



Locks Heath Infant School Governing Body

Code of Conduct 2024/2025

Last reviewed: Autumn 1 2023	Current review: Autumn 1 2024	Next review: Autumn 1 2025
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Our code of conduct sets out the purpose, responsibilities and accountabilities of our governing body and describes the appropriate relationship between individual governors, the whole governing body and the senior leadership team of the school.

It sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing body to work together and properly carry out its work within the school community. The code of conduct will be reviewed annually at the first full governing body meeting of the academic year.

The code of conduct will apply to all governors and will be shared with new governors as part of their induction. It will also be available on Governor Hub and the school's website. Any concerns or questions about the governing body code of conduct should be directed to the CoG or the Clerk to the Governors.

The governing body has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Approving the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school development plan priorities and success criteria
- Agreeing and engaging in ways of working that reflect the school's vision and values
- Meeting all statutory duties as required by the DfE and local authority
- Completing a bi-annual governing body self evaluation and action plan

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing, challenging and supporting the headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards school development priorities
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with all stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Approving the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained and that money is spent in on today's children
- Challenging the school on the rationale to budget line reductions and/or increases
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the Locks Heath Infant School Governing Body we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the headteacher.

We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the 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 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 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, in line with The Seven Principles of Public Life (Appendix 1)

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.

Commitment

We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment to our school governors' schedule of full governing body meetings, working groups and any other responsibilities as agreed with the CoG.

We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and work together to undertake our fair share of responsibilities, including service on panels or working groups.

We will make full efforts to attend all meetings in person or virtually and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to. We will send to the Clerk or CoG questions we wish to be tabled upon our behalf.

We will prepare for all governor meetings by reading agendas and supporting documentation and where appropriate formulate questions, challenge and celebration for the headteacher.

We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school events. We will celebrate the school's successes and share our acknowledgement of these.

We will conduct focus visits tightly linked to at least one of the following; the school development plan, our statutory obligations or lead governor roles. All visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the headteacher.

We will proactively identify any gaps in our governance knowledge and skills (individually and as a collective) and engage in relevant governor training and development.

We accept that in the interests of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, 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 and logged on the DfE's national database of governors.

Relationships

We will strive to work together 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 chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct at all times.

We are prepared to answer queries from other governors 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.

We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect the school's current policy, values and vision, even if they might be different to our personal views

When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor of the school

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. This includes discussions with members of the school staff.

We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote

We will use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither our personal/professional reputation, nor the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate posting or sharing on social media

We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor member leaves office

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 Pecuniary 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 body.

Breach of the Code of Conduct

If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension/removal 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, another governor will investigate. In the first instance and if appropriate, this will be the Vice Chair.



Appendix 1

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.

Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful

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.
