



Code of Conduct for Creative Education Trust Academy Councils (ACs)

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from Academy Council members and Trust Directors in order for those responsible for governance to carry out their work within Trust schools and their communities.

The CET Board is the overall governing body of the Trust and all its Academies. It is charged with the strategic direction of the Trust and is responsible to the Secretary of State for Education for executing its statutory duties. It appoints AC members and chairs.

The Academy Council has the following core functions:

- Ensuring that the overarching Trust strategy, which is set by the Board of Directors, is implemented at school level.
- Supporting CET's plans for the school as set out in the ADIP, SEF and annual budget.
- Providing understanding of the local context and the challenge that the local environment presents.
- Acting as a sounding board for senior leaders, especially the Principal or Head Teacher.
- Providing regular monitoring of health and safety matters, safeguarding provision, the welfare of looked after children, and provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Providing hearing panels for pupil behaviour matters.
- Building and maintaining positive local perceptions of the school.
- Building and maintaining relationships with the local and regional business community.
- Building and maintaining relationships with community partners (e.g. health services, police, social services).
- Undertaking local fundraising.

Role & Responsibilities

- We have read and understood CET's Scheme of Delegation laying out the precise roles of each of the Board of Directors, Headteacher/Principal and the Academy Council.
- We understand the purpose of the Board of Directors and the role of the Headteacher/Principal.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board of Directors has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Academy Council when we have been specifically authorised to do so.

- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Academy Council or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Academy Council 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 would be expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government 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 school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.
- We will actively support and challenge the Headteacher/Principal.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a member of the Academy Council involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Academy Council, 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.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Trust and agreed with the Headteacher/Principal.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training under the guidance of the Trust.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the Academy Council, category of member and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.

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 members.
- 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 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 Headteacher/Principal, 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 school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside an Academy Council meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Academy Council 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 Academy Council 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 summary Register of Business Interests will be published on the school'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 and the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the Academy Council.

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 Academy Council 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 member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

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. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material 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 that 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.

Adopted by the Academy Council of Thistley Hough Academy.