

# Governors' Code of Conduct

Date approved by governors: 10 July 2019

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the governing body to carry out its work properly and efficiently within the school and the community.

## **PART ONE: INFORMATION**

### **The purpose of the governing body**

The governing body is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being. Over the past decade the responsibilities of governing bodies have grown and schools are now accountable for children's health and well-being in the community and for a wide range of extended services provision out of school hours.

### **The governing body sets the strategic direction of the school by:**

- Setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- Setting statutory targets
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure
- making available information to the community
- Appoints and performance manages the headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the governing body.

### **Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:**

- the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
- progress towards targets
- the implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
- the budget and the staffing structure

### **Ensures accountability by:**

- signing off the Self Evaluation Form
- responding to School Improvement Partner and Ofsted reports when necessary
- holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- making available information to the community

**Appoints and executes the performance management of the headteacher** who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of

the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the governing body.

**For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively governors must be:**

- prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously
- acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals
- supported by the appropriate authorities in that task
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance

**The role of a governor**

- In law the governing body is a corporate body which means no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body.
- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made.
- Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority Community, Foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

**PART TWO: GOVERNORS' COMMITMENT**

**General understanding of the role of the Governing Body**

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the headteacher as set out above.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and in so far as we have responsibility for staff we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local
- community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

**Expectations of Governors' involvement**

*We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.*

- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- Meeting dates are published 12 months ahead. We will all make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain fully as far in advance as possible why we are unable to.
- We will read all the paperwork posted on the Governors' Virtual Office (GVO) in preparation for meetings, and should arrive promptly.
- We will make full use of the GVO, using it for discussion purposes and document review. Agreed time deadlines will be given for this purpose.
- If for a good reason we are unable to attend a meeting we will
  - a) read and prepare all the documents distributed by the Clerk
  - b) send to the Clerk our questions and comments for consideration at the meeting
  - c) read the minutes as soon as they are published and contact the Chair or another governor for clarification as necessary.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

### **Relationships**

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in his role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed and we acknowledge the time, effort and skills that are committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will not bring the school into disrepute through improper use of, or friendships made, through Facebook or other social media.

### **Confidentiality**

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

### **Conflicts of interest**

- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- All members of the governing body, including associate members, are required to complete an annual declaration of any pecuniary or business interests. Dated nil returns are also required. The register is reviewed annually, but we will declare any changes as and when they occur. The register of interests and details of governors' membership are published on the school's website. Any governor failing to provide information to enable the governing body to fulfil its responsibilities may be in breach of the Code of Conduct and, as a result, be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases, the governing body will consider suspending the governor.

### **Breach of this code of practice**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate. The Governing Body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the governing body.
- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (held as a separate document)

### **Undertaking**

As a member of the Governing Body 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 Body, the Headteacher or staff.

**Agreement**

This document was agreed and signed by governors at their Full Governing Body meeting held on 10 July 2019.

Name	Signature
Tina Donovan	
Helen Drummond	
Mandi Hirsch	
Liz Goodchild	
Julian Hoad	
Selina McKee	
Howard Roberts	
Julian Rose	
Paul Seabrook	
Helen Smith	