Governance Code of Conduct 2026-27

Potteries Educational Trust

Policy Family	Governance
Reference	GOV-02
Responsible Manager	Chair of Trust Board
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Aim

The Potteries Educational Trust (PET) Code of Conduct for Trustees and Governors is based on the model Code of Conduct provided by the National Governors Association and guidance provided to the Potteries Educational Trust at its inception by Browne Jacobson education advisors.

Based on NGA Model Code of Conduct © National Governance Association 2025

Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all Members, Trustees and Governors of the Potteries Educational Trust. Members, Trustees and Governors will act in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association to fulfil the objects of the organisation.

Trustees agree to follow the charity governance code. Governors recognise and support the principles set out in the charity governance code.

All Members, Trustees and Governors of the Potteries Educational Trust agree to follow the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles – published 31 May 1995) and the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education.

- Selflessness - We will act solely in terms of the public interest.
- Integrity - We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- Objectivity - We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability - We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- Openness - We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- Honesty - We will be truthful.
- Leadership - We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Board expects Members, Trustees and Governors to promote equality and diversity in all aspects of governance and when carrying out any functions.

Members, Trustees and Governors will focus on the organisation's purpose and will be clear about the Trust's purpose and intended outcomes for its pupils and the community, making sure that pupils receive a high quality education and that tax payers receive value for money.

There will be clearly defined functions for the Board, it's Committees, Local Governing Bodies and senior leaders.

Members, Trustees and Governors will promote and practice the values of the Trust and behave in ways that exemplify effective governance.

Decisions will be informed, rigorous and transparent in the way that they are taken, making use of good quality information, guidance and support and ensuring that an effective risk management system is in operation.

The Board and Local Governing Bodies will appoint and elect trustees and governors that have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well, will regularly review and evaluate the performance of the Board, its Committees and Local Governing Bodies and develop the capacity of its people taking appropriate succession planning into account. The Trust will strike a balance of trustees and governors, in the membership, between continuity and renewal.

The Board and Local Governing Bodies will engage with stakeholders and make accountability real but having a planned approach to communication and dialogue with relevant stakeholders.

We will apply the highest standards and will:

1. act within our powers
2. promote the success of the trust
3. exercise independent judgement
4. exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
5. avoid conflicts of interest
6. not accept benefits from third parties
7. declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

As Members, Trustees and Governors we are agree to:

As trustees / governors, we will focus on our core purpose:

1. Strategic leadership: defining a vision, fostering a positive culture and championing the strategy
2. Accountability and assurance: providing robust and effective oversight of operations and performance
3. Engagement: strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders (and ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard
4. Ensuring our children and young people are safeguarded

As individuals on the Trust Board, Trust Board Committees and Local Governing Bodies we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day to day management.
2. We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our scheme of delegation.
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our trust and its academies.
4. We agree to adhere to trust and academy policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law,
5. We shall fully cooperate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as disclosure and barring or right to work checks.
6. We will work collectively for the benefit of the Trust and the academies.

7. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
8. We will consider how our decisions may affect the Trust, the academies and local community.
9. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
10. 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.
11. We will only speak or act on behalf of the Trust Board or Local Governing Body if we have the authority to do so.
12. **For Trustees:** We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
13. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
14. We will strive to uphold the reputation of the Trust and its academies in our private communications (including on social media).
15. We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
16. **Those governing at local level**: We will act as the local ambassadors for our trust.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Trust Board or Local Governing Body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the Trust and its academies well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the academies and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe academy and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
8. We will participate in the regular review of effective governance to ensure that we continue to discharge our duties to the highest standards.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/ communities.
2. **Those governing at local level**: We will champion the voices of our school community and stakeholders.
3. **Those governing at local level**: We will establish effective working relationships with trustees.
4. **Trustees**: We will engage with and be accountable to those governing at local level.
5. **Trustees:** We will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities, sector bodies and other trusts.
6. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
7. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board, committee and local governing body member's contributions are valued equally.
8. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board or local governing body and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of Trust and its academies when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.
5. We will practice good ICT security, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the Trust and its academies' business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. 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.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the Trust / academy website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the trust and its academies as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. 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 trustee or governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
7. We accept that information relating to Trust Board members and Local Governors will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.
8. We accept that information relating to Trust Board members will be collected and recorded on Companies House database, some of which will be publicly available

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We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions, including removal from the Trust Board or Local Governing Body as a last resort.

Adopted by: Potteries Educational Trust on 2 July 2026 for implementation from 1 September 2026

Signed M. Jones (Chair of Trust Board – Martin Jones)

The Trust Board agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full Trust Board.

We Shape Young People to Transform the Future

Registered Offices: Potteries Educational Trust, Leek Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST42RU

BIDDULPH HIGH SCHOOL

Moorside High School

SIXTH form COLLEGE CITY OF STOKE ON TRENT