



# **GOVERNING BODY** **CODE OF CONDUCT**



**This Code of Conduct was ratified by the Full Governing Body on  
Thursday 19th September 2019**

## **GENERAL**

The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation of the curriculum. Governors have a responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.

- The main aim of the school is to raise the educational achievement of all its pupils.
- The governing body will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its three roles:
  - To provide a strategic view of where the school is heading
  - To act as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the school
  - To hold the school to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides
- All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.
- Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools.
- Governors should encourage open government and should be seen to do so.
- Governors do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual governors have power only when it is designated specifically to them by the whole governing body.

## **COMMITMENT**

- Being a governor involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on the governing body of a school.
- All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept a fair share of the responsibilities, including service on committees.
- Regular attendance at meetings of both the full governing body and committees is essential.
- Governors should know the school well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in school activities.

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

- Governors should strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents, Diocese, the LA and their local community.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
- Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.
- Governors must not use any type of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Etc) to discuss or comment upon any governor related topics.

## **CONDUCT**

- Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- Governors should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically asked to do so.

- All visits to school should be undertaken within a framework that has been established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- All maintained schools are required by law to have a complaints procedure in place. In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should refer to the school's 'Complaints Procedure' for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community should reflect this.
- Any pecuniary interest that a governor may have in connection with the governing body's business must be recorded in the register of pecuniary interests.
- Where an interest is declared, the governor must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.
- Governors should withdraw from any meeting in which they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest. It may only be necessary to withdraw for the part of the meeting where the 'item' is discussed.
- A person who is paid to work at the school is not regarded as having a pecuniary interest if his/her interest is no greater than that of other persons paid to work at the school.
- A governor paid to work at the school, other than the Headteacher, must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to the pay or performance appraisal of any particular person working at the school. This does not affect general discussions about general policy.
- The Headteacher must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to their own pay or performance appraisal.
- Governors understand that breaking the Code of Conduct may result in their loss of position on the governing body.

See also the Governors in School Policy

### **MEETINGS**

- Individual governors do not have any authority in school. It is the collective decisions of all the governors together that carry authority.
- If a governing body is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial. The meetings of the governing body and its committees will be conducted in accordance with the Meetings Charter set out in this document.

### **MEETINGS CHARTER**

#### **As a governor I expect:**

- people to attend regularly and be punctual;
- an agenda and relevant documents to reach me in advance of the meeting;
- an agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;
- a Chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point;
- my contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;
- the decision making process to be quite clear;
- governors to work together and not to be stubbornly partisan;
- governors to take collective responsibility for decisions;
- minutes that summarise discussion, question and challenge succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

#### **Others can expect me to:**

- attend regularly and be punctual;
- read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;
- bring my papers to the meeting;
- make relevant and positive contributions;
- listen to and consider what other people want to say;
- accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.

### **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Governor training and development is important. It benefits the school and individual governors, and can help to develop effective teamwork. All governors will be expected to attend the National Training Programme for New Governors as soon as possible after their appointment. This course is an essential element to learning and demonstrating good governance. Governors are encouraged to undertake additional training to further their individual interests and skills within the governing body and the work of the governing body as a whole.

David Miliband – former Minister of State for School Standards emphasised the importance of governor training and support:

*“ Governing bodies need to invest in their own training and development. School governors give a great deal of their own time to support their schools, and have important legal responsibilities. They require training and adequate clerking support to do the complex job that the government asks them to do effectively. We need to persuade governing bodies as well as Headteachers, who have a significant interest in ensuring that their governors have the information and knowledge they require to operate effectively, that adequate governor support and training is a worthwhile commitment on the school budget. **Indeed I would go further, and say that a governing body which is not making proper provision for professional support is failing in its duty to support their school effectively.**”*

## **MENTORING**

An experienced governor who acts as a mentor to new governors can provide support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the governing body. Governors should be prepared to act as mentors, as required.

## **APPENDIX TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT, St Augustine’s CE (VA) Junior School:**

### **THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions 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 obligations to outside individuals or organisations that might 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 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.

**These principles apply to all aspects of public life. The Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee) has set them out for the benefit of all who serve the public in any way.**

Signed Chair of Governors:

Date:

Signed Headteacher:

Date:

Date Ratified: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Date of review: Autumn term 2020.