

Growing Together Federation

Bowerdean Nursery School

Henry Allen Nursery School

Mapledean Nursery School

Governor Code of Conduct

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from all levels of school governors, including trustees, management committee/associates and executive board members in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school(s)/academy/trust and the community. In the case of academies, governors/trustees/members should be mindful of their articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

The Governing Board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school(s)/academy/trust
- Agreeing the school(s)/academy/trust improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher/principal (where delegated)
- Performance managing the headteacher/principal (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school(s)/academy/trust and progress towards agreed targets
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school(s)/academy/trust self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

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

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Commitment

We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor/trustee/member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy, and 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;
- make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot, will explain in advance why we are unable to do so;

- get to know the school(s)/academy well;
- take responsibility for our own individual induction and learning, whilst also evaluating the needs of the board as a whole in their training needs;
- prepare for meetings by circulating and reading paperwork beforehand;
- understand the purpose of the board and the role of the headteacher/principal.

Communication (including social media)

We acknowledge that as a governor/trustee/member we:

- owe a duty of mutual trust and confidence in our school(s)/academy/trust, and to each other. We recognise this could be breached if unsuitable language and/or material is contained in any communication or correspondence, including all types of electronic communication, social networking sites, personal blogs and websites;
- will gain the agreement of the chair and headteacher/principal prior to posting any content (written, vocal or visual) to the internet which identifies us as members of the governing board;
- will be mindful of upholding the reputation of the school(s)/academy/trust when communicating in a private capacity.

Conduct

We agree to work as a team member at all times and be loyal to collective decisions; we will:

- uphold the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs;
- accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing board or its' delegated agents. This means we will not act or speak out against majority decisions outside the governing board;
- when making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board;
- visit the school(s)/academy, with all visits arranged in advance with the headteacher/principal and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board;
- always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school(s)/academy/trust. Our actions within the school(s)/academy/the local community will reflect this;
- accept that we have no legal authority to act or speak individually, except when the governing board has given us delegated authority to do so. We will only act or speak on behalf of the governing board;
- 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;
- accept that in the interests of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee/member and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website;

- accept, in the interests of transparency, that information relating to governors/trustees/members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors 'Get Information about Schools (GIAS)' (aka Edubase);
- encourage open governance and act appropriately;
- consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools; □ actively support and challenge the headteacher/principal.

Confidentiality

We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote and when matters are deemed confidential we will:

- observe complete confidentiality, or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school;
- exercise discretion at all times when discussions regarding school(s)/academy/trust business arises outside a governing board meeting;
- continue to observe that confidentiality after a governor/trustee/committee member leaves office.

Conflicts of interest

We acknowledge that 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, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time;
- accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school(s)/academy/trust website;
- declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise;
- act in the best interests of the school(s)/academy/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board by that group.

Relationships

As a member of a team we will:

- strive to ensure constructive working relationships are actively promoted;
- express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors/trustees/members, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings;
- support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times;
- be prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed: we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved;

- seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher/principal, staff, parents, the trust, any other relevant agencies and the community.

Breach of this code of conduct

If we believe this code has been breached, we will:

- raise the issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- approach another governing board member, such as the vice chair to investigate, should we believe the chair has breached this code.

As individual governing board members we will support these core functions by following the Seven Principles of Public Life (as listed below).

The Seven Principles of Public Life are:

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 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 it.

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.