

David Nieper Education Trust



Governors & Trustees (Joint Board Members) Code of Conduct

This policy was originated by Joy Williams – Clerk to Trustees

Version Control

Version 1	Approved by Governors Spring 2021
Version 2	Approved by Chair of Trustees Spring 2022

Signed:	Date:

Due for review Spring 2024

PURPOSE OF THE CODE

This Code has been prepared in order to assist those participating in the work of the Trust in meeting the high ethical standards and behaviours that underpin the David Nieper Education Trust's (DNET) pursuit of excellence and of probity. The Code clarifies the Trust's expectation of its Trustees, Directors and Governors (collectively termed herein, the Directors) and is designed to ensure that the children and young people in its care have not only exceptional role models but work and play in a safe and disciplined environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THOSE ENGAGED IN PUBLIC LIFE: *THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES*

(Adapted for the Trust's purpose and the guidance of its Directors)

1. Selflessness ... acting solely in the interests of the public good and without financial or other benefit to themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity ... resisting every temptation to place themselves under financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may seek to influence them in their role as a Trustee, Director or Governor.

3. Objectivity ... Always making choices and decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability ... DNET is a charity and its schools owned by their communities and stakeholders. DNET's Directors, Principals and Head Teachers are publicly accountable for their decisions and actions and therefore must submit themselves to any such scrutiny as may from time to time become appropriate.

5. Openness ... decision-makers and problem-solvers being as open and transparent as possible concerning the decisions and actions they take, bearing in mind that their conduct is constantly under scrutiny and potentially subject to a FOI request.

6. Honesty ... declaring any private interests that may relate to, or conflict with, a Director's public endeavour, resolving any situation of personal compromise and volunteering any outstanding conflict of interest as necessity arises.

7. Leadership ... practicing and promoting the [*Nolan Principles of Public Life*](#) by leadership and by example.

As Directors, we will focus on our strategic functions:

- ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the Trust, academy and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the Trust and making sure its money is well spent
- ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

As individuals on the Joint Board we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

- We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
- We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of the academy.
- We agree to adhere to Trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- We will work collectively for the benefit of the Trust.
- We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- We will consider how our decisions may affect the Trust and our local community.
- We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
- Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Joint Board if we have the authority to do so.
- We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
- We will strive to uphold the Trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Joint Board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- We will get to know the academy well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in its activities.
- We will visit the academy and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe academy and Director protocol.

- When visiting the academy in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

- We will develop effective working relationships with academy leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Directors and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- We will support the Chair in their role of leading the Joint Board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of the Trust when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the Joint Board's business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the academy website.
- We will act in the best interests of the Trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, 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 will be published on the academy website.
- We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools GIAS), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.