

Academy Governor Code of Conduct

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Ownership and Control

History

Version	Author	Dated	Status	Details
1	Based on NGA and ECC models	September 2015	Approved	Approved by the Full Governing Body on 23 September 2015
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Intended Audience

Intended Audience	Intended Method of Distribution
Governors, prospective Governors	Sharepoint

Code of Conduct for Academy Governors

This code sets out the expectations on, and commitment required from, Academy Governors in order for the Governing Body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

New Governors will be expected to sign up to the Code of Conduct prior to appointment.

All Governors will also be asked to reaffirm their commitment to its content at the first meeting of each new academic year.

Code of Conduct for Academy Governors

The Governing Body is the Academy's accountable body and is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The Governing Body aims to ensure that students are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

The Governing Body has the following core functions:

Establishes the strategic direction by:

- setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
- agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- agreeing the school improvement strategy and monitoring priorities and targets
- setting statutory duties and targets
- appointing the Headteacher

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

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

Ensures probity by:

- setting and monitoring the budget
- monitoring spending against the budget
- ensuring value for money is obtained
- ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

Ensures accountability by:

- performance managing the Headteacher and holding him/her to account for the performance of the school;
- monitoring school self-evaluation
- responding to Ofsted reports when necessary;
- ensuring stakeholders and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate;

For the Governing Body to carry out its role effectively, Governors must be:

- prepared and equipped to take their role and 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.

As individuals on the Governing Body we agree to the following:

1.0 Role & Responsibilities

- 1.1 We understand the purpose of the Governing Body and the role of the Headteacher.
- 1.2 We are aware of and accept the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life as shown in Appendix A.
- 1.3 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 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- 1.6 We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Body.
- 1.9 We will use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither our personal or professional reputation, nor the school's reputation, is compromised by inappropriate postings or behaviour.
- 1.10 We will actively support and challenge the Headteacher.

2.0 Commitment

- 2.1 We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- 2.2 We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including appointment to committees, panels or working groups.
- 2.3 We will not go beyond our duties as Governors or act outside of the powers of authority conveyed on us, and acknowledge that were we to do so, we could be held liable to the school and /or third parties.
- 2.4 We will make full efforts to attend all meetings, and when we cannot attend we will explain the reasons in advance.
- 2.5 We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- 2.6 We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- 2.7 We will take our individual and collective needs for training and development seriously, and will undertake relevant training
- 2.8 We accept that - in the interests of open government - our names, terms of office, roles on the Governing Body, category of governor, appointing body and declared business interests may be published on the school's website.

3.0 Relationships

- 3.1 We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- 3.2 We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications.
- 3.3 We will support the Chair in the role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and all times.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the Local Authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

4.0 Confidentiality

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

5.0 Conflicts of interest

- 5.1 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 Body's business in the Register of Business Interests and ensure that this information is kept up to date. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- 5.2 We will declare any personal interest or loyalty (pecuniary or non-pecuniary) which could be perceived as a conflict of interest as soon as possible – if a matter arises in a meeting, we understand that we will be required to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time either voluntarily or at the Chair's request..
- 5.3 We will not use the position of Governor to benefit ourselves, other individuals or other agencies we may be associated with.
- 5.4 We will speak, act and vote in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group or individual (even if elected to the Governing Body).
- 5.5 We will always base our views and decisions on matters put before Governors on an impartial assessment of the available facts.
- 5.6 We will record any hospitality or gifts received in the Hospitality and Gifts Register.



Breach of this code of conduct

In the event of an allegation being made that this code has been breached, the Chair of Governors will investigate the matter (or appoint another Governor to do so) in accordance with the procedure shown at Appendix B.

Should it be the Chair of Governors who is believed to have breached this code, the Vice Chair of Governors will investigate the matter (or appoint another Governor to do so) in accordance with the procedure shown at Appendix B.

Any allegation of a breach of this code which involves safeguarding shall be immediately referred to the designated school safeguarding lead for investigation and action in accordance with the school's adopted safeguarding procedures.

For Staff Governors, any allegation of a breach of this code which involves behaviour or action which could also constitute a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct shall be immediately referred to the appropriate SLT member in the Line Management structure for investigation and action in accordance with the school's adopted procedures.

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.

Procedure for investigating an allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct

Stage 1 – Investigation

In the event that an allegation is received concerning a breach of this Code of Conduct by a Governor, the Chair of Governors or the Vice Chair of Governors (as appropriate).will investigate the matter.

The Chair of Governors or Vice Chair of Governors will conduct a fair and impartial investigation, remaining open-minded while trying to establish the scale and depth of the issue. He/she will aim to understand the context and implications of the breach in order to assess the level of impact or risk it may present to the school.

As part of the investigation, the Governor against whom the allegation has been made will be informed about the claim and invited to attend a meeting at the school. The Governor will be allowed to bring a 'friend' to accompany him/her at the meeting, subject to suitable undertakings being made by that person over confidentiality. The Chair or Vice Chair of Governors may also invite another Governor to attend the meeting in order to corroborate proceedings and decisions. The meeting will be minuted at the discretion of the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors.

The outcome of the investigation will be reported as soon as practicable to the Full Governing Body. The item must be specified on an agenda circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting date, along with a written report outlining the findings.

Stage 2 – Consideration by the Full Governing Body

The outcome of the investigation will be reported at the Full Governing Body meeting. The Governor against whom the allegation has been made will be offered the opportunity to make a statement in response, either in person at the meeting or by way of a written statement if he/she is unable to attend. The meeting may proceed in the absence of the Governor if no acceptable reason is given in advance for non-attendance.

The Governor against whom the allegation has been made must then withdraw from the meeting. The Full Governing Body will subsequently decide by majority vote of those present (including properly appointed proxies) whether or not the allegations have been substantiated.

If the allegations are agreed to have been substantiated, the Full Governing Body will then decide by majority vote on the course of action to be taken next. Options considered may include anything from a requirement for the Governor to undertake further training to a fixed term suspension (with or without the entitlement to receive papers, depending on the nature of the breach). If the breach of the Code is found to be so serious that the Governor's continued service constitutes a risk to the school's best interests, the Full Governing Body may make a recommendation to Academy Trust Members that consideration be given to removing the Governor under Article 67 (not applicable to Parent Governors). The Governing Body will only use suspension or a recommendation for removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve issues in more constructive ways if possible.