

West Hill Primary School

Governor Code of Conduct



Approved by:

Date:

Last reviewed on: November 2021

Next review due by: November 2022

Governing Body Principles and Procedures

The governing body has adopted the following principles and procedures:

Purpose of the governing body

The governing body is the key strategic decision-making body in the school, setting the strategic framework and ensuring it meets all its statutory duties. Raising achievement is at the heart of a governing body's strategic role; every child has the right to attend a good school.

The governing body has the following core strategic functions:

Establishes the strategic direction by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school.
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets.
- Meeting statutory duties.

Ensures accountability by:

- Appointing the Headteacher.
- Monitoring progress towards targets.
- Performance managing the Headteacher.
- Engaging with stakeholders (parents & pupils).
- Contributing to school self-evaluation.

Ensuring financial probity by:

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

For the governing body to carry out its 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.
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.
- Ensure they are willing to work collectively for the benefit of the school

The role of a governor

In law, the governing body is a corporate body which means:

- No governor can act on his/her own without proper authority from the full governing body.

- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made.
- Although appointed through different routes, the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole. Governing bodies should be alert to the risk of becoming dominated by one particular mind-set or strand of opinion.

Governing Body Code of Conduct

As individuals on the governing body, we agree to the following:

Nolan Principles of Public Life

We agree to abide by the seven Nolan principles of public life:

Selflessness:

- We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

- We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work.
- We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends.
- We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

- We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

- We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

- We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

- We will be truthful.

Leadership

- We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour.
- We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Headteacher.
- We accept the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- We will always use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither our personal/professional reputation, nor the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- We will promote tolerance of and respect for those of different faiths and beliefs, races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientation and work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We will support the Headteacher and senior leadership team but challenge their expectations and hold them to account for school performance.
- We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.

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 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 do so.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- 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 staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will demonstrate commitment to our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training to develop knowledge and skills and keep them up to date
- We accept that in the interests of openness and transparency, our names, terms of office, details of positions of responsibility on the governing body, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

- We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

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 board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings. 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 our headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority, and other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside the school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

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 body'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'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 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 body will only use suspension 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.