



## Code of Conduct for Governance

The Quantock Education Trust (QET) governing body comprises members, trustees, and local governors for each school. As individuals on the governing body, we agree to the following:

### Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the executive team/Headteacher/Head of School.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside governing body meetings.
- 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 trust/school. Our actions across the trust, within each school, and with the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive team/Headteacher/Head of School

### Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office on the governing body involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, 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 do so.
- We will get to know the trust/school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in trust/school activities.
- We will visit school(s), with all visits arranged in advance with the executive team/Headteacher/Head of School and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body.
- 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 government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the trust/school website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to members of the governing body will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase).
- 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 others.
- 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 members of the governing body 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 executive team/Headteacher/Head of School, staff and parents, the trust, 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.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding trust/school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any 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 governing body'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 trust/school 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/school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body.

### **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 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, another governing body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

### **Principles and personal attributes**

The principles and personal attributes that we bring to the governing body are as important as our skills and knowledge. These qualities enable us to use our skills and knowledge to function well as part of a team and make an active contribution to effective governance.

We will fulfil our duties in line with the seven principles of public life, the Nolan principles. These are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honest
- Leadership

We will be mindful of the responsibility under equality legislation, recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion. We will strive to understand the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people. In addition, we will demonstrate the following attributes:

- **Committed**
  - Devoting the required time and energy to the role and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for young people.
  - Prepared to give time, skills, and knowledge to developing themselves and other in order to create highly effective governance.
- **Confident**
  - Having an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations.
  - Be willing to express their opinion and to play an active role on the governing body.
- **Curious**
  - Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach.
  - Understanding the value of meaningful questioning.
- **Challenging**
  - Providing appropriate challenge to the status quo.
  - Not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.
- **Collaborative**
  - Prepared to listen to and work in partnership with others.
  - Understanding the importance of building strong working relationships within the governing body and with executive leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils/students, the local community, and employers.
- **Critical**
  - Understanding the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support.
  - Self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve own and whole governing body effectiveness.

- **Creative**
  - Able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving.
  - Recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.