



# **Code of Conduct for Governors**

# Code of Conduct for Governance

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

## Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the lead executive/Head of School.
- We 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.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- 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 government and will act appropriately.
- 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/group of schools. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the lead executive/Head of School

## Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a local governor/trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school/s, with all visits arranged in advance with the lead executive/headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, 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.

- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors/trustees will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase).
- 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/trustees/academy committee members and the clerk to the governing board.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members 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.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the lead executive/Head of School, staff and parents, the trust, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

### **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/trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- **Conflicts 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 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/trust's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any 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 and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal 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 governing board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## Principles and personal attributes

The principles and personal attributes that individuals bring to the board are as important as their skills and knowledge. These qualities enable board members to use their skills and knowledge to function well as part of a team and make an active contribution to effective governance.

All those elected or appointed to boards should fulfil their duties in line with the seven principles of public life, the Nolan principles. These are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honest
- Leadership

They should also be mindful of the responsibility under equality legislation, recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion. They should understand the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people. In addition, all those involved in governance should be:

- **Committed** – devoting the required time and energy to the role and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for young people. Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and other in order to create highly effective governance.
- **Confident** – of an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the board.
- **Curious** – Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and understanding the value of meaningful questioning.
- **Challenging** – Providing appropriate challenge to the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.
- **Collaborative** – prepared to listen to and work in partnership with others and understanding the importance of building strong working relationships within the board and with executive leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils/students. The local community and employers.
- **Critical** – Understanding the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support, and self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole board effectiveness.
- **Creative** – Able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving; recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.