

Model Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies

2015-16

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the aims and ethos of the particular school.

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.

The governing body:

a) 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

β) 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

χ) Ensures accountability by:

- responding to 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

δ) 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.



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; and
- 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, and
- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority Community/Co-opted, Foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

General

- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life (appended).
- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- We recognise that the Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and the delivery of the curriculum.
- We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Body has given us delegated authority 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 shall be seen to be doing so
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect other schools.

Commitment

- 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, attend regularly, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend meetings and, where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development and undertake relevant training.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team, expressing views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in his/her role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the head, staff and parents, the Local Authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the Governing Body, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the school arises outside the Governing Body.
- We will make use of e-communication and social networking sites as agreed by the governing body and will ensure that our individual use of electronic media is responsible, supports the ethos of the school and may not bring the school or the governing body into disrepute.

Conflicts of interest

- We will declare and record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest – or a personal interest which could be deemed 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.

Conduct

- We will accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Body.
- Our visits to school will be undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school.
- We will, upon ceasing to be a governor, continue to work to the principles in this Code of Conduct, particularly those relating to confidentiality.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached we will raise this issue with the Chair of the governing body who will investigate further.
- A breach of the code may lead to the suspension or removal of a governor if it has not been possible to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

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.

Signed

Printed name

Date:

Appendix:

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 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.

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.