



Model Code of Conduct for Governance Boards

This model code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors, directors and academy committee members in order for the governance board to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the Christian ethos of a particular school. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' includes academies, and it applies to all levels of school governance.

Introduction

..... is a Church of England voluntary aided / controlled / academy etc school which aims to serve our community by providing the best possible education within the context of Christian belief and practice and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

Insert any further details of the schools aims / mission / vision.

General

The principles of good governance are absolutely key to making a difference and this includes:

- The right people around the table with the right skills, knowledge and experience
- Understanding of the role and responsibilities
- Understanding that the governance board is a corporate body with equal status for all governors
- Good chairing
- Professional clerking
- Good open and honest relationships based on trust ensuring that the Christian Vision and values underpin relationships
- Knowing the school or academy - the data, staff, parents, pupils and the community
- Commitment to asking challenging questions
- Confidence to have courageous conversations in the interests of the children and young people
- Active involvement including regular training

Therefore:

- Governors should conduct themselves in line with the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- All governors should seek to uphold the Christian foundation of the school.
- Foundation governors in particular, aided by their colleagues, have a specific role in preserving and developing the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the school in accordance with the trust deed.

The Governance Board has the following strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school(s)/trust

- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board, we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

1. We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the school leaders.
2. 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 governance board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
3. We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or any that has been delegated by the board. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governance board meeting.
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.
5. We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
6. We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
7. 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.
8. In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governance board.
9. We will actively support and challenge the school leaders
10. We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;
11. We will respect the role of the school leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
12. We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governance board as set out by the relevant governance documents and law
13. When formally speaking or writing in our governance role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
14. When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation

Commitment

1. We acknowledge that being a governor requires a commitment of significant amounts of time and energy and will have regard for this.
2. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the governance board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
3. We accept that regular attendance at meetings of the board is essential. Where we cannot attend we will explain in advance why we are unable to do so.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school/s, with all visits arranged in advance with the senior leader / headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governance board.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor/director /academy committee member.
7. We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training and ensure the effectiveness of our own governance through self-evaluation.
8. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governance 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.
9. In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to governors/directors/academy committee members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (GIAS).

Relationships

1. We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the clerk and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
3. We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
4. 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.
5. We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the senior leaders, staff and parents, the Diocese, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.
6. We will respect the role of the school leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
7. We have a duty of care to all staff and to each other.

Confidentiality

1. 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. This covers all forms of verbal and written communication, including the various forms of social media such as Facebook and Twitter.
2. We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school/trust business arise outside a governance board meeting.
3. We will not reveal the details of any governance board vote.
4. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
5. We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office

Conflicts of interest

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 governance 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.
2. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
3. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
4. 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 governance 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 governance 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 governance board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

The (Nolan Committee) Seven Principles of Public Life

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.

Adopted by the governance board of [name of school] on [date].

As a member of the governing board forChurch of England School, I will do my utmost to always work to the terms of the Code of Conduct to support the ethos and values of the school and for the good of the whole school community.

Signed by the Governor/Director/Local Academy Committee Member:

Signed _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Type of Governor: _____