



# Waterbeach Community Primary School

## Governors Code of Conduct 2022-23

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

### **The purpose of the governing body**

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

### **The governing body:**

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy and policy framework
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders and involving them when necessary
- Contributing to school self-evaluation
- Responding to Ofsted reports when necessary

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget



- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

For governing bodies to carry out their 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; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

### **The role of a governor**

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

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

### **General**

- We understand the purpose of the governing body 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 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 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 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 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 body.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.
- We will promote equality and diversity throughout our organisation, including the board's operation
- We will not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

### **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 in full why we are unable to.
- Governors will comply with rules of the Governor Allowances Policy when claiming expenses for their roles.
- Governors accept that hybrid meetings are useful under certain circumstances. The expectation is for governors to attend meetings in person unless exceptional circumstances permit this, reasons should be agreed by the Chair of Governors. The school requires at least 48 hours' notice to arrange the technology for hosting a hybrid meeting.



- 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 arranged in advance with head teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body 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 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 will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (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 with other governors.
- We will support the Chairs in their role of always ensuring appropriate conduct.
- 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 headteacher, 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 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

### **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 board.

### **Ceasing to be a governor committee member**

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor/trustee/academy committee member leaves office.

### **Breach of this code of practice**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body should 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, then the Vice-Chair (or such other governor as the governing body shall appoint if the Vice-Chair is unable or willing to so act) shall 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 body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the governing body. (See Annex A)
- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor, Schedule 6 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 and Schedule 4 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (held as a separate document).

### **Links to other policies**

- Governor Allowances Policy

**The Governing Body of Waterbeach Community Primary School adopted this code of practice on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022.**



Governors will sign the Code of Conduct at the first Full Governing Body meeting for the new academic school year.

As a member of the governing body, 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 body, the Head Teacher or staff.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix A**

### **Process for governor suspension**

Subject to the following paragraphs the governing body may by resolution suspend a governor for all or any meetings of the governing body, 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 s/he is disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor under the school's Instrument of Government;
- (c) that the governor is in breach of any of the provisions of this code of practice which the governing body believes has, or could, bring the school or governors into disrepute;
- (d) that the governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos of the school and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the governing body the Head Teacher 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/her 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, reports, other papers, and minutes for, meetings of the governing body during the period of his/her suspension.



## **Appendix B: 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 exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.