

## **Code of Conduct for Governance at Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (LDST)**

### **1. Rationale**

The purpose of this code of conduct is to enable the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (LDST) Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) to fulfill their primary role of

- supporting the Trust, the Head Teacher and staff in ensuring Jesus is at the heart of everything that is done in the LDST schools
- raising standards by acting strategically as a critical friend
- being accountable to those with a legitimate interest.

### **2. Legal Framework**

- LDST Directors are answerable to the Members of LDST, and LGBs are in turn answerable to Directors. As corporate bodies, individual Directors and LGB governors only have authority to act individually where the Board has delegated the authority to do so (refer to the Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation for further clarification)
- All LGB governors have equal status, and their central concern must always be the welfare of the pupils.

### **3. Role and Responsibilities**

The Board of Directors and LGBs are responsible for

- ensuring that the school keeps Jesus at the heart of the school in line with the Diocesan aspiration to be a bigger church making a bigger difference in our communities
- promoting the Christian character of the school, ensuring it grows in Christ in line with the Diocesan three year plan for growth
- promoting high standards of educational achievement, strategic planning and financial control
- ensuring the school meets statutory requirements.

### **4. Commitment**

Being a Director or LGB governor

- Involves participating fully in the work of the Board of Directors or LGB so that individuals accept a fair share of the responsibilities and duties, including service on committees, working parties or as 'named directors/governors'. Individuals should be prepared to serve on at least one committee
- Requires regular attendance at meetings of the full Board of Directors / LGB and committees

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Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust

- Requires getting to know the schools well and responding to opportunities to visit and get involved in school activities
- Requires considering seriously individual and collective training and development needs and using any designated funds to address them.

## **5. Confidentiality**

You will be required to

- Observe confidentiality as a matter of course, but particularly when explicitly asked to do so, for example regarding matters concerning staff, children or their parents/carers
- Keep discussion about decisions confidential even when decisions themselves are made public through the minutes of meetings
- Exercise prudence when invited to respond in discussions and informal talk outside meetings, and instead of passing individual comment, encourage issues to be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors, Head Teacher, or LGB (depending on the nature of the issue) through the proper channels.

## **6. Relationships**

6.1 The Board of Directors and LGB will strive to develop effective working relationships with

- Head teachers, staff, children, parents, the LDST central team, the Diocese, the Local Authority, the local church and clergy, the local community and fellow schools within LDST and locally.

6.2 In forming, building and sustaining good working relationships, you will need to

- Remember that whilst you may have been elected as a representative in a particular category, you are not representative of those groups, e.g. a representative parent, not a representative of the parents.
- Work as a member of a team (the Board of Directors or an LGB) in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted; the team shares collective responsibility and accountability and all relationships are built on trust
- Develop an open and honest relationship with Heads and all school staff; acting as 'critical friend', ensuring a balance is struck between offering (in this order) support and challenge
- Be fully committed both to the growth strategy of the Diocese and its vision of 'bigger church, bigger difference' in our communities.

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## 7. Conduct

You have a general duty to act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school in line with Gospel values and the Nolan principles of public life. You are expected to behave professionally at all times.

- Directors' meetings, like LGB meetings, always begin with prayer
- You will be expected to share in the worship life of the Trust/school wherever possible
- You will aim to discharge your duties in a manner that maintains and develops the character of each school as a Christian community. You are expected to safeguard and enhance its reputation in the local community and wider educational community
- You should reflect on how you are perceived by stakeholders in all you say and do, both as individuals and as a collective body
- You should consider carefully how your decisions and actions might affect others, whether they are individuals employed by a school, children or adults who are part of LDST's school communities, other schools in the locality or the wider community
- You are encouraged to express views openly at meetings, but also to accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board of Directors, the LGB, the Head Teacher, or any individual delegated to do so
- You should not speak out against majority decisions in public or in private outside of meetings. The intention is to protect the reputation and authority of the LGB, the wider LDST and its schools in the public domain. If you have a concern, you should speak to the Chair of the LGB, the Chief Executive of LDST, or the Diocesan Education Team
- An individual may only speak or act on behalf of the Board of Directors, the LGB or a school when they have been specifically authorised to do so
- You must respond to any criticism or complaints about the LDST or a member school, or its staff by referring to the relevant Complaints Procedure adopted by the Board of Directors or LGB. You may advise the complainant as to the correct procedure to be followed
- You must record in the register of business interests any pecuniary interest you might have in connection with LDST's business, including the interests of family members or others closely connected with you
- You are expected to declare an interest in any item of business and withdraw from the meeting while it is under discussion, whether that discussion is at a formal meeting or otherwise
- Any school visit will be made in consultation with the Headteacher and following any locally agreed protocol

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## **8. Breach of this code of conduct**

If you believe this code has been breached, raise this issue with the Chair of the Board of Directors or LGB as appropriate, and the Chair will investigate; suspension or removal will only be used as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways. If you believe that the Chair has breached this code, another Board or LGB governor (such as the vice chair) will investigate.

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