



AVENUE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Management Committee Code of Conduct Policy 2022 - 2023

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all Members to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that Members carry out their role with honesty and integrity, and help us to ensure our Pupil Referral Unit is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

The code is based on [the Governance Handbook](#) and the Department for Education's [guidance on the school governance regulations 2013](#). It should be read alongside our constitutional documents (e.g. our instrument of government, standing orders and any scheme of delegation).

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the appendix.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, Members will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the Pupil Referral Unit and its pupils.

2. The 7 Nolan principles of public life

As Members, we will follow these [principles](#) set out by the government at all times. They apply to anyone who holds a public office:

- **Selflessness** – we will act in the public interest
- **Integrity** – we will not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare any conflict of interests
- **Objectivity** – we will act and take decisions impartially, fairly, and on merit. We will use the best evidence and avoid discrimination or bias
- **Accountability** – we understand that we are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions. To make sure of this, we will be scrutinised where necessary
- **Openness** – we will act and take decisions openly and transparently. We will not withhold information from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so
- **Honesty** – we will be truthful
- **Leadership** – we will actively promote and support the above principles and will challenge poor behaviour wherever it happens

3. Members' responsibilities

The 3 functions of our Management Committee are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Pupil Referral Unit
- Hold executive leaders to account for the educational and financial performance of the Pupil Referral Unit, and the performance management of staff
- Oversee the financial performance of the Pupil Referral Unit and make sure money is well spent

In order to do this effectively, as individuals we will:

- Understand and respect the distinction between the role and responsibilities of the Management Committee and those of the Pupil Referral Unit leaders
- Set and maintain an ethos of high expectations for everyone in the Pupil Referral Unit community, including in the conduct and the professionalism of the Management Committee itself

- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Operate and make decisions in the best interests of pupils, informed by the views and needs of our key stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, the local community and the local authority)
- Follow the Pupil Referral Unit's policies and procedures, and the procedures of the Management Committee as set out in relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and the Pupil Referral Unit's constitutional documents
- Take responsibility for our self-evaluation, regularly reviewing our Management Committee's performance, constitution and skillset
- Take part in any training or development required to fill any gaps in the skills we need for effective governance
- Understand that where responsibility has been delegated, the Management Committee as a whole remains accountable and that important decisions relating to core functions will be made by the Management Committee
- Comply with relevant guidance and legislation that sets out how we must manage our Pupil Referral Unit's money, and procure goods and services
- Act with integrity and transparency when making financial decisions, and understand that our financial management and decision-making will be scrutinised and audited
- Declare all gifts worth more than £30 and record them on the gifts and hospitality register. We will not accept bribes
- We will work to actively identify and manage risks to the Pupil Referral Unit

4. Working with others

We will:

- Support and strengthen Pupil Referral Unit leadership by providing constructive challenge to leaders, and holding them to account
- Respect the role of Pupil Referral Unit leaders and avoid routine involvement in operational matters
- Respect each other's views
- Work together as a Management Committee to develop effective relationships with stakeholders
- Engage meaningfully with the communities we serve and understand that we are answerable to these stakeholders
- Follow the Equality Act 2010, and apply the principles of fairness and equality in everything we do

5. Commitment to governance

We:

- Will attend all meetings where possible. Where we cannot attend, we will explain our valid reason and give suitable notice
- Understand and accept the time and workload commitments of the role
- Understand that work should be shared among Members and that all Members are expected to take an active role

- Will prepare ahead of meetings to ensure we make informed contributions
- Will participate in regular pre-arranged Pupil Referral Unit visits in accordance with Pupil Referral Unit policy
- Will attend any training or development activity needed to ensure the Management Committee has a wide range of skills and expertise

6. Openness and transparency

Conflicts of interest

To make sure the Management Committee takes impartial decisions without bias, we will:

- Publish an up-to-date register of business and pecuniary interests of all Members including Associate Members
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting, and withdraw from the meeting for the relevant item of business and not vote on the matter

Publishing information

To ensure the Management Committee is transparent and open to the community we serve, we will make certain information publicly available.

- We accept that the following information will be published on the Pupil Referral Unit's website to ensure transparency:
 - The structure and remit of the Management Committee and any Boards, and the full name of the chair of each one
 - For each Member who has served at any point over the past 12 months:
 - Their full name
 - Their date of appointment
 - Their term of office
 - The date when they stepped down (where applicable)
 - The body which appointed them
 - Their relevant business and pecuniary interests
 - Their attendance record at Management Committee and Board meetings over the last academic year
- We accept that the information relating to Members will be published on Get information about Pupil Referral Units
- We accept that the approved Management Committee and Board minutes and any agenda and papers considered at a meeting will be made available to any interested person

7. Confidentiality

In the course of our role, we are sometimes privy to sensitive information. We will observe confidentiality when discussing this information, and will not publicly disclose:

- Information about sensitive matters
- Information about named individuals (such as staff, pupils and their parents)
- Details of individual Members' contributions in meetings or how they may have voted

Confidential information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

Our commitment to confidentiality does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

We will continue to observe confidentiality after we have left office.

Breaches of confidentiality

In the event of a breach of confidentiality, we will inform the chair as soon as possible who will investigate the matter further.

Members' understand that if they breach confidentiality, they may be suspended.

8. Data protection

We will follow the Pupil Referral Unit's information security processes and measures and data protection policy when using, storing, sharing and disposing of personal data.

Our commitment to data protection does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

Personal data breaches

We will inform the Pupil Referral Unit's data protection officer immediately if we believe that there has been a personal data breach.

9. Social media

We will:

- Abide by any requirements set out in our Pupil Referral Unit's social media policy

We will:

- Uphold the reputation of the Pupil Referral Unit at all times
- Maintain a professional presence online and carefully consider how we interact with the Pupil Referral Unit community
- Review privacy settings regularly to make sure we are happy with the information about us that is publicly available
- Report any incidents of harassment we experience, or see towards Members to the chair of the Management Committee and the Headteacher

We will **not**:

- Accept friend requests from pupils and not join any private parent groups associated with the Pupil Referral Unit
- Disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection principles
- Make comments online about any members of the Management Committee or Pupil Referral Unit community
- Post any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media that may bring us or the Pupil Referral Unit into disrepute

10. Monitoring arrangements

This code of conduct will be reviewed and agreed annually, upon significant changes to the law, or as needed. It will be ratified by the Management Committee.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Digital Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Appendix 1:

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

If we suspect a Member has breached the code of conduct, we will follow this procedure:

- The chair will investigate
- The chair will hold a meeting with the Member to discuss the issue. The Member can bring a friend to the meeting. Another Member will attend to corroborate any decisions
- If the situation doesn't improve, or there is another suspected breach, we will take action to improve the issue. This may involve:
 - Further meetings with the chair to reset expectations, based on this code of conduct
 - Support, mentoring or training for the Member
 - Making sure the Member withdraws from votes connected to any disputes they have been involved in
- If there is no improvement in the Members' behaviour, the Management Committee will vote on a motion to suspend them for up to 6 months. This is a last resort and will not be used without the above steps being taken, except in exceptional circumstances

Members may be suspended if they:

- Are a staff Member undergoing disciplinary proceedings at the Pupil Referral Unit
- Are undergoing court or tribunal proceedings that would result in the Member being disqualified from holding office
- Have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of the Pupil Referral Unit and has brought, or is likely to bring the Pupil Referral Unit into disrepute
- Breach confidentiality

'Bringing the Management Committee into disrepute' may include, but is not limited to:

- Speaking out publicly against the Pupil Referral Unit
- Being disrespectful to members of the Pupil Referral Unit community
- Behaving inappropriately in a public forum, such as a PTA meeting or on social media

We may remove a Member from office where:

- There have been repeated grounds for suspension
- There has been serious misconduct. We will determine what counts as serious misconduct based on the facts of the case, but it will include any actions that compromise the 7 principles of public life, if sufficiently serious
- They display repeated and serious incompetence
- They have engaged in conduct aimed at undermining fundamental British values
- Their actions are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the Management Committee, or their actions interfere with the operational efficiency of the Pupil Referral Unit