

## 1. The purpose of the governing body:

The governing body is the school's accountable body. It aims to ensure that students attend a school, which will not only provide them with the best possible education, but will also nurture their well-being, spiritual and social development.

## 2. As governors / trustees, we will focus on our strategic functions:

- a. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- b. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- c. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
- d. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

As individuals on the board we agree to:

## 3. Fulfil our role & responsibilities

- a. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day to day management.
- b. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
- c. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- d. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
- e. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- f. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
- g. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
- h. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- i. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
- j. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- k. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
- l. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
- m. We will always be mindful of our responsibility to support, maintain and develop the Christian ethos and reputation of the school but we will never work to impose any individual or collective held belief on the school or on any person within the school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.

## 4. Demonstrate our commitment to the role

- a. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
- b. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- c. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- d. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- e. We will visit the school and when doing so, will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.

- f. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- g. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

## 5. Build and maintain relationships

- a. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/ communities.
- b. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- c. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

## 6. Respect confidentiality

- a. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- b. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- c. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- d. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

## 7. Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

- a. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
- b. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- c. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- d. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
- e. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
- f. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- g. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

## 8. IT Acceptable Use Policy

I understand that I must use school ICT systems in a responsible way, to minimise the risk to my safety or to the safety and security of the ICT systems and other users. For my professional and personal safety:

- a. I understand that the school will monitor my use of its ICT systems including email and other digital communications technologies.
- b. I understand that this agreement will also apply to use of school ICT systems out of school (eg laptops, email, VLE etc).
- c. I understand that the school ICT systems are primarily intended for educational use and that I will only use the systems for personal or recreational use within the policies and rules set down by the school.
- d. I will keep my usernames and passwords private and will not try to use anyone else's username and password.
- e. I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or incident, to the appropriate person in school.

- f. I will be professional in my communications and actions when using school ICT systems or any other forms of electronic communication, including personal equipment and equipment that may be shared with other members of my family or friends: -
- g. I will not access, copy, delete or otherwise alter any other user's files, without their permission.
- h. I will communicate with others in a professional manner.
- i. I will ensure that if I take or publish images of pupils or parents/colleagues, I will do so with their permission and in accordance with the school's policy. I will not use my personal equipment to record these images, unless I have permission to do so. Where these images are published it will not be possible to identify pupils by name, or other personal information.
- j. I will not share any personal information with a pupil (including personal phone numbers or email address), nor will I request or respond to any personal information from a pupil.
- k. I will only use chat and social networking sites in school in accordance with school policy. i.e. I will not accept invitations from pupils to add me as a friend to their social networking sites; I will also be careful with who has access to my pages through friends and friends of friends, especially connected with my professional role in any way.
- l. I will only communicate with pupils and parents/carers using official school systems and in a professional manner.
- m. I will not engage in any on-line activity that may compromise my professional responsibilities, and I will ensure that any private social networking sites, blogs etc that I create or actively contribute to are not confused with my professional role in any way.

## 9. Breach of this Code of Practice

- a. If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate. Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, a sub-group of governors selected by the Vice Chair will investigate.
- b. The results of any investigation into a breach of the code of practice shall be raised at a meeting of the next full governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and consideration then given to the suspension of the person or persons committing the breach from the governing body. The governing body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- c. At all times, we will take account of the Statutory Regulations and support the right of appeal.

## 10. Ways of working

- a. A provisional timetable for Governor's meetings will be agreed before the first full governor's meeting at the start of the school year.
- b. Agendas (and discussion papers) for each governor meeting will be circulated at least one week before the agreed date of the meeting and include start and finish times. It is expected that governors will come to the meeting fully prepared.
- c. All meetings will be governed by the usual code of conduct i.e. no interruptions, never more than one person speaking at a time and only speaking with the assent of the Chair.
- d. In order to fully cover the agenda, a discussion time specified by the Chair will be allocated to each item.

## APPENDIX A: 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.*

### **1. 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.

### **2. 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.

### **3. Objectivity**

In carrying 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.

### **4. 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.

### **5. 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.

### **6. 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.

### **7. Leadership**

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