



St Mary's Hampton

Church of England Primary School

GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

“St Mary's Hampton Church of England School is a school founded on a Christian vision of human worth and ethical values – open to all. These values are fundamental and underpin all policies, practices, procedures, and most importantly behaviour and conduct of all members of the school community”



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THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board is the school's accountable board. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school, which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

The governing board:

- 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
 - Setting targets
 - Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure
- Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:
 - The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
 - Progress towards targets
 - The implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
 - The budget and the staffing structure
 - Conducts self-evaluation

- Ensures accountability by:
 - Responding to Ofsted reports when necessary
 - Holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school
 - Ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
 - Making available information to the community
- Appoints and performance manages the Headteacher 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 governing board.

For the governing board to carry out its role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable board by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

THE ROLE OF A GOVERNOR

The governing board is a corporate board, which means:

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

GENERAL

- We understand the purpose of the governing board and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing 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 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 government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing 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 affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.

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.
- If acting as directors, we will not go beyond our duties or act outside of the powers of authority conveyed on us, and acknowledge that were we to do so we could be held liable to the school and/or third parties.
- If acting as members of the trust board, we accept that we may be held responsible up to the limit in the articles of association, were the school/trust to go bankrupt.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- 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 governing board and agreed with the Headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.
- We acknowledge that in accordance with government legislation we will comply with the school to instigate the application of an enhanced criminal records certificate within 21 days of appointment to the Board.
- We agree to register with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Update Service (free to volunteers) at www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service either immediately using the application form number or within 19 days of receipt of the DBS certificate using the certificate number. Registration to the Update Service will be confirmed with the Office Manager.
- We acknowledge and agree that by registering to the Update Service an annual DBS check will be electronically renewed, free of charge, in our capacity as a governor on this Board by the Office Manager.

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 co-chairs 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 recognise that the roles of governor, staff member and volunteers in school are different. Where I am also a staff member and/or volunteer in school I will maintain the separation of my roles.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.
- We acknowledge that as governors we are representatives of our category of governorship and are primarily appointed for the skills we will bring to the board.

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 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 (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- The Register of Business Interests will be published on the school website in line with the Statutory Guidance for the Constitution of Governing Bodies (August 2015) for all governors and associate members. Any governor failing to provide information to enable the governing board to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of the code of conduct and as a result be bringing the governing board into disrepute.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived 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.
- 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.
- Refer to the Conflict of Interest Policy for further detail.

BREACH OF THIS CODE OF PRACTICE

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the co-chair and the co-chair will investigate; the governing board should seek to resolve any difficulties or disputes constructively;
- Should it be one of the co-chairs that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the governing board, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension or in some circumstances removal from the governing board.
- In taking the decision to suspend we will follow a process as set out in Annex A.

The Governing Board of St Mary Hampton Academy Trust adopted this code of conduct on 14 April 2016. Governors will sign the Code at the first governing board meeting of each school year.

UNDERTAKING:

As a member of the governing board I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the governing board, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed (Print name:) Date:

APPENDIX: 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.

Process for governor suspension

Subject to the following paragraphs the governing board may by resolution suspend a governor for all or any meetings of the governing board, or of a committee, for a fixed period of up to 6 months on one or more of the following grounds—

- (a) that the governor, being a person paid to work at the school, is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his employment;
- (b) that the governor is the subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal, the outcome of which may be that he is disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor under the articles of association;
- (c) that the governor is in breach of any of the provisions of this code of practice which the governing board believes has, or could, bring the office of school governor into disrepute;
- (d) that the governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos or with the religious character of the school and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the governing board or his office into disrepute; or
- (e) that the governor is in breach of his duty of confidentiality to the school or to any member of staff or to any pupil at the school.

A resolution to suspend a governor from office shall not have effect unless the matter is specified as an item of business on the agenda for the meeting of which notice has been given in accordance with the articles of association.

Before a vote is taken on a resolution to suspend a governor, the governor proposing the resolution shall at the meeting state his reasons for doing so. The governor who is the subject of the resolution shall then be given the opportunity to make a statement in response before withdrawing from the meeting.

Nothing in this regulation shall be read as affecting the right of a governor who has been suspended to receive notices of, and agendas and reports or other papers, for meetings of the governing board during the period of his suspension.