
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE GOVERNING BOARD

Introduction

This is not a statement of responsibilities, but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles that the Trust/Governing board has adopted and by which Trustees/Governors will operate.

Purpose of the Trust/Governing Board

The Trust/Governing board is the school's accountable board. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards and as part of this Trustees/Governors would be expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Ultimately the board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

The Governing Board:

All boards, whether in the maintained or academy sector and no matter how many schools they are responsible for, have three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Ensures Accountability, by:

- Appointing the Head Teacher/Lead Executive - who will deliver the strategic direction of the school (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, delivery of the curriculum and report appropriately to the Governing/Trust Board.
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the Head Teacher/Lead Executive in line with schemes of delegation
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contribution to school self-evaluation.

Ensures Financial Probity by:

- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.

All Trustees/Governors are appointed within a scheme of delegation. Their central and common concern should be the welfare of the school as a whole. For boards to carry out their roles effectively, Trustees/Governors must:

- Understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Lead Executive/Head Teacher.
- Accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.

- Be prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged they are the accountable Board and be prepared to challenge appropriately supported by the appropriate authorities in that task,
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance and undertake training
- As they share responsibility for the employment of all staff fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors/Trustees should consider carefully how their decisions might affect other schools and the community.
- The Board should recognise that it is accountable for its decisions.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school will follow the procedures established by the Board.

Local Governing Boards

Whilst Governors sitting on local governing boards operate within an agreed scheme of delegation which sets out any delegated responsibilities it is expected that they agree to operate within the broad principles adopted by the Trust Board and agree to the overarching ideology of school governance.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor/Trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Board and accept a fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working parties.
- Regular attendance at meetings of the full Board, committees and working groups is essential. Where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will commit to attending training sessions relating to our own development and the development of the Board.
- We will get to know the school well and take all possible opportunities for involvement in school activities including contact with pupils.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Board and agreed with the Head Teacher/CEO.
- Agree to adhere to all schools safeguarding procedures and policies including the school Social Networking Policy
- Appointment to the Board is subject to a cleared enhanced DBS which must be requested within three weeks of appointment. Refusal to undertake a DBS will mean an automatic disqualification.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance the following information will be published on the school website:
 - ❖ Our names
 - ❖ Terms of office
 - ❖ Roles on the governing board
 - ❖ Category of governor and the board responsible for appointing us
 - ❖ Relevant business interests
 - ❖ Details of any other educational establishment we govern
 - ❖ Any relationship between governors and the member of the school staff including spouse, partners and relatives.

Relationships

- We will strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships lead to effective Governance.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Governors/Trustees/Staff and Clerk to the governing board.

- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- Apart from very specific instances for the Chair, we recognise that we have no individual powers and should only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Board when specifically authorised.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- Any concern or possible criticism about the school will be discussed with the Head Teacher/CEO in the first instance.
- We will develop effective working relationships with Head Teachers/CEO, staff, parent groups, LA and other relevant agencies, where appropriate.

Confidentiality

- Although decisions reached at Governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which the decisions were based is regarded as confidential.
- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or its delegated agents. We will not speak out against decisions, in public or private, outside the Board.
- We will observe complete confidentiality in relation to matters concerning staff or pupils and any other matters agreed by the Governing Board.
- We will exercise the highest degree of caution when involved in sensitive issues arising outside the Governing Board, which may have an impact on the work of the Governing Board or the operation of the school.
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing/Trust Board vote.

Conflict of Interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the Governing/Trust Board's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start or throughout the meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the Governing Board.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair who will undertake an investigation.
- The Governing Board will only use suspension/removal of Governors as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.
- Non attendance a governor is automatically disqualified if they have not attended for six months and not tended apologies for acceptance, Governor Support Service (GSS) strongly recommends that before taking the more formal steps, the Chair contacts the Governor on an informal basis to establish the reasons for non-attendance such as timings of meetings, not receiving papers, no longer wishing to serve etc.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity – In carry out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

As part of this code of practice you are also agreeing to personal information such as Name, Address, Telephone Numbers, Email address, Category of Governor, Term of Office being shared with other members of the governing board as appropriate. This information will be stored in both electronic and hard copy formats.

However governors can withdraw consent for this information to be shared at any time by contacting their Governor Support Officer.

I AGREE FOR MY DETAILS TO BE SHARED WITH OTHER GOVERNORS PLEASE PUT A TICK IN THE BOX

Governors will sign the Code of Conduct when appointed and again at the first governing board meeting of each school year.

I agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct and as a member of the governing board I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the governing board, the Head Teacher or staff

Signed:Printed name: Date: