

Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. Code has been adopted from the National Governors Association (NGA).

Being a school governor is a rewarding and challenging role. Governors should expect high levels of support from the school. This includes:

- Access to regular training
- Independent support and advice from the Key for School Governors and the National Governors Association.
- Effective clerking that provides governors with independent advice and support.
- Access to papers through a Governing Board online portal.
- Support from senior leaders to enable governors to effectively undertake their strategic and oversight role.
- Transparency from the school to access and understand key data and information on pupil progress, attainment, attendance, exclusions, performance management, safety records etc.

The governing board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Ensuring that our decisions are informed by a knowledge of the school
- Promoting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets (and ensuring these are resourced correctly).
- Meeting statutory duties as laid out by Governor Law

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets (our approach is to know rather than being told).
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Ensuring that Performance Management and appraisal is for purpose and drives school improvement,
- Engaging with stakeholders (pupils, staff, parents, partners etc)
- Contributing to school self-evaluation
- Ensuring the school operates with transparency

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Benchmarking spending across the school against national trends
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Head teacher and the senior leaders.
- We are a collective body. 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 governance and will act transparently.
- 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. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the Headteacher.

Governors should act as a “critical friend” to the Head, offering support, challenge and holding him/her to account

Governors should ensure regular appraisal of the Head and support his/her professional development

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 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 well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- 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 board and agreed with the head teacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training

Relationships

- 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.
- 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 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.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the head teacher, staff and parents, 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 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 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.

- Similarly, we will declare any personal interest, such as friend and family connections, and offer to leave the room.
- 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 body.

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 governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

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.

Adopted by the Governing board of St George's Primary School on 17.09.15

Reviewed Annually

Governor Signature: _____ Governor Name: _____

Date: 17.11.16