

St Hugh's School

Governors' Code of Practice

The Board of Governors

The board of governors is the school's accountable body and is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high educational standards. The board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school providing them with a good education and supporting their well-being. The board of governors:

- Sets the strategic direction of the school by:
 - setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
 - agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
 - safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people
 - setting targets and ensuring all statutory duties are met
 - agreeing the school improvement strategy including approving the budget and staffing structure
- Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, evaluating and reviewing:
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
 - progress towards achieving ambitious outcomes for **all** children and young people
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
 - the budget and the staffing structure
- Ensures accountability by:
 - signing off the school's own self-evaluation report
 - responding to Ofsted reports when necessary
 - holding the head teacher and leaders at all levels to account for the performance of the school
 - ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
 - making information available to the community
- Appoints and performance manages the head teacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the board of governors

The Role of the Governor

In law, the board of governors is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the board,
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made; and
- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, local authority, co-opted, Foundation) the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the children and the school as a whole

The Role of the Head Teacher

To enable governors to carry out these duties effectively the head teacher will:

- respect governors and value their skills, experience and contribution to the board
- facilitate decision making by providing transparent, clear, concise and relevant information
- contribute to the induction, training and development of governors enabling them to become an active part of the life of the school

General

We understand the purpose of the board of governors, the role of governor and head teacher as stated.

We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

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 board when authorised.

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 transparency whilst respecting the need for confidentiality in certain circumstances.

We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board of governors or its delegated agents.

We will not speak against majority decisions outside the board meeting.

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 we will follow the established procedures.

Commitment

We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves a significant time and energy commitment.

We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the board of governors, and accept our fair share of responsibility, including service on committees or working groups.

We are committed to attend all meetings having read any paperwork provided and on the rare occasion we are unable to attend, to provide an explanation in advance.

We will actively support collaboration, partnership working and support from other agencies where this is considered of benefit to the pupils.

We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.

Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the board of governors and agreed with the head teacher.

We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training to ensure our effectiveness as a board of governors.

We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the head teacher.

We will communicate with the head teacher in a positive and constructive way.

We accept that in the interests of open governance, 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/academy committee members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of schools GIAS(Get information about Schools).

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.

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 community, the local authority and other relevant agencies.

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 board meeting.

We will not reveal the details of any board of governors' vote.

Conflicts of Interest

We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have regarding the board of governors business and understand this information will be made available on the school's website.

We will declare any pecuniary or personal interest which could be conceived as a conflict of interest in a matter under discussion at a meeting, and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Failure to reveal information to enable the board to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of this code.

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.

We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after we leave office.

Breach of this Code of Practice

If we believe this code has been breached, the issue will normally be raised with the Chair, or where appropriate an alternative governor.

In certain circumstances we may raise the issue directly with the local authority which may decide to investigate the matter as a *whistleblowing* issue.

The Chair or an independent person will investigate the matter further.

This would lead to the appropriate action being undertaken in accordance with the relevant legislation.

The Board of Governors (_____ **) adopted this code of practice on**
Governors will sign the Code on appointment, and subsequently at the first board meeting of
each school year.

Signed

Dated