNA** | Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment | **RHE** | Relationships and Health Education |
| **EHCP** | Education, Health and Care Plan | **RSHE** | Relationships, Sex and Health Education |
| **EHE** | Elective Home Education | **SALT** | Speech and Language Therapist |
| **ELSA** | Emotional, Literacy and Support Assistant | **SARC** | Sexual Assault Referral Centre |
| **ESFA** | Education and Skills Funding Agency | **SBM** | School Business Manager |
| **EVC** | Educational Visit Coordinator | **SCCs** | Standard Contractual Clauses |
| **EWO** | Education Welfare and Safeguarding Support Officer | **SDQ** | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire |
| **EYFS** | Early Years Foundation Stage | **SEMH** | Social, Emotional, and Mental Health |
| **FBV** | Fundamental British Values | **SENCO** | Special Educational Needs Coordinator |
| **FGM** | Female Genital Mutilation | **SEND** | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities |
| **FOI** | Freedom of Information | **SLA’s** | Service Level Agreements |
| **FSM** | Free School Meals | **STEM** | Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths |
| **FTS** | Find a Tender Service | **TA** | Teaching Assistant |
| **GAG** | General Annual Grant | **TCAT** | Three Counties Academy Trust |
| **GDPR** | General Data Protection Regulation | **VSH** | Virtual School Headteacher |
| **GIAS** | Get Information about Schools |  |  |
| **GPA** | Government Procurement Arrangement |  |  |

**Statement of intent**

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) recognise and value the effort taken by our Members, Trustees and Local Governors to contribute towards our Trust and schools. We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many school activities and processes would be at risk if it were not for your help. As a result, we want to make sure that your time spent as a Member, Trustee or Local Governor is productive and enjoyable.

Irrespective of role, all Members, Trustees and Local Governors are bound by this Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines what is expected from Members, Trustees and Local Governors, including Associate Trustees, Associate Local Governors or individuals “in attendance”, and sets out the Code of Conduct with which all Members, Trustees and Local Governors are required to comply.

# Core functions of governance

TCAT Members, Trustees and Local Governors will focus on the three core functions of governance according to their remit and classification:

* Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
* Holding Executive and School Leaders to account for the educational performance of TCAT schools and their pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
* Overseeing the financial performance of TCAT and our schools and making sure its money is well spent

The Trust Board and where delegated under the TCAT Scheme of Delegation Local Governing Bodies will ensure it understands and meets the following key features of effective governance:

* Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy
* Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance
* People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
* Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
* Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
* Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors are required to fulfil their duties in line with the law, the ‘[Academy Trust Governance Guide](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/-governance-in-academy-trusts)’ and ‘[The 7 principles of public life](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2)’. In addition, all Members, Trustees and Local Governors will be expected to be:

* Committed
* Confident
* Curious
* Challenging
* Collaborative
* Critical
* Creative

# Standards for conduct, behaviour and practice

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will agree to meeting the standards outlined in this section.

1. **Undertake the roles and responsibilities of a** Member, Trustee or Local Governors

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Accept that their role is strategic and, therefore, focus on the core functions of governance rather than the day-to-day management of the trust or school
* Respect the role of the Executive Headteacher/CEO, Headteacher/Head of School and senior leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of their schools, never acting in a way that could undermine such arrangements
* Accept that they have no legal authority to act individually, except when they have been given delegated authority in writing to do so
* Act fairly and without prejudice
* Apply the Equality Act 2010 in all governance matters
* Ensure the Trust Board and Local governing Bodies have a diverse composition which, as far as possible, reflects the composition of the local community
* Encourage open governance
* Accept collective responsibility at the appropriate level for decisions made by the Trust Board or Local Governing Bodies
* Stand by decisions that the Trust Board or Local Governing Bodies makes as a collective
* Be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of their schools
* Consider how decisions may affect the community
* Where decisions and actions conflict with ‘The 7 principles of public life’ or may place pupils at risk, bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities
* Actively support and respectfully challenge the leadership of the Trust and our schools at the appropriate level
* Follow the procedures established by the Trust Board
* Only speak on behalf of the Trust Board or a Local Governing Body when they have been specifically authorised in writing to do so
* When formally speaking or writing in a governing role, ensure their comments reflect current TCAT and school policy even if that may differ from their personal views
* For Trustees, fulfil their duties as an employer, acting in a manner that is expected of a good proprietor
* Adhere to each school’s rules and policies, and the procedures of the Trust Board in accordance with the relevant governing documents and law
* Provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in each school are effective and support the delivery of a robust trust-wide, whole school approach to safeguarding

1. **Demonstrate commitment to the role**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Undertake mandatory training and access the additional training and support available to fully understand their role, including safeguarding and child protection (including online, and filtering and monitoring systems) training at induction
* Undertake further training appropriate to their area of monitoring or responsibility – this can be online
* Be committed to the amount of time and energy the role involves
* Be actively involved in the role and accept their fair share of responsibilities within the Trust Board or Local Governing Body
* Give full effort to the attendance of meetings. Where a Member, Trustee or Local Governor cannot attend a meeting, they will contact the Governance Professional or their Clerk in advance to give their apologies and the reason for their non-attendance
* Come to meetings prepared, including having accessed and read the paperwork prior to the meeting
* Visit TCAT schools for which they have a responsibility to undertake agreed monitoring or participate in school events, with visits being arranged beforehand with the Headteacher/Head of School and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust Board or LGB where delegated
* Be prepared to support and to challenge when needed

1. **Behave appropriately**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Pay due regard to their position of public office and adhere to ‘The 7 principles of public life’:
  + Selflessness
  + Integrity
  + Objectivity
  + Accountability
  + Openness
  + Honesty
  + Leadership
* Acknowledge the time, effort and skills demonstrated in the execution of delegated functions by other members of the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies
* Take into account any concerns expressed about their delegated function and be prepared to answer queries from other Members, Trustees or Local Governors regarding their role
* Act in the best interests of TCAT and our schools and pupils; Members, Trustees and Local Governors will not act in a manner that will bring TCAT or our schools into disrepute

1. **Build relationships**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Seek to develop open, honest and effective working relationships with the Executive Headteacher/CEO, Headteacher/Head of School, staff and parents at our schools, as well as any other relevant body
* Continuously strive to work as a team
* Express their views openly, in a courteous and respectful manner

1. **Maintain confidentiality**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Maintain complete confidentiality both inside and outside TCAT and our schools when matters discussed between Staff, Members, Trustees or Local Governors are deemed confidential, or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils
* Not reveal details of a Members Board, Trust Board or Local Governing Body vote
* Operate in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
* Maintain confidentiality even after they leave the Members Board, Trust Board or Local Governing Body

1. **Be transparent**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Accept and consent that in the interests of open and transparent governance, their names, dates of appointment, terms of office, roles, attendance records and any conflicts of interest will be published on TCAT and the school’s websites
* Accept and consent to information relating to them, as members of the Members Board, Trust Board or Local Governing Body, being logged on Get Information about Schools (GIAS). This information will be given by Members, Trustees and Local Governors, but in doing so governors should understand that any information provided to the Trust Board must be shared with the Secretary of State via GIAS

1. **Declare conflicts of interest**

All Members, Trustees and Local Governors will:

* Act in the best interests of TCAT and our schools at all times, and not act in the interest of, or as a representative of, any group or individual
* Declare any business, personal or other interests they have in connection to the Members Board, Trust Board or Local Governing Bodies interests and record these in the Declared Conflicts of Interest Register
* Declare any interest they may have in an item of business on the agenda and immediately remove themselves from the meeting while it is under discussion. Any conflict of interest will be declared at the start of any meeting, should the situation arise

# Breaching the code

If a Trustee or Local Governor breaches this Code of Conduct, the issue will be raised with the Chair of the Trust Board, they or an appropriately senior Trustee, who will investigate the concern. In the event that it is believed the Chair of the Trust Board has breached this Code of Conduct, a Vice-Chair of the Trust Board will undertake the investigation. If a Member breaches this Code of Conduct, the issue will be raised with the Chair of the Members Board, who will investigate the concern. In the event that it is believed the Chair of the Members Board has breached this Code of Conduct, a Vice-Chair of the Members Board will undertake the investigation. In extenuating circumstances and only after all interaction with the Trust Board has been exhausted, the Members Board can remove Trustees.

The Members Board or Trust Board as appropriate will attempt to resolve any difficulties or disputes in a constructive manner before suspension or removal is considered. The Members Board will only remove a Trustee as a last resort. Equally, the Trust Board will only suspend or remove a Trustee or Local Governor from their post as a last resort. If the need arises to suspend a Trustee or Local Governor, The Trust Board will ensure a fair and objective process by implementing the following procedure:

* A resolution to remove a Trustee or Local Governor from office will be included on an agenda and circulated to all members of the Trust Board
* A meeting will be held and the resolution to remove the Trustee or Local Governor from office will be fully explained
* Trustees will give due and careful consideration to the reasons given to remove the Trustee or Governor from office
* The Trustee or Local Governor whom it has been proposed to remove from the Trust Board or Local Governing Body will be given the opportunity to make a statement in response to the resolution to remove them from office
* Within 14 days of the first meeting, a second meeting must be held and an item specifying that the Trust Board will confirm their decision included on the agenda
* Any elected staff or parent Local Governor who has been disqualified from their role and removed from office will be disqualified from serving as a Trustee or Local Governor and holding office for a period of five years. This period is taken from the date immediately after the day they were disqualified from their elected role. Given the consequence of the five-year disqualification period, the Trust Board’s power to remove an elected parent or staff Local Governor will only be used in exceptional and serious circumstances which may include the following:
  + Serious misconduct
  + Repeated serious incompetence
  + Engagement in conduct which aims to undermine fundamental British values
  + Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the Trust Board and its Local Governing Bodies
  + Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of TCAT and our schools

A Trustee or Governor who has been removed from the Trust Board or a Local Governing Body has the right of appeal. The Trustee or Governor should exercise their right of appeal by writing to the Governance Professional within 10 working days of their removal from the Trust Board or Local Governing Body, making clear the reasons for their appeal.

On receipt of an appeal, the Trust Board will establish an independent appeal panel. The appeal panel will comprise a panel of three Trustees which may include Trustees from other school’s or an appropriate representative from the LA.

# Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board appointed Trustee and the Trust Board.

Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to Executive Leaders and the Governance Professional who in turn will alert Local Governing Body Clerks.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st August 2028.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed by: | | | |
|  | Executive Headteacher/CEO | Date: |  |
|  | Board appointed Trustee | Date: |  |

# Appendix A: Code of Conduct Individual Acknowledgement Form

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| --- | --- |
| **Name of Member, Trustee or Local Governor** |  |
| **Role on the Members Board, Trust Board or Local Governing Body** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Please tick the appropriate box once you have read and understood the following documents** | |
| Behaviour Policy (Local Governors only) |  |
| Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (SG1) |  |
| Health and Safety Policy (HS1) |  |
| Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (GN19) |  |
| Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (GN20) |  |
| Data Protection Policy (FI20) |  |
| Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (HR3) |  |
| Complaints Policy and Procedures (GN9) |  |
| ‘Keeping children safe in education’ |  |

I hereby acknowledge the terms detailed within the Members, Trustees and Local Governors Code of Conduct and agree to abide by this code whilst I am an acting member of TCAT governance. I understand that the role is of a voluntary nature and, therefore, I will not receive payment for my duties. The Member, Trustee and Local Governor Allowances Policy sets out any pecuniary claims that can be made by Members, Trustees or Local Governors whilst acting on behalf of TCAT in an official capacity.

Signature:

Date: