



# St Luke Academies Trust



## Code of Conduct for all members of St Luke Academies Trust/ Local Governing Bodies

**Presented to Directors: 19th April 2017**

**Adopted by Directors: 19th April 2017**

**Review Date: April 2018**

### Statement of Intent

At St Luke Academies Trust and Our Lady of Walsingham we recognise and value the effort taken by members of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body who contribute towards St Luke Academies Trust and Our Lady of Walsingham. We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many Trust and 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 part of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body is productive and enjoyable.

This policy outlines what is expected from members of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body and sets out the Code of Conduct which all members are required to comply with.

Signed by:

..... Chair of Board of Directors/Chair of Governors

Date: .....

## **Our Vision**

The vision of St Luke Academies Trust is to develop each of its schools as welcoming and inclusive communities, where faith is nurtured, excellence in learning is achieved and pupils are inspired to serve others, following the example of Jesus.

We aspire to follow the Church's mission; to make Christ known to all people, placing Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives.

The expectation of the Trust Board is that the work of all members of St Luke Academies Trust is based on trust, collaboration and respect, with all members and their contributions equally valued.

## **Our Core Principles**

Our Core Principles, as expressed in *Principles, Practices and Concerns* (Bishops' Conference 1996) are that our schools will promote:

- the search for excellence as an integral part of the spiritual quest;
- the uniqueness of the individual made in God's image and loved by Him;
- the education of the whole person based on the belief that the human and divine are inseparable;
- the education of all, with the particular duty to care for the poor and disadvantaged;
- the promotion of social justice in every aspect of our work.

## **Our Aims**

We aim to secure:

For All

Christian values at the heart of all activities;

- faithfulness and integrity;
- dignity and compassion;
- humility and gentleness;
- truth and justice;
- forgiveness and mercy;
- purity and holiness;
- tolerance and peace

For Learners

- Schools where children come first and all activities reflect this.
- Inclusive schools that promote the highest expectations for every individual.
- Every lesson good or better.
- Every child enabled to make progress and fulfil their God-given potential.
- Every individual nurtured emotionally and spiritually and encouraged to learn independently.
- Celebration of diversity.

For Staff

- A working environment strengthened and nurtured by our Catholic faith.
- Mutual support linked to priorities.

- Collaborative work in a system of self-improving schools.
- A community of peer led professional learning, reflection, challenge and support.

#### For Communities

- Schools assisting parents in the education and religious formation of their children;
- Schools to be proud of, rooted in partnership with and service to our Catholic communities;
- Catholic schools that look outwards and work towards achieving community cohesion and to be of service to society.

To achieve this, St Luke Academies Trust school improvement strategy aims to develop:

- Genuine collaboration, based on shared values, trust and respect.
- Effective leadership at all levels.
- Quality in the classroom.
- Rich curriculum and extra-curricular activities, promoting a culture of vocation.
- Pastoral support systems to maximise pupils' wellbeing, self-esteem and confidence.
- Systematic monitoring and intervention.
- Clear systems and policies in place to ensure consistency is achieved.
- Targeted professional development.
- A culture of celebration of achievement for pupils, staff and governors.

#### **Our Ultimate Aims**

- All Catholic primary schools in North Northamptonshire are part of St. Luke Academies Trust.
- All schools within the Trust judged to be good or better in Section 5 and Section 48 inspections.
- Numbers of Catholic pupils in our schools is increased.
- All schools well led and governed.
- Well-motivated staff, working together to improve all schools.
- Succession management is in place to secure good leaders in the future.
- Robust school improvement, challenge and support procedures are embedded and successful.
- Good strategic business and financial management and efficiency at Trust and school level, ensuring value for money.
- Reputation of success results in offer of support to schools outside the Trust.

## **Code of Conduct for all members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies**

### **Legal Framework**

This Code of Conduct has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2011
- The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- The Childcare Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Data Protection Act 1998

This Code of Conduct also has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE Governance Handbook January 2017
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education October 2016
- DfE Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 June 2016
- The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Committee)

### **Role and Responsibilities**

1. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the Catholic ethos and reputation of the schools. Their actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
2. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies are responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the Trust and its schools will operate.
3. All members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will be required to make themselves familiar with Trust and school procedures, including the following:
  - Catholic Life Policy
  - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - Equality Policy
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Behavioural Policy
  - Whistleblowing Policy
  - Assessment Policy
  - Data Protection Policy
  - Disciplinary Procedures
  - Complaints Procedures
4. This Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the St Luke Academies Trust on an annual basis and will be signed by Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) **at the first meeting of the Autumn term.**

5. The St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies have three core strategic functions: to ensure accountability, establish the strategic direction of the Trust and its schools and to ensure financial probity.
6. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies accept that ~~we~~ they have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body has given them delegated authority to do so, and therefore they will only speak on behalf of the Board of Directors/ Local Governing Body when they have been specifically authorised to do so.
7. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board of Directors and Local Governing Body or its delegated agents. This means they will not speak against majority decisions outside the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body meeting.
8. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as they have responsibility for staff, they will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
9. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
10. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will consider carefully how their decisions may affect the community and other schools.
11. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will actively support and challenge the leadership of the Trust and schools.
12. In making or responding to criticism or complaints Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will follow the procedures established by the Board of Directors.
13. Under no circumstances will Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies speak against majority decisions outside of meetings.

### **Confidentiality**

14. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside school.
15. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the Trust and school business arise outside a Board of Directors/Local Governing Body meeting.
16. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will not reveal details of any Board of Directors/Local Governing Body vote under any circumstance.
17. Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) accept that, in the interest of open government, their full names, date of appointment, terms of office, role, attendance record and any business/pecuniary interests they have will be published on the Trust/Our Lady Walsingham website.

18. In the interests of transparency, Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) accept that information relating to members of St Luke Academies Trust and Local Governing Bodies will be logged on the Department of Education's national database (Edubase).

### **Commitment**

19. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies acknowledge that accepting office as a Director/Academy Representative (Governor) involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
20. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will be involved actively in the work of the Board of Directors/ Local Governing Body, and accept their fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
21. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will make full efforts to attend all meetings. Where they cannot attend a meeting they will contact the Clerk in advance to explain why they are unable to.
22. We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and undertake relevant training and inductions in a prompt and efficient manner.

### **Behaviour of directors and academy representatives (governors)**

23. The Chair of the Board of Directors and the Chairs of Local Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring the appropriate conduct and behaviour of directors and academy representatives (governors) at all times.
24. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will seek to develop open, honest and effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, members of staff, parents/carers, at St Luke Academies Trust and Our Lady of Walsingham as well as other relevant agencies (include the Diocesan Authority), and the community.
25. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
26. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will always express their views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Directors/Academy Representatives (Governors).
27. The Board of Directors and the Local Governing Bodies acknowledge the time, effort and skills demonstrated in the execution of delegated functions by other members of St Luke Academies Trust and the Local Governing Bodies.
28. Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) will take into account any concerns expressed about their delegated function, and will be prepared to answer queries from other Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) regarding their role.
29. When making decisions, Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) will carefully consider how their decisions and actions might affect those who are part of the school community and wider locally.

### **Conflicts of interest**

30. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will act in the best interests of St Luke Academies Trust and Our Lady of Walsingham as a whole and not as a representative of any group or individual, even if elected to the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body.
31. Interest of those related or closely connected to a Director or Academy Representative (Governor) will be declared on the Register of Business Interests.
32. If any such conflict matter arises in a meeting Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
33. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.

### **Attendance at Board of Directors/Local Governing Body and Committee meetings**

34. A high level of attendance (70%) at meetings of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body and their Committees is expected so that Directors/Academy Representative (Governors) can perform their functions properly. The minimum acceptable level of attendance will be more than half of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body, or the Committee meetings which the Director/Academy Representative (Governors) is a member of, held in one academic year.
35. If unable to attend a meeting, Directors/Academy Representative (Governors) should notify the Clerk to the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body and give as much notice as possible of their absence and the reason for the absence.
36. Giving an apology does not in itself protect a Director/Academy Representative (Governors) from disqualification for failing to attend any Board of Directors/Local Governing Body meetings in the relevant period. The Board of Directors/Local Governing Body has to consent to the reasons for absence.
37. A Director/Academy Representative (Governors) will be disqualified if s/he fails to attend Board of Directors/Local Governing Body meetings - without the consent of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body - for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed.
38. A Director/ Academy Representative (Governors) disqualified for non-attendance is not eligible for re-appointment as the same category of Director/Academy Representative (Governors) for a period of twelve months from the date of disqualification.

### **Access to the School**

39. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will take an active interest in the school and its community.
40. Visits to the school will be arranged in advance with the Head Teacher.
41. St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will adhere to the agreed framework in which all visits will be undertaken.

42. Directors and Academy Representatives (Governors) will actively participate in the school community, and will respond to opportunities to be involved in Trust and Our Lady of Walsingham activities and events.

### **Suspension**

43. If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a Director/ Academy Representative (Governor), St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will do so by following the St Luke Academies Trust Scheme of Delegation as to ensure a fair and objective process.

### **Removal**

44. Members of St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies recognise that removing a Director/Academy Representative (Governors) from office is a last resort, and that it is the appointing bodies which have the power to remove those they appoint.
45. If the need arises to use the sanction of removing a Director/ Academy Representative (Governors), we will do so by following the St Luke Academies Trust Scheme of Delegation so as to ensure a fair and objective process.

### **Breaching this code of conduct**

46. If a member of St Luke Academies Trust or its Local Governing Bodies breaches this code of conduct, the issue will be raised with the Chair of the Board of Directors/Chair of Local Governing, who will investigate the concern. In the event that it is believed the Chair of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body has breached this code, another member of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body will undertake the investigation.
47. St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will only suspend or remove a Director/Academy Representative (Governor) from their post as a last resort.
48. St Luke Academies Trust and its Local Governing Bodies will attempt to resolve any difficulties or disputes in a constructive manner before suspension or removal is considered.

### **Our mutual expectations of one another are that the Head Teacher should:**

- Share information with Directors/Academy Representatives (Governors), whether it is good or bad.
- Trust Directors/Academy Representatives (Governors) to act professionally regarding this information and any discussion that may take place in Board of Directors/ Local Governing Body meetings or committee meetings.
- Be familiar with legislation to help Directors/Academy Representatives (Governors) make the right decisions.
- Encourage the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body to improve (through training and self-review) and be part of the planning process.



- Know and value individual Director's/Academy Representative's (Governors') skills and talents.
- Encourage all Directors/Academy Representatives (Governors), new and experienced, to participate fully in the business of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body.
- Promote the role of the Director/Academy Representative (Governor) in the school and in the community, so that staff and others understand the purpose and responsibilities of the Director/Academy Representative (Governor).

**The Director/Academy Representative (Governor) should:**

- Attend meetings regularly, making the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body meeting a priority.
- Read the paperwork prior to the meeting.
- Be prepared to be a member of at least one committee.
- Observe confidentiality and never discuss an individual teacher or pupils at a meeting or the content of a discussion outside the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body.
- Put the interests of the pupils and staff at the heart of his/her actions.
- Be willing to learn by visiting the school in an appropriate manner.
- Understand the difference between governance and management and never step over the "invisible line", remembering also that a Director/Academy Representative (Governors) is not an inspector.
- Be a supportive ear for parents but not the receiver of complaints.
- Be committed to training and agree to undertake appropriate training in order to develop their own skills and support the development of the team of Directors/Academy Representative (Governors)s (Governors).
- Be an ambassador for the St Luke Academies Trust, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos.
- Never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the St Luke Academies Trust, its schools, the Head Teachers, or the other members of the Board of Directors/Local Governing Body.

*Based on the National Governors' Association's Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies 2016 and The SchoolBus model Governing Body Code of Conduct September 2016*

## Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form

<b>Name of Director/ Academy Representative (Governor)</b>	
<b>Role in the Board of Trustees/ Local Governing Body</b>	
<b>Year of appointment</b>	
<b>Length of appointment</b>	

**Please tick the appropriate box once you have read and understood the following documents**

<b>Catholic Life Policy</b>	
<b>Behavioural Policy</b>	
<b>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</b>	
<b>Keeping Children Safe in Education, October 2016, Chapter 1</b>	
<b>Health and Safety Policy</b>	
<b>Equality Policy</b>	
<b>Whistleblowing Policy</b>	
<b>Assessment Policy</b>	
<b>Data Protection Policy</b>	
<b>Disciplinary procedures</b>	
<b>Complaints procedures</b>	

I hereby acknowledge the terms detailed within the St Luke Academies Trust/Our Lady of Walsingham local Governing Body Code of Conduct and agree to abide by this code whilst I am an acting member of St Luke Academies Trust/local Governing Body. I understand that the role is of a voluntary nature and will therefore not receive payment for my duties. Any expenses which I claim will be in line with the Directors' and Governors' Allowances Policy.

Signature: .....

Date: .....