

Advice and Guidance for Trustees

Part One: Code of Conduct

Role & Responsibilities

- Trustees must understand the role of the Trust Board and its position within the Inspire Partnership Multi-Academy Trust;
- Trustees accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Trust Board. This means that Trustees will not speak against majority decisions outside the Trust Board meeting;
- Trustees have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice;
- Trustees should always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the IPMAT and its Academies. Our actions on the Trust Board and as representatives of the Inspire Partnership will reflect this;
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints, Trustees will follow the procedures of the Trust Board;
- Trustees should actively support and challenge the CEO and other Officers of the IPMAT;
- Trustees will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Trust Board and staff, ensuring that Trustees work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;
- Trustees should respect the role of the CEO and her responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- Trustees agree to adhere to the IPMAT's policies and procedures and the Trust's Scheme of Delegation;
- Trustees must support agreed organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views;
- When communicating in a private capacity (including on social media), Trustees should be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.

Commitment

- Having been given the dates of the meetings for the year at the end of the previous summer term, Trustees must attend all meetings if at all possible, explaining in advance if unable to attend. At the very least 66% of meetings should be attended;
- Trustees should be committed and involve themselves actively in the work of the Trust Board, accepting their share of responsibilities;
- Trustees should know the IPMAT well and respond to opportunities to involve themselves in its activities;
- Trustees should take up relevant training and development opportunities offered beginning with induction training;
- Trustees must accept that, in the interests of open governance and transparency, names, photograph and biographical information about their professional life will be published on the IPMAT website.

Relationships

- Trustees should work as part of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted;
- Views should be expressed openly, courteously and respectfully in all meetings and in all forms of communication with Trust Board members, IPMAT Central Office staff and staff and local governors of the Trust's Academies;
- The Chair should be supported in his/her role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times;

- Trustees should seek to develop effective working relationships with the CEO, CFO and COO along with all staff employed by the IPMAT, parents, the community and other relevant agencies;
- The Chair of the Trust Board will attend and lead the termly meeting of the Chairs of the LGB.

Confidentiality

- It is important Trustees should not discuss outside of the meeting any matters which are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff of the IPMAT and its Academies;
- Trustees should exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the business of the IPMAT or individual Academies arise outside of the Trust Board meeting;
- Trustees should not reveal the details of any Trust Board vote;
- Confidential papers should be handled with care and disposed of appropriately;
- Trustees should ensure the use of an official IPMAT email address for all official correspondence.

Conflicts of interest

- Trustees must disclose any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) in connection with the Trust Board’s business in the Register of Business Interests and, if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting, Trustees will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time;
- Trustees must declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of a meeting should the situation arise.
- Trustees will always act in the best interests of the IPMAT as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

All Trustees must observe the seven principles, which consist of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Ceasing to be a Trustee

- Trustees should understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Trustee leaves office.

Breach of this code of conduct:

- If the code of conduct is thought to have been breached, the issue will be raised with the Chair and the Chair will investigate. The Trust Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the Chair that has breached this code, another Trustee, such as the Vice-Chair will investigate.

Name of Trustee**John North**.....

Signature of Trustee 

Date**12th October 2020**.....

Part Two: Protocols for Trustees when visiting an Academy

The Trust Board of the IPMAT has a statutory responsibility to evaluate and account for the effectiveness of the Trust's Academies and their performance.

In order to avoid misunderstandings that could arise from a Trustee visiting an Academy, it is important to have an approved protocol for the visits. They should be non-threatening and carried out in the spirit of partnership. Any visit should help the Trustee have a better understanding of the Academy, its staff, the LGB and the pupils.

Purpose of Visits

The main purposes for visiting the Academies are to:

- show Trustees are supportive of the work of the Academies;
- listen to the views of the Head, staff and governors regarding their Academy;
- help Trustees have a better understand the issues affecting the Academies and their communities;
- help fulfil the Trust Board's duty to ensure the Academies are promoting high standards in all aspects of their work;
- help develop Trustees' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the Academies;
- contribute to the Trust Board's monitoring role;
- help individual Trustees to ask informed and challenging questions at Trust Board meetings.

The benefits to the Head, staff and governors of each Academy should be to:

- get to know and build positive relationships with Trustees;
- appreciate and value the role and responsibilities of the Trust Board;
- ensure Trustees have an understanding of their school;
- feel valued.

What are the Trustees' visits not about?

Trustees are not visiting the Academies to make judgements about the professional expertise of the Head, members of staff nor to judge the work of the Chair and LBG governors.

Furthermore, visits must never be concerned with pursuing a personal agenda or issues.

Trustees cannot become representatives for the Academies they have visited nor can they form close relationships with the Heads, staff or governors.

The Visit

Before the Visit

- Ensure the enhanced DBS check is up to date;
- Arrange details of the visit with the Headteacher and never turn up unannounced;
- Discuss a timetable for the visit: time of arrival; make arrangements for meeting the Head and Chair of the LGB; tour of the school; meet the staff and LGB (or a group of governors); allow time for a short meeting with the Head to discuss the visit.

During the Visit

- Do not arrive late;
- Ensure you sign on arrival and wear the visitor's badge;
- Visits to classrooms can only be made if accompanied by the Head;
- Never interrupt the teacher during a lesson;
- Respect confidentiality;

After the Visit

- Always let the Head or School Office Team know you are leaving the building;
- Sign out before leaving the premises.

Reporting on the Visit

Trustees should report back to the Trust Board following a visit.

Always remember . . .

- Trustees are visiting the Academies as representatives of the Trust Board of the Inspire Partnership MAT and have no individual power or status.
- If anything is seen on visits which does not feel to be appropriate, it must be brought to the attention of the Head of the Academy and the CEO.
- Never to criticise or appear to criticise the Academy in any respect in front of the Head, staff or pupils.