ACADEMIES GUIDANCE

**A discussion document to aid the development of a**

**Code of Practice**

**for**

**Academy Committee Representatives**

**September 2014**



**DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE**

**Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216**

**Making Christ Known Today**

**This document has parts highlighted All highlighted sections need replacing with appropriate text**

**Blue – where information needs to be inserted**

**Green - These sections are to be adapted to your schools particular needs. The current text in these sections gives discussion points and will be replaced by sections of your choice. An example of what a typical governing body might put in these sections is found in the accompanying document ‘Example code of practice’**

**Archdiocese of Birmingham**

**INSERT NAME OF MULTI-ACADEMY**

**INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Academy Committee Code of Practice**

1. **Rationale**
   1. The purpose of this code of practice is to enable the academy committee representatives to contribute to the school securing its mission and sustaining its ethos as a Catholic school, as well as ensuring the school provides a quality educational experience for all its children and achieves high standards.
   2. The mission of our school is:

**INSERT MISSION STATEMENT**

1. **Legal Framework**
   1. The academy committee is a corporate body. Academy committee representatives have no authority to act individually. The powers and authority of the academy committee are only those delegated by the board of directors of the multi-academy company.
   2. All academy committee representatives have equal status, and although representatives are appointed and elected by different groups, the central concern must be the welfare of our school as a Catholic school, conducted in accordance with the Diocesan Trust Deed.
2. **Roles and Responsibilities**
   1. The academy committee’s responsibilities are different to those of the board of directors and are delegated to them by the board of directors. The delegated functions relate to[[2]](#footnote-2):

* the Catholic life;
* the day-to-day life of the school; the health and safety arrangements; the implementation of the school’s curriculum plans; the arrangements for teaching and learning;
* the culture and traditions of the school as a unique community with a specific school, parish, community and locality, identity and history;
* communication and the appropriate formation of relationships with parents of pupils attending the school to work with and support them in their role as primary educators of their children;
* engagement with the parish priest and local Church and parish community to work with and support them as they contribute to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural formation of the pupils in the school;
* relationships with other local schools, agencies and businesses, as well as the wider neighbourhood community, that enhances the quality of education provided by the school for its pupils;
* providing evaluative feedback and supporting evidence to the Directors on the impact and effectiveness of both the Company’s and the school’s collective and individual: aims and objectives; policies; targets; and plans.
  1. The academy committee has a strategic role. As agent of accountability, on behalf of the Catholic community and the communities of the school. The academy committee ensures that the strategic framework and policies of the board of directors are implemented in the school.
  2. Ensuring the implementation of the strategic framework of the board of directors includes:
* Setting the local aims and objectives of the school, with regard to the powers delegated to them.
* Ensuring that the common policies and procedures of the multi-academy are adopted in the school.
* Ensuring there are plans and procedures in place to secure those policies, targets and priorities.
* Giving challenge and support to the principal and ensuring he/she performs his/her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school.
* providing evaluative feedback and supporting evidence to the Directors on the impact and effectiveness of both the Company’s and the school’s collective and individual: aims and objectives; policies; targets; and plans
* Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school’s financial resources.
  1. In its strategic role the academy committee is accountable to:
* The Trustees who own the school, for the school’s effectiveness as a Catholic school.
* The Board of Directors.
* The Catholic community, and the wider community, who entrust their children to the schools within the multi-academy, for the outcomes achieved by their children, in all aspects of their being.
  1. The principal is responsible for:
* Acting, as professional adviser to the academy committee and in consultation with other principals in the multi-academy, as professional adviser to the Board of Directors, and for providing the information they need to carry out their legal duties.
* Advising on and implementing the strategic framework agreed by the Board of Directors and academy committee, which includes:
  + In consultation with the other principals in the multi-academy, formulating and drafting aims and objectives, policies and targets for consideration by the Board of Directors.
  + formulating and drafting local aims and objectives, policies and targets within the remit of and for consideration by the academy committee.
  + Implementing policies set by the Board of Directors and the academy committee.
  + Leading their school towards agreed targets.
  + Reporting on progress towards the agreed aims, objectives and targets.
  + Discharging delegated responsibilities on behalf of the Board of Directors and the academy committee.
* The internal organisation, management and control of the school, including the implementation of the curriculum and the day to day running of the school.
* The educational performance of the school.

1. **Commitment**
   1. We acknowledge that being an academy committee representative:

* Involves committing significant amounts of time and energy.
* Involves participating fully in the work of the academy committee so that individuals accept a fair share of the responsibilities and duties, including service on committees, working parties or as ‘named representatives’.

**INSERT**

* + Individual academy committee representatives will be expected to be on a minimum of X and a maximum of X standing committees
* Requires regular attendance at meetings of the full academy committee and subcommittees.
* Requires getting to know the school well and responding to opportunities to visit and get involved in school activities.
* Requires considering seriously our individual and collective training and development needs and using any designated funds to address them.
* Requires knowledge and understanding of our role within school procedures.

1. **Confidentiality**
   1. We understand that being an academy committee representative requires that we:

* Observe confidentiality routinely as a matter of course, but particularly when explicitly asked to do so, for example regarding matters concerning staff, children or their parents/carers.
* Keep discussion about decisions confidential even when decisions themselves are made public through the minutes of meetings.
* Exercise prudence when invited to respond in discussions and informal talk outside academy committee meetings, and instead of passing individual comment, encourage issues to be brought to the attention of the principal, the local academy committee or board of directors (depending on the nature of the issue) through the proper channels.
* Exercise care that any discussions do not prejudice any formal procedures.

1. **Relationships**
   1. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the academy committee representatives will strive to develop effective working relationships with:

* The principal
* Staff
* Children
* Parents
* The board of directors
* The Diocese (i.e. Diocesan Education Service)
* Multi-agency representatives
* Our parish and local communities
* Other local schools, including Catholic and other VA, VC and Community schools and Academies.
* Local educational organisations/businesses etc.
  1. In forming, building and sustaining good working relationships academy committee representatives will strive to:

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify what it means to be an academy committee representative in any given category.
* Clarify how the role of an individual academy committee representative differs from the role of the academy committee corporate.
* Clarify the nature of individual and collective responsibility and accountability.
* Clarify the nature of relationship that will enable the academy committee to act as ‘critical friend’ to the headteacher.
* Clarify the values that should underpin relationships between the academy committee representatives and other stakeholders.

1. **Conduct**
   1. Academy committee representatives have a duty to act with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness honesty and leadership[[3]](#footnote-3), in the best interests of the school at all times. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the academy committee will strive to behave professionally at all times.

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify the expectations of the academy committee and individual academy committee representatives in relation to the Catholic ethos of the school.
* Clarify the expectations of the academy committee and individual academy committee representatives in relation to their stewardship of the school.
* Clarify expectations of academy committee representatives’ behaviour in relation to all they say and do as individuals and as a corporate body.
* Clarify expectations of academy committee representatives’ understanding of how their decisions and actions can impact within and beyond the immediate school community.
* Clarify what academy committee representatives may or may not discuss outside the meetings of the board of directors.
* Clarify expectations of academy committee representatives’ understanding of protecting the reputation of the school and the multi-academy, and the governance of the school and the multi-academy.
* Clarify the authority of individual academy committee representatives.
* Clarify how individual academy committee representatives will be expected to respond to approaches from members of staff, parents, and members of the parish or the wider community.
* Clarify how academy committee representatives will be expected to register any potential for conflict of interest and the implications for conducting business.

1. **Structure of the academy committee**
   1. The academy committee must appoint a clerk with a view to their efficient functioning and must have regard to advice from the clerk as to the nature of academy committee functions.
   2. The academy committee will work efficiently and effectively in the best interests of the school by organising itself into a committee structure so that it can fulfil its statutory responsibilities, including ensuring the statutory right of appeal, through appropriate full delegation of powers and statutory functions to either:

* a committee
* an academy committee representative or
* the principal.
  1. The academy committee will be structured as follows:

**INSERT TITLES OF THE STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES**

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify how academy committee representatives will secure the Catholicity of the school, i.e. a separate Catholicity subcommittee or the expectation that the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church and Gospel values will underpin all aspects of the working of the academy committee.
* Clarify which powers are delegated to subcommittees or individuals
* Clarify that subcommittees or individuals have no powers unless formally given by the academy committee
* Clarify that the academy committee must review the delegation of its statutory functions annually.
* Clarify whether or not the academy committee will give fully delegated powers, including delegated decision making powers, to subcommittees.
  1. The academy committee must review the delegation of its statutory functions annually.
  2. The subcommittees will have clear terms of reference.
* No vote on any matter may be taken at any meeting of a subcommittee unless the majority of members of the subcommittee present and voting are academy committee representatives.

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify the position regarding observers and their role.
* Consider an ‘open door’ policy for meetings, the implications and how it can be managed effectively.
* Clarify how chairs of the subcommittees will be elected.

1. **Meeting Structure and Management**

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify the number, frequency and purpose of meetings.
* Clarify the approach to planning meetings.
* Clarify the academy committee attitude to the timing of meetings, and their scheduling, with a view to reasonable expectations of everyone’s time commitment, including senior managers as well as academy committee representatives.
* Clarify the options for flexibility.
* Clarify the role of clerk to the academy committee and arrangements for the clerking of subcommittee meetings.
  1. The clerk will send out agendas, minutes and any reports or other papers to be considered at the academy committee /subcommittee meeting at least seven clear days in advance to appropriate people
  2. The chair of the academy committee, chairs of subcommittees, the principal, all other academy committee representatives and the clerk will subscribe to the following expectations so that the academy committee representatives, whether working corporately or in subcommittee, will achieve informed, collective decisions in an effective and efficient manner that meet the legal requirements.

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify attendance at subcommittee meetings of the principal and / or other senior managers.
* Clarify the role and responsibilities of chairs in managing meetings effectively.
* Clarify the requirement for meetings to be quorate.
* Clarify how items will arrive on the agenda, and how papers will be managed.
* Clarify matters to do with the start, finish and duration of meetings, punctuality and dealing with apologies and lateness.
* Clarify expectations of academy committee representatives in preparing for meetings.
* Clarify how the agenda, including ‘Any Other Business’ will be managed in meetings, how decisions will be taken, and how academy committee representatives will behave.
* Clarify how minutes will be managed.

1. **Visiting the School**
   1. School visits are an essential part of the academy committee representatives’ role. Effective and well organised visits can provide the academy committee with a strategy for monitoring the effectiveness of policies.
   2. Before the visit it will be important for the academy committee representative concerned to:

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify how the purpose and agenda for visits will be determined.
* Clarify the practical arrangements for the visit and the nature of communication between all parties concerned.
* Consider the personal courtesies that should be extended to individuals.
  1. During the visit it will be important for the academy committee representative to:

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify expectations of behaviours in the classroom, towards the teacher and the children.
* Clarify expected outcomes.
* Consider the personal courtesies that should be extended to individuals.
  1. After the visit it will be important for the academy committee representative to:

**INSERT appropriate paragraphs or bullet points**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify the expected outcomes of visits.
* Clarify the nature of communication with all parties concerned.
* Consider the personal courtesies that should be extended to individuals.
  1. The written report, using the standard proforma, will include:

**INSERT**

**Some prompts to aid discussion:**

* Clarify the expectations of reporting back to the academy committee.
* Clarify the use of proformas etc.

1. **Implementing the Code**
   1. There is an expectation that anyone serving as academy committee representative will adhere to this Code of Practice.
   2. In the unlikely event of a serious breach of this Code of Practice, by behaving in a manner that would be inconsistent with the school or multi-academy ethos, the academy committee or the board of directors have the right to hold an individual academy committee representative to account (The academy committee should seek advice from the Diocesan Education Service).

Agreed on: [insert date]

Review on: [insert date]

Final copies distributed to: [insert list]

*N.B. This model code draws on a sample code published in ‘Welcome to Governance’ which was published by the National Governors’ Council (note this is now part of ‘The National Governors Association’). The model code also draws on a document produced by Warwickshire LA ‘Warwickshire Advice on Partnership in Primary School Governance’. Other LA models have been considered including those published by Coventry and Sandwell LA.*

*An electronic copy is available on request from the DES or from our website*

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1. This document refers to an individual institution within a multi-academy as a ‘school’, whether or not the school uses the word ‘academy’ in its title [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See section 7 of the scheme of delegation for a full description of the functions of the academy committee.. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The 7 principles of public life. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)