CODE OF CONDUCT

For Members and Trustees of the Esher Sixth Form College Academy Trust

Members and Trustees should ensure that they use their influence to maintain the high standards traditionally associated with Esher Sixth Form College operations. Their personal integrity and independence of judgement are central to this. They must place the interests of the College ahead of their own interests or those of any other group with which they are involved.

All Members and Trustees must declare any general personal interests and record them in the annually completed Register of Interests, updating them through the Governance Professional as appropriate during the year. Members and Trustees who have any outside interests, especially financial, in an agenda item must declare this before any discussion begins and take no part in the proceedings.

If a Member or Trustee has evidence to suggest that proper conduct is not being maintained by other Members or Trustees, they have a duty to ensure that their concerns and complaints are expressed. If a Member or Trustee is dissatisfied with the conduct of any meeting, they are expected to make their views known to the relevant Chair or other senior member of the Board of Trustees.

If this code is breached, the matter will be investigated in an appropriate manner.

Specifically, Members and Trustees should:

a. support the aims and objectives of the College and promote the interests of the College and its students in the wider community

b. work co-operatively with other Members and Trustees in the best interests of the College

c. share with other Members and Trustees accountability for all decisions made by the Academy Trust

d. acknowledge that differences of opinion may arise in discussion of issues but, when a majority decision of the Academy Trust prevails, it should be supported

e. base her or his view on matters before the Academy Trust on an honest assessment of the available facts, unbiased by partisan or representative views

f. acknowledge that as an individual Member or Trustee, she or he has no legal authority outside the meetings of the Academy Trust and its committees

g. understand that an individual Member or Trustee does not have the right, other than through the Chair's agreement, to make statements or express opinions on behalf of the Members or Trustees

h. understand that requests for information from Members or Trustees should be made through a Committee or Board meeting, thereby enabling the Trustees to consider in the Committee or Board, and agree as a Committee or Board, what information is required and for what purpose.

i. resist any temptation or outside pressure to use the position of Member or Trustee to benefit her or himself or other individuals or agencies

j. declare openly and immediately any personal conflict of interest arising from a matter before the Board of Trustees or from any other aspect of Governorship

k. respect the confidentiality of those items of business which the Board of Trustees decides from time to time should remain confidential

l. take or seek opportunities to enhance her or his effectiveness as a Member or Trustee through participation in training and development programmes and by increasing her or his own knowledge of the College

m. give priority, as far as practicable, to attendance at meetings of the Board of Trustees and its committees, informing the Governance Professional as early as possible if they are unable to attend a meeting or will have to leave early, to avoid possible problems with making sure that meetings are quorate

n. have regard to her or his broader responsibilities as a Member or Trustee of a public institution including the need to promote public accountability for the actions and performance of the Academy Trust.

Underpinning all activities are the "Seven Principles of Public Life". Namely:

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

Approved by the Board of Trustees July 2026

Signed by Trustee/Member/Senior Post Holder/Director of Finance

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