



# Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies



Approved by Board of Directors Autumn Term 1 2018

## **Introduction**

The *Governance* of schools is now a function of considerable importance and the work of the *Governing Body* of a school matters more than ever before. Authority is vested almost entirely in people who are essentially volunteers, whether elected, co-opted or appointed and whose ranges of experience, expertise and interests are likely to be very diverse.

**Various pieces of legislation define the duties, powers and responsibilities of Governing Bodies and the procedures to be followed and this code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, in line with their Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation.**

This Code of Conduct is designed to assist members of *Governing Bodies* and *Headteachers* in the normal conduct of their general responsibilities so that a balanced view of *Governance* is maintained, harmony is achieved and unnecessary conflict avoided. It is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which *Governors* will operate and can be amended to include specific reference to the ethos of the school. 'School' includes academies, and it applies to all level of school *Governance*.

Once approved by the Board of Directors, the Code of Conduct will apply to all Directors, Trustees and Local *Governing Body* Members.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Name of School/ Trust	-	Hearsall Community Academy
Name of Governor	-	Kate Steventon
Date	-	September 2018

The Governors of this Academy accept the following Code of Conduct:

### General

- Governors have responsibility for:
  - a. Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction values and objectives for the school/ Trust. (*strategic direction*)
  - b. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff ; and (*accountability*)
  - c. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent. (*financial performance*)

the Headteacher is responsible for:

- a. The internal organisation, day to day management and control of the school/ trust
- b. The educational performance of the school/ trust
- c. Presenting aims and objectives, policies and targets for consideration by the Governing Body;
- d. Reporting to the Governing Body on progress on meeting these aims and objectives.

Governors and School Leaders will each recognise and respect the roles of the other and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.

- The authority with which the Governing Body operates is held corporately and Governors accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Body.
- All Governors have equal status and their central concern should be the welfare of the school/ trust as a whole. Each Governor is a Governor in their own right, but each

brings an individual perspective to the Governing Body, whether as parent, member of staff or from outside the school itself.

- Governors are required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check within 21 days of appointment.
- Governors have a general duty to act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school at all times.
- Governors and the Headteacher will seek to work together as a team and to develop effective working relationships with staff and parents, the local authority, other relevant agencies and the community.
- Governors will actively support and challenge the Headteacher.
- Governors have or share the responsibility for the employment of staff and will fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors will consider carefully how their decisions might affect the community and other schools.
- Governors will be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and be prepared to explain their actions and decisions as far as reasonable confidentiality allows.
- Governors/Trustees adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the Governing Body as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- Governors will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation when communicating in a private capacity (including on social media).

In the exercise of its delegated powers and functions, the governors of the LGB shall:

- ensure that the Academy is conducted in accordance with the objectives of the Trust, the terms of any trust governing the use of the land which is used for the purposes of the Academy, any agreement entered into with the Secretary of State for the funding of the Academy and these terms of reference;
- promptly implement and comply with any policies or procedures communicated to the LGB by the Directors from time to time;
- review its own policies and practices on a regular basis, in view of any advice or

recommendations made by the Directors;

- work closely with the Directors and act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the Trust and the Academy;
- be open about decisions and be prepared to justify those decisions;
- keep confidential all information of a confidential nature obtained by them relating to the Academy and the Trust; and
- adopt financial prudence in managing the financial affairs of the Trust in so far as these relate to the Academy and are delegated to them.

### **Commitment**

- Accepting a role as a School Governance requires significant amounts of time and energy from every Governor/ trustee.
- All Governors/ trustees will involve themselves actively in the work of the Governing Body and accept a fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups. It is recommended that each Governor serves on at least one committee.
- Governors/ Trustees know the school/ trust well and take all possible opportunities for involvement in school/ trust activities.
- Regular attendance at meetings of the Local Governing Body, committees and working groups is essential. Apologies are given to the Clerk to Governors in advance of a meeting if they are unable to attend.
- Governors will visit the school and visits will be arranged in advance with a Headteacher and in line with the Governing Body protocol for visits.
- Governors/ Trustees will consider their individual and collective needs for induction, training and development and will undertake relevant training.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent) Governors will maintain their underlying responsibility as a Governor.

## **Confidentiality**

- *Governors will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.*
- *Governors will exercise the highest degree of prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside of a Governing Body meeting. Governors will encourage issues to be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or Governing Body (depending on the nature of the issue) through the proper channels.*
- *Governors will not speak against majority decisions of the Governing Body, even if they have not themselves agreed with them.*
- *Governors will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote including committee.*
- *Requirements relating to confidentiality continue to apply after a Governor leaves office.*

## **Conflicts of interest**

- *Publication of Governor's Details and Register of Interests on the school website is required. The detail to be published for each Governor and Associate Member as a minimum includes:*
  - *their full name*
  - *their category of governor*
  - *which body appoints them*
  - *date of appointment*
  - *their term of office*
  - *the names of any committees the Governor serves on; and*
  - *details of any positions of responsibility such as chair or vice-chair of the Governing Body or a committee of the Governing Body*
  - *relevant business interests and details of any other educational establishments governed. The register should also set out any relationships between Governors and members of the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives*
  - *Attendance at Governing Body Meetings and Committee meetings in the previous year*

- Information relating to *Governors/Trustees* is collated by School Leaders and logged on the DfE's national Database of *Governors* (Edubase).
- *Governors and Associate Members* are required to complete a declaration of business interest form on an annual basis
- Individual *Governors* will declare any potential conflict of interest and withdraw from the meeting before the particular item is discussed.
- *Governors* will resist the temptation of outside pressure to use the position of Governor to benefit him or herself or other outside parties.
- *Governors* 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 Body*.

### **Conduct**

- *Governors* will express their views openly, courteously and respectfully within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- *Governors* will support the *Chair* to ensure appropriate conduct at all times.
- *Governors* will follow the appropriate procedures established by the *Governing Body* when responding to complaints.
- *Governors* have no authority to act individually except when given delegated authority to do so by the *Governing Body* and should therefore only speak on behalf of the *Governing Body* when specifically authorised to do so.
- *Governors* have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school and their actions within the school community should reflect this.

### **Breach of the Code**

- If there is a belief that the code is breached the issue should be raised with the *Chair of Governors/ Trustees* and they will investigate. Suspension/ removal would only be used as a last resort if the issue is not resolved in a more constructive way. Should the *Chair* be the subject of the breach, ideally the *Vice Chair* (or another *Governor*) should investigate.

## **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).

Governors should accept the Seven Principles of Public Life as follows:

**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.



## Undertaking

As a member of Board of Directors/Local Governing Body, I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the academy at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the academy, publicly supporting its aims and values. I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the academy, the Local Governing Body, the Multi Academy Trust, the Executive Principal, Headteacher or staff.

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

Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

School: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of approval: Autumn Term 1 2018

Signature: Executive Principal

Signature: Chair of Board of Directors

Renewal Date: Autumn Term 1 2019