



## ***A Vision for Excellence***

## **Governors' Handbook**

October 2018

## **Vision and Values**

Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust of Catholic schools which is part of the mission of the Catholic Church dedicated to human flourishing and the building of a kingdom of peace, truth and justice. The Trust is to be conducted in all aspects in accordance with canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and at all times to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our vision and values are derived from our identity as a Catholic Trust. Central to our vision is the dignity of the human person, especially the most vulnerable. Our academies are dedicated to providing an education and formation where all our pupils and young people flourish in a safe, nurturing, enriching environment. All Governors in our academies are expected to be familiar with the vision, mission, values and principles of the Trust and not in any way to undermine them. They should support and promote the vision and conduct themselves at all times in school and on school business according to the vision and principles of the Trust.

## **Summary of the role of Local Governing Boards in CAST**

When CAST was formed in 2014, the role of the Governing Board of each school changed fundamentally. Plymouth CAST became the employer, not the Governing Board. Plymouth CAST assumed accountability to the Trust Members and the Secretary of State for the educational and financial performance of CAST schools, as well as for clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

The original Scheme of Delegation tried to leave Local Governing Boards (LGBs) which much of the responsibilities that they had assumed in the past. When the Trust was inspected in October 2016, accountability came under intense scrutiny and a new Scheme of Delegation was called for to make accountability between the schools and the Board much clearer and more effective.

The model of accountability we now have, as enshrined in the Scheme of Delegation (Oct 2018) is 'sheer and clear'. There is a direct line of accountability from the Headteacher, to the Education and Standards Manager (ESM), to the Director of Education and Standards (for educational performance) and to the Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO) (for financial performance) to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to the Board.

What then is the role of the Local Governing Board? This may be summed up as:

- To support and promote the vision, values and principles of Plymouth CAST as a non-statutory body
- To act as a 'wisdom group' for the school, to support and encourage the Catholic life and mission of the school
- To act as champions and advocates in the local community for their school
- To support and challenge the Headteacher in fulfilling their responsibilities
- To have oversight and develop knowledge in key areas, especially RE and Catholic Life, SEND, Safeguarding, Statutory Grant Funding (pupil premium, PE and sports premium), Health and Safety
- To support and challenge the Headteacher in the implementation of the School Improvement Plan

- To build bridges between the school and the local community, especially parents and carers and the local parish
- To support CAST strategic priorities and to contribute expertise and knowledge to the development of building Governor capacity across CAST
- To be accountable to the Board and, in the case of Foundation Governors, to the Bishop, for their conduct as Governors.

The expectations of Governors are outlined in a new draft Code of Conduct for Governors (See: below) which will be approved by the Board along with the final version of the Governors' Handbook following the consultation period. Foundation Governors should also be mindful of the Information and Guidance regarding the Role and Appointment/re-Appointment of Foundation Governors from Plymouth Diocese. The Foundation Governor's Declaration (in the Code below) is taken from that Information and Guidance.

The first part of the Scheme of Delegation covers the following points:

## **Constitution of the Local Governing Board**

The constitution of a Local Governing Board in Plymouth CAST is set out in the new Scheme of Delegation approved by the Board in September 2018. Below is a summary of the main points from the Scheme.

The members of the Local Governing Board shall be known as Governors, with not less than four on a LGB. The constitution and delegated powers of the LGB are in accordance with Appendix 1 of the Scheme of Delegation.

Foundation Governors on the LGB will be those appointed by the Bishop. They shall "outnumber all the other members by two so as to ensure the preservation and development of the Catholic character of the Academy." The Chair must be elected annually by a simple majority of the LGB. Only Foundation Governors may be considered for the post. For any other arrangement, the LGB must write to the Bishop setting out the reasons.

The arrangements for staff and parent Governors and terms of office are described in sections 6.2.1 to 6.3 of the Scheme of Delegation. The resignation and removal of Governors and the circumstances of disqualification of members of the LGB are covered from 6.5.1 to 6.5.13.

The role and responsibilities of the Local Governing Board are outlined in detail in Appendix 1 of the Scheme of Delegation.

## **Business and proceedings of the Local Governing Board**

The Local Governing Boards should meet at least **six times** in an academic year or once a half-term. LGBs may if they wish meet more often, depending on circumstances.

The arrangements for meetings, notice periods, quorum, resolutions, participation and minutes are outlined in sections 6.7.1 to 6.7.24.

## **Committees of the Local Governing Board**

The Board has taken the view that under the terms of the Scheme of Delegation there is no longer any need for LGB sub-committees. If there are sub-committees with ongoing business, then the Board has made provision for these sub-committees to continue until Christmas 2018. Thereafter all sub-committees shall cease and all LGB business shall be conducted in the annual cycle of full LGB meetings. Governors may, however, convene from time to time specific working parties or 'task and finish' groups with terms of reference agreed by the LGB.

The arrangements for the Chair and Vice-Chair, Clerk, conflicts of interest, indemnity, notices and other operational matters are covered from 6.7.26 to 7.6.

**Appendix 1** of the Scheme of Delegation covers the delegated role of Local Governing Boards in the following areas:

### **Governance**

This includes more clarity of definition of the role of the LGB to 'support and challenge the Headteacher', to support the Directors in carrying out their three core functions and to appoint 'lead' Governors in five key areas. See below for more information. In this section, the role of the LGB in developing and supporting pupil, parent and staff voice is outlined, as well as their role in establishing relationships with the parish priest and local community.

### **Finance**

This section clarifies the role of the LGB as that of 'supporting the Headteacher in the preparation of the annual budget.' The LGB does not set or approve the annual budget. There is no provision in the Scheme of Delegation for an individual Governor with oversight of finances. It is expected that all Governors will be able to support and challenge the Headteacher in achieving value for money and in setting a balanced budget. Local Governors, with their knowledge of the local community and often of local and national business, can play an invaluable role in creating links with local businesses and sourcing opportunities for additional income.

### **Contracts**

The LGB and individual Governors are not in a legal position to issue any contracts on behalf of their school. They are, however, well placed to support and challenge the Headteacher in ensuring that value for money is achieved and all school business is carried out ethically. They may also support the

Directors in their monitoring of the delivery of any central services and support the Headteacher in ensuring good value from any service level agreements.

### **Standards**

The Scheme of Delegation does not require the LGB to appoint a lead Governor for standards. As with finance it is expected that all Governors will develop knowledge of standards. The five lead Governors will of course have oversight of standards in their own areas.

### **Curriculum**

There is a key role for Local Governing Boards in supporting Headteachers to ensure that the curriculum of the school is taught in the light of Gospel values and that RE is in accordance with the RE Curriculum Directory and that 10% of the weekly timetable (or 5% for KS5) is given to RE. LGBs will also support the observance of a daily act of collective worship and that RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) is taught in accordance with the social and moral teaching of the Church.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Local Governing Boards are asked to appoint a Lead Governor with oversight of SEND and to assist the Headteacher and Senior Executive Leadership team to ensure that the SEND policy is implemented in full and that the progress of pupils with SEND is effectively tracked and intervention is arranged where needed.

### **Safeguarding**

Local Governing Boards are asked to appoint a Lead Governor with oversight of Safeguarding. This Governor will support the Headteacher and Senior Executive Leadership in ensuring that the Trust's Safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented. The Safeguarding Lead Governor has a key role to play in supporting any safeguarding audits, ensuring that any safeguarding requests from the Trust are returned on time, supporting the Headteacher to ensure that the Single Central Record is maintained properly and the site is safe for its pupils. There will be overlap between this role and the Health and Safety Lead.

### **Behaviour**

The Directors will prepare a CAST-wide behavior policy by June 2019 for implementation in September 2019. Schools will be free to adopt the rewards and sanctions policies which best suit their circumstances. In the meantime, behavior policies will be drawn up by Headteachers, with support from their ESMs and support and advice from their Local Governing Board.

### **Admissions**

The Board of Plymouth CAST is the admission authority, hence the role of the Local Governing Board is to support the consultation and publication of admissions arrangements. Local Governing Boards, with their commitment to the school and local knowledge, have a key role to play in supporting pupil recruitment to the school.

## **Other pupil-related matters**

Local Governing Boards are invited to appoint a Lead Governor with oversight of Statutory Grants (see below), to support and challenge the implementation of the complaints policy and to hear complaints at the relevant stage.

## **Staffing**

As mentioned above, the Local Governing Board is not the employer and is not able to make staff appointments or dismiss or discipline staff. The Directors, when appointing senior staff, will wish to ensure that Governors are properly consulted. The Directors, as employers, have delegated the performance management of the Headteacher to the Senior Executive Leadership. Local Governors will be invited to take part in the process to advise and support. Likewise, in the case of any major reviews of staffing structures or senior job descriptions, the Local Governing Board should be involved to advise and support. As a non-statutory body, it is not the role of the LGB to convene panels for staff disciplinary hearings or grievance procedures.

## **Communication and Information Management**

It is important that any public response to media interest regarding CAST schools is co-ordinated and approved by the Directors. Local Governing Boards may well be in a position to support their Headteacher in responding to media interest but any response must be forwarded to the Senior Executive Leadership and/or the Directors to be approved.

Schools are encouraged to generate stories about the achievements and successes of their pupils and may supply local media with such stories without approval provided that the required regulations with regards to personal information and photographs are followed. Governors are invited to support and challenge their Headteachers to ensure that CAST policies and procedures for data protection are followed.

Communication across the Trust at the moment is an area for development. The position we would like to aim for is that all CAST employees and local Governors use a Plymouth CAST email account for CAST business. We are currently very far from that position. As a starting point, all local Governors should use a school email accounts for Governor business. This will at least put us in a better position with regards to data protection.

In terms of communicating with CAST, the protocol is that Chairs can communicate on behalf of the LGB directly with the CEO by email or telephone. In practice the CEO is not able to communicate effectively with individual Governors. The other 'route' for LGBs to communicate with the Senior Executive Leadership or the Board is through their Link Director (see below).

## **Health and Safety**

Health and safety is the responsibility of the employer, in other words the Directors of CAST. Local Governing Boards are invited to appoint a Governor with oversight of health and safety in the school. This Governor is not responsible for health and safety in the school but can develop expertise and knowledge to support the Headteacher and Directors to ensure that the Trust's health and safety policy is implemented

## **Risk and Audit**

Local Governing Boards, with their range of expertise and experience, are well placed to support and challenge the Headteacher to review the risk register and ensure that contingency planning is in place

## **School Estate**

Local Governing Boards must seek approval from the Directors for any changes to fixed assets used by the school. They are also in a good position to advise the Headteacher in the monitoring of the arrangements for effective supervision of building maintenance and minor works.

## **Lead Governors**

Local Governing Boards are asked to appoint 'lead' Governors in the following areas:

- RE and Catholic Life
- SEND
- Safeguarding
- Statutory Grants (Pupil Premium, PE and Sport Premium, Year 7 Catch-Up Premium)
- Health and Safety

The role of the Lead Governors is not to be responsible or accountable to the Board for the outcomes in the specific areas. It is to be the Governor 'specialist' in that area who can support and challenge the Headteacher. It is a way of building capacity in the school community. The Headteacher is the lead professional and is accountable to their ESM and ultimately to the Board for outcomes in all of the areas identified. The Headteacher will benefit from the support and challenge of committed and informed Lead Governors who have developed knowledge and interest in one of the areas. The Lead Governor may not have a professional background in the area, but the assumption is that they will commit to informing themselves about the area and, where possible, undertaking training. The expectations of the Lead Governor may be summarized as follows:

- To be the lay 'specialist' in that area to support and challenge the head
- To lead on the questions at LGB meetings when that area is being discussed
- To proactively support the head and the school in their area through visits and support with monitoring e.g. health and safety inspections, safeguarding audits
- To reach out to agencies and local groups who might help in the area e.g. local authority training, links with the local parish and diocese
- To meet the school lead in these areas for briefings and updates. The frequency of any meetings can be determined locally.

The Board will have Lead Directors in each of these areas. It is the Board which carries the final accountability to the Bishop and the Secretary of State for outcomes and provision in these areas.

## **Governor Training**

At the moment, Governor training in CAST is limited. This is an area for development. We currently have three Governor Briefings per year in the calendar. This offers some training opportunities but clearly not enough. There will also be updates provided in the new termly (i.e. six a year) newsletters. These will focus on leadership and governance. The intention is to send a newsletter out to all Heads, Chairs and Clerks on the first Friday of the term. Local Governing Boards may look to local providers but should do so with caution. The training they provide will be generic and may well be for a governance arrangement which does not apply in CAST.

The training offer which CAST needs to develop must be bespoke. The intention is to develop a training capacity with our local governing boards to help deliver training. In some of our schools we already have considerable capacity, with National Leaders of Governance. We could develop our own cohort of lead Governors, perhaps CAST Local Leaders of Governance, to help deliver an attractive and bespoke training programme.

## **Governor Database**

We have a wide range of knowledge and expertise across our Local Governing Boards. Clerks will be asked to return information for a Governor database, identifying key skills and areas of expertise in the LGB. This knowledge will help us to develop Governor capacity across the Trust.

## **Link Directors**

Each school in CAST has been allocated a Link Director. It is the responsibility of the Link Director to make contact with his/her school and arrange a visit. The Link Director is not an inspector and is not in the school to fulfil any monitoring function. The Lead Director will visit a school to get to know the school community and its circumstances. If there are issues which the school feels have not been addressed by the Senior Executive Leadership then the school may take up the issue with their Lead Director.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the role of the LGB when Ofsted come?**

The Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (September 2018) states that, “Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance. This includes maintained school Governors, proprietors or academy trustees. In a multi-academy trust this may include members of the local governing board<sup>55</sup> at school level, as well as the trustees.”

The footnote goes on to explain that “in a multi-academy trust, this could include meeting with a local governing board where relevant responsibilities are devolved in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.”

### **Will Ofsted have to approve the new role for Local Governing Boards?**

No. The new role for Local Governing Boards is approved by the Directors.

### **What is the role of the LGB when appointing the Head or other senior reserved posts?**

LGBs are invited to advise and support the Senior Executive Leadership (SEL), delegated by the Directors as employers, in senior appointments. This means in practice sitting on appointment panels.

### **Is the LGB responsible for the head’s appraisal, pay?**

The LGB is not the Head’s employer or line manager and as such has no statutory role in the appraisal of the Head or determination of their pay. However the SEL will ensure that Governors are involved in the appraisal process so that they can contribute their knowledge of the impact of the Headteacher.

### **What is the role of the LGB in a redundancy process or any major re-structuring of staff, including reviews of job descriptions for senior staff?**

The LGB will be consulted, although they have no statutory role.

### **Does the LGB approve the budget?**

The LGB can work with the Headteacher to help them to finalise a budget in agreement with the ESM to be presented to the CFOO.

### **Is LGB responsible for educational standards?**

The LGB will bring their knowledge of educational standards and how they might be improved to the work of the school but it is the Headteacher who is responsible for educational standards.

### **Are ‘lead’ Governors responsible for certain areas?**

Not as responsible but there should be lead Governors with ‘oversight’ of SEND, Safeguarding, Statutory Grants (Pupil Premium, Year 7 catch-up premium, PE and sport premium), Health and Safety. The responsibility rests with the Trust Board and there is a lead Director with oversight of each of these areas.

**Are Governors responsible for Health and Safety in the school?**

As above, the Board is the employer and as such are responsible for Health and Safety across all CAST schools.

**Does the LGB need to approve any policies?**

The role of the LGB is to adopt any statutory or other policies approved by the Board for CAST schools and then to approve any other policies as required in agreement with the Headteacher and ESM.

**Can the LGB initiate or bid for capital projects?**

The support and expertise of the LGB in bidding for capital projects is very welcome, but any bids must be approved by SEL and the Board.

**Procedure for appointing Governors, Foundation Governors?**

See Scheme of Delegation

**Do we have Terms of Reference?**

The terms of reference for the Local Governing Board are contained in the Scheme of Delegation Part 1.

If you have any more questions you'd like to be included in the final version of the Governors' Handbook please raise them at the Governors' Consultation evenings in early October or ask the Headteacher to include them in the Vision and Values feedback proforma.

## **Code of Conduct for Governors on a Local Governing Board in Plymouth CAST**

*Based on the CES Model Code of Conduct*

This Code of Conduct has been approved and adopted by the Plymouth CAST Board of Directors for use for Governors of a Local Governing Board in Plymouth CAST

On [ENTER DATE]

And will be reviewed on [ENTER DATE]

Signed by the Chair of the Board of Directors:

- 
- This document should be available to view on your Academy's website
  - Governors are required to sign an undertaking which can be found overleaf:

**As a Governor of the Local Governing Board of the Academy I undertake that I:**

- Will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Academy.
- Will not act in any way that is detrimental and/or prejudicial to the interests of the Catholic education in the Diocese and the Academy.
- Have read, understood and will adhere to this Code of Conduct and (for Foundation Governors only) to the declaration in Appendix 1: Foundation Governor of a local Governing Body Company Declaration Form.
- Will also adhere to Appendix II: The Nolan principles.
- Have read and understood any diocesan criteria for appointment and, to the best of my knowledge can confirm I am eligible for appointment.
- Declare that I am not disqualified by law from appointment as a Governor on the local governing body.
- Agree to DBS checks and any other relevant checks being conducted that may be required by law or good practice.
- Understand that any refusal to do so may result in the termination of any appointment.
- Consent to the information given by me being held and processed by the Academy Trust Company and/or Plymouth Diocese, including the sharing of data with third parties where required, in accordance with any Plymouth Diocese policy.

**Signed by the Governor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Governor:** \_\_\_\_\_

- ❖ E signatures are acceptable
- ❖ Acceptance to the Code is required by signature annually from every Governor (at the beginning of each academic year)
- ❖ Signed copies of this Code from each Governor should be retained by the Clerk

## THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD

The term '**Board**' in this document means the board of Directors of Plymouth CAST. There is a separate code of conduct for the Directors.

The terms '**local governing board**' means the local governing board of an academy.

The term '**Governors**' in this document means Governors of the local governing board.

As a local governing board, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that we comply with our legal and canonical duty to ensure that the Catholic character of the Academy is preserved and developed and that this duty permeates everything that we do. However, **all** Governors of the local governing board have a duty to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Academy in order to fulfil the objects set out in its governing documents.

## OUR THREE CORE STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS:

Further, in accordance with our Scheme of Delegation, we endeavour to operate at a strategic level, leaving the Academy's senior leadership responsible and accountable for the operational day to day running of the Academy. It is achieving these aims that we can be sure that our academy has effective governance. Our core strategic functions as a local governing board, to the extent that any of these functions have been delegated to the local governing board, are in:

1. Supporting the Board of Plymouth CAST whose responsibility it is to ensure clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Supporting the Board and Senior Leadership of Plymouth CAST whose responsibility it is to hold the appropriate senior leadership within the Academy to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the Academy and its pupils; and for the internal organisation, management and control of the Academy, including performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the Academy and supporting and challenging the Headteacher to make sure its money is well spent.

We understand that Canon 806§2 says that Catholic schools are to be ".....at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area" and that Governors should be mindful of this requirement in all that they do.

We adhere to Canon Law and the teaching of the Catholic Church as required by the Plymouth CAST Articles of Association.

## AS GOVERNORS WE AGREE TO OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AS FOLLOWS:

### ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

- We will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Academy and this responsibility will permeate throughout all of our actions within, and through all aspects of, the Academy and the local community.
- We will ensure that the Academy is conducted in accordance with its governing documents which includes the provision of:
  - **Canon Law [1]**
  - **The Curriculum Director and Bishops' statements on religious education**
  - **Any Diocesan directives relating to schools**
- We will conduct the Academy in accordance with the Plymouth Diocese trust deed.
- We will conduct the Academy in accordance with its Articles of Association and any Scheme of Delegation adopted by the Academy Trust Company (or Trustees in the case of St. Mary's, Buckfast)
- We will support and implement the policies and procedures of the Diocesan [and religious order], including the Diocesan Bishop's policies on education, including religious education, any Admissions Guidance issued by the Diocese, and the expectations of the Diocesan Bishops collectively, specifically the Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools;
- We will respond to the needs of the Catholic community as a whole as represented by the Diocesan Bishop, complying in all respects with the diocesan requirements;
- We will protect, promote and serve the Diocese in the ministry of our role as Governors faithfully and in particular in compliance with Diocesan protocols for committed working relationship between the Diocese and the Catholic Multi Academy Trust Company.
- We will consider not only the interests of the Academy but the interests of other Catholic schools, academies, colleges and of Catholic education throughout the Diocese;
- We will undertake to discharge our duties as Governors with due care and diligence.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools and academies.
- We will attend relevant training including diocesan training; Governor induction and continuing professional development training, as required by the Trust or the Diocese
- We understand the purpose of the governing board and our role as Governors on the local governing board and the role of senior leadership.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, expect when the governing board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.

*[1] this means the canon law of the Catholic Church from time to time in force, which include the 1983 Code of Canon Law, and any particular Law such as legislation of the Bishops' Conference, directives of the diocesan bishop and legislation of the school's religious order (if any).*

- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meetings
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice.
- We will encourage transparency and will act appropriately.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the Academy we will follow the procedures established by the Board
- We will actively support and challenge the senior leadership.
- We will adhere to the Nolan principles set out in Appendix II.

### **Commitment**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including 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 our Academy well and positively respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in Academy activities
- We will visit our Academy, with all visits arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- We will evaluate our effectiveness as a governing board by way of completing a skills audit and a self-evaluation form on an annual basis.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for continuous training and development as required by the Trust and the Diocesan Schools Commission, and will undertake that relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of transparency our full names, date of appointment terms of office, roles on the governing body attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on our Academy's website and anything else as required by law.

### **Relationships**

In all our relations we shall exercise stewardship and draw on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ in that:

- All relationships will be built on the core values of the Gospel based on the Beatitudes summarised as: Humility, Compassion, Kindness, Justice, Forgiveness, Integrity, Non-violence, and Courage.
- We will comply with Diocesan Protocols for a committed working relationship between the Diocese and the Catholic Multi Academy Trust Company.

- We will ensure that we continually communicate with and, where appropriate, seek support and guidance from our diocesan education service.
- 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 Governors.
- We will support the chair in ensuring appropriate conduct both at meeting and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Governors 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 Diocese, parish, the senior leadership, staff and parents, pupils, the local authority, other relevant agencies, and the local community.

### **Confidentiality**

- We will observe confidentiality in all circumstances in particular in relation to matters concerning specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside the Academy unless there is a lawful requirement for disclosure.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the business of the Academy arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will exercise care and skill when communicating through social media.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

- We will always act in the best interests of the charitable objects set out in the governing documents of the Academy.
- We understand that a conflict of interest or conflict of loyalty shall not be deemed to occur solely from the fact that any member or Director is also a trustee, charity trustee, Governor or Director of any Catholic school, Diocese, or religious order, or of any other charity which permits its land to be occupied by a Catholic school or schools or other education institutions<sup>4</sup>
- 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 governing body'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 Academy's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.

<sup>4</sup>98A of Multi Academy Trust model Articles of Association for Catholic School (February 2015)



## **BREACH OF THIS CODE**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will promptly raise this issue with the chair, consult with the Diocese, determine the investigatory process (if any); the governing body will only use suspension/removal (which is at the absolute discretion of the Ordinary or religious superior) 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 Governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

**We are also reminded of the declaration signed upon appointment by Foundation Governors of a Local Governing Board (the basic principles of which are agreed by all of the Governors of the local governing board) which you can find in this Code of Conduct at Appendix I for Foundations Governors of a Local Governing Board.**

## Appendix I

### Foundation Governor Declaration

Dear Bishop Mark

I, ..... (*insert name*) hereby accept my appointment as Foundation Governor at:

..... (*insert school name and town*) and promise to serve the mission of the Catholic Church and the Diocese of Plymouth to the best of my ability during my term of office (4 years).

In all my deliberations as a Foundation Governor, I will seek to understand and apply appropriately the wisdom of the Church to the matters under consideration.

In addition, I commit myself to:

- directly supporting the above-named school, but always having regard to the Diocese as a whole and the Church's commitment to the Common Good;
- attending the diocesan Foundation Governor induction event as soon as possible (and certainly within one year of my appointment);
- taking advantage of opportunities to develop my understanding of the teachings of the Church and their application to educational issues;
- acting as a link between the school and the parish(es) it serves;
- encouraging, through my own example as a Foundation Governor, honest and respectful communication, sensitive listening and prayerful discernment;
- respecting the confidentiality of any given information made available to me through this role.
- giving public support to the reasons of the Local Governing Body even if I did not previously agree with them.
- in all my actions, serving as a witness to the Catholic faith.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

*Please sign and date both copies of this declaration. Please keep one for your own records and return the other to Plymouth CAST.*

## Appendix II

### The Nolan Principles

(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 to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under the 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