



Southend East Community Academy Trust (SECAT) Code of Conduct for Trustees

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant Articles of Association and agreed Scheme of Delegation.

The governing board has the following strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the Trust
- Agreeing the Trust improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leaders (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the Trust Academies and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leaders (where delegated)
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to Trust self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the Trust Board and the role of the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Trust Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated committees or agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust Board meeting.
- 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 wider community and other Academies/schools outside of the Trust.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our Trust. Our actions within the Trust and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust Board.
- We will actively support and challenge the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the Chief Executive Officer and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the Trust rules and policies and the procedures of the Trust Board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our Trustee role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust Board, 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 to the Chair and Clerk why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the Trust and Academies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Trust activities.

- 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 governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the Trust Board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to Trustees will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools).

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 with other Trustees and Academy Committee Members, the clerk to the Trust/Academy Committee and Academy staff both in and outside of meetings. We have the right to expect such behaviour from 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 board members 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 Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leaders, staff and parents, 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 the Trust.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Trust board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

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 Trust Board'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's 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 as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to an Academy Committee Body within the Trust.

Ceasing to be a Trustee

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Trustee leaves office.

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 Trust Board 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 Trust Board Member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

SECAT Trustees Code of Conduct. Adopted at Trust Board 4th June 2019, based on NGA 2018 Model Code of Conduct.

Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Annex

The seven principles of public life

Originally published by the Nolan Committee: 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.

Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful

Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.