

Code of Conduct for members of a Local Governance Committee

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from LGC Members in order for the Local Governance Committee (“LGC”) to properly carry out its work within the school and the community and has been adapted from the NGA Code of Conduct (2016 Version).

This code of practice was adopted by the Trust Board of the Empower Learning Academy Trust (the “Trust”) on 25th September 2017. LGC Members will be asked to review and re-sign the Code annually at the first LGC meeting of each academic year.

The purpose of the LGC

The overarching purpose of a LGC is to proffer provide strategic direction, support and local accountability for the performance of the relevant Academy within the framework and parameters set by the Trust Board.

It is a non-executive body supporting the Trust Board to deliver its responsibilities.

The LGC’s delegated authority is laid out in the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation. The powers and responsibilities contained in the Scheme of Delegation may be varied from time to time by the Trust Board at its absolute discretion.

The primary functions of the LGC encompass:

- ensuring that the school provides its pupils with a good education and supports their well-being;
- developing and monitoring the vision and ethos of the school within the vision and ethos set by the Trust;
- approving the school’s strategy for improvement as set out in its Academy Improvement Plan and monitoring its implementation;
- supporting the Trust Board in providing scrutiny of key aspects of the school’s performance as determined by the Trust Board and, in particular, monitoring pupil progress and analysing any performance data in the light of the Academy’s strategy for improvement and performance targets;
- promoting high standards throughout the school;

The LGC

The LGC has the following core functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the School within the frameworks and parameters agreed by the Trust Board
- Agreeing the improvement strategy for the school including priorities and targets

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- Meeting any duties and responsibilities delegated to the body by the Trust Board through the Scheme of Delegation or otherwise.

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Actively participating in the performance management of the Principal/Headteacher
- Engaging with the school's stakeholders
- Contributing to the school's self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Reviewing and recommending the school's budget to the Trust Board
- Ensuring risks to the school are managed

The role of a LGC Member

The LGC is a collective body, which means:

- no LGC Member can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full LGC;
- all LGC Members carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- decisions will be determined based upon the welfare and performance of all children in the school, but will take into account any other priorities determined by the Trust.

As individuals on the LGC we agree to the following:

Roles and responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the LGC & the Trust Board and the role of the Chief Executive & Principal/Headteacher.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the LGC has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the LGC when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the LGC or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the LGC meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools within and without the Trust.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Trust and our school. Our actions within our school and the local community will reflect this.

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- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will be open & transparent and follow the procedures established by the Trust.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a LGC Member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the LGC, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups and links to specific areas.
- We will make full effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to do so.
- We will get to know the school and take opportunities to engage with school first hand to affirm our knowledge.
- We will visit our school purposefully, having arranged the visit in advance and agreed the purpose with the Principal/Headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training. We will undertake at least 8 hours of training and development each year that is relevant to our role as a LGC Member.
- Within 6 months of joining the LGC we will undertake relevant induction training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us may be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to LGC Members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (GIAS).
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Principal/Headteacher.

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 LGC Members, the executive and the Trust Board.
- We will support the Chair of the LGC in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at other times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other LGC Members/Trustees 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.

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- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Chief Executive, Principal/Headteacher, staff, parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the communities we serve.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff, pupils or parents, both inside or outside the school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a LGC meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any LGC 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 LGC's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to withdraw from the meeting for the length of time of the relevant discussion. We accept that the Register of Business Interests may 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 as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair of the LGC and the Chair will investigate; the LGC will only use suspension 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, we will raise this issue with the Chair of the Trust Board, who will investigate.
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any LGC Member shall be following an investigation discussed at a meeting of the Trust Board, and, if the breach is upheld by the majority of the Trust Board, a sanction will be agreed which may result in suspension or, in the case of gross misconduct, removal from the LGC.

Undertaking:

As a member of the LGC I have read, understood and agree to abide by this Code of Practice.

Additionally, I will:

- always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school and the Trust at heart;
- act as an ambassador for the school/Trust publicly supporting the school's/Trust's aims, values and ethos; and
- never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the Trust, any of its schools, the Trust Board, the LGC, the Chief Executive, Principals/Headteachers and the staff.

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Signed

Printed name

Date:

Appendix: 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.