Trustee and Members Code of Conduct

Staff Responsible:	**Mrs A Sheridan & Mrs E Chandler**
Date of Issue:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2029

Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations and standards of behaviour required of all Trustees and Members of Ribbon Academy Trust.

The Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, integrity, transparency and accountability in all its work. Trustees and Members are expected to uphold the Trust's values and act in the best interests of pupils, staff, families and the wider community at all times.

This Code should be read alongside the Trust's Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation, Governance Handbook, Conflict of Interest Policy and all relevant Trust policies.

Our Strategic Role

As Trustees, we will focus on our strategic functions to fulfil our roles and responsibilities by:

- Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the Trust and its pupils and the performance of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the Trust and ensuring public money is well spent.
- Ensuring effective stewardship of resources and value for money.
- Ensuring the voices of pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders are heard.
- Ensuring the Trust complies with charity law, company law, academy trust requirements, funding agreements and relevant education legislation.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of governance arrangements.

Members will fulfil their constitutional responsibilities as defined within the Trust's Articles of Association and will apply the principles within this Code in a manner appropriate to their distinct role.

Commitment to Safeguarding

We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

We will:

- Ensure safeguarding remains a priority in all governance decision-making.
- Maintain appropriate oversight of safeguarding arrangements and statutory compliance.
- Support a culture where pupils are safe, listened to and protected from harm.
- Undertake safeguarding training as required.
- Challenge appropriately where safeguarding concerns arise.

As Individuals on the Board, We Agree to the Following

Strategic Leadership

We will:

- Accept that our role is strategic and focus on governance rather than day-to-day management.
- Develop, share and uphold the Trust's ethos and values.
- Adhere to all Trust policies, procedures and relevant legislation.
- Work collectively for the benefit of the Trust and its schools.
- Provide constructive challenge while maintaining professional respect.
- Consider how decisions will affect pupils, staff, families and the wider community.
- Support collective decisions once they have been made through proper governance processes, regardless of individual viewpoints expressed during debate.
- Speak up where decisions or actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils, staff or the Trust at risk.
- Only speak or act on behalf of the Board when authorised to do so.
- Fulfil our responsibilities as a fair and responsible employer.
- Follow established procedures when making or responding to complaints.
- Uphold the reputation of the Trust in all communications, including social media activity.
- Act honestly, responsibly and in accordance with the Trust's values.
- Not discriminate against any person and actively promote equality of opportunity for all.

Demonstrating Commitment to the Role

We will:

- Actively involve ourselves in the work of the Board.
- Accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups where required.
- Make every effort to attend all meetings.
- Notify the Chair and Clerk in advance if unable to attend a meeting.
- Arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers and supporting information.
- Contribute positively, professionally and respectfully to discussions.
- Get to know the Trust and its schools well enough to carry out our responsibilities effectively.
- Participate in monitoring visits and governance activities in accordance with agreed protocols.
- Continue to observe this Code when visiting schools in a personal capacity.
- Participate in induction and ongoing governance training.
- Undertake mandatory safeguarding, governance and statutory training as required.
- Commit to continuous professional development in order to fulfil the role effectively.

Persistent non-attendance or failure to engage with governance responsibilities may result in formal action under Trust governance procedures.

Building and Maintaining Relationships

We will:

- Foster effective working relationships with leaders, staff, parents, pupils and stakeholders.
- Express views openly, courteously and respectfully.
- Challenge constructively, professionally and appropriately, recognising that robust debate leads to stronger decision-making.
- Respect the views and experiences of others.
- Support the Chair in leading the Board effectively.
- Create an inclusive environment where each Board member's contribution is valued equally.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in our governance practices and across the Trust.

Respecting Confidentiality

We recognise that effective governance depends upon trust and discretion.

We will:

- Observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or involve individual pupils, staff or families.
- Respect commercially sensitive information and data protection requirements.
- Not disclose confidential Board discussions or documentation to unauthorised persons.
- Not reveal the details of Board votes.
- Ensure confidential papers and electronic records are stored securely and disposed of appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality even after leaving office.
- Use Trust information only for carrying out governance responsibilities.

Data Protection and Cyber Security

We will:

- Comply with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act and all Trust information governance requirements.
- Handle personal and sensitive information securely and appropriately.
- Ensure electronic documents, passwords and communications are protected.
- Report any data breach or cyber security concern promptly through the appropriate procedures.
- Support the Trust in maintaining effective cyber security arrangements and risk management processes.

Declaring Interests and Acting Transparently

We will:

- Declare any business, personal, financial or other interest relevant to the Board's work.
- Ensure interests are accurately recorded in the Register of Interests.
- Declare conflicts of loyalty or potential conflicts at the start of meetings where necessary.
- Withdraw from discussions and decisions where a conflict exists, where appropriate.
- Act solely in the interests of the Trust and not as representatives of particular groups or interests.
- Accept that the Register of Interests may be published in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Support openness and transparency in governance while respecting confidentiality obligations.
- Accept that governance information required by the Department for Education and other regulatory bodies may be collected and published where required.

The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

We agree to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Selflessness

We will act solely in the public interest and in the best interests of the Trust and its pupils.

Integrity

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation that could improperly influence our work. We will not seek personal benefit and will declare and manage interests appropriately.

Objectivity

We will make decisions impartially, fairly, on merit and based on evidence.

Accountability

We are accountable for our actions and decisions and will submit ourselves to appropriate scrutiny.

Openness

We will act transparently and openly wherever possible and lawful to do so.

Honesty

We will be truthful in all our actions and communications.

Leadership

We will demonstrate these principles through our own conduct and challenge behaviour that falls below expected standards.

Breaches of this Code

Trustees and Members are expected to uphold this Code at all times.

Any potential or perceived breach will be taken seriously and considered by the Chair of Trustees (or Vice Chair where the Chair is involved).

Appropriate actions may include:

- Informal resolution or mediation.
- Additional training or support.
- Formal warning.
- Removal from committees or appointed positions.
- Recommendation for suspension or removal from office where permitted by the Trust's governing documents and applicable legislation.
- Referral to an appropriate regulatory or statutory body where necessary.

All concerns will be handled fairly, proportionately and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

Declaration

I have read and understood the Trustees and Members Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its principles and requirements.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Role (Trustee/Member): _____

Date: _____