



Governors' Code of Conduct

Introduction

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from our school governors in order for the Governing Board (**The Board**) to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

Purpose of the Board

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

Strategic Functions of the Board

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school
- 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
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

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

Roles and Responsibilities

As individuals on the Board we agree to the following:

- We understand the purpose of the Board and the role of the executive leaders
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside Board meetings
- 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 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 we will follow the procedures established by the Board
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Board and school 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 school 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 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 school

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 Board, 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 why we are unable to

- 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 the appropriate members of staff / Headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the Board
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the 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

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, the clerk to the Board and school staff both in and outside of meetings. We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Board members 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 executive leaders, staff and parents / carers, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.
- 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 Board meetings
- We will not reveal the details of any Board 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 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
- 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 Board

Complaints against Governors

Complaints against governors can be categorised, as from:

- (i) other governors on the Governing Board
- (ii) members of the public which includes parents
- (iii) members of the school staff

Irrespective of the category of complaint the responsibility for dealing with the complaint is that of the Governing Board, which would normally fall to the Chairperson to manage.

Where the complaint is made against the Chairperson then:

- (i) it could be passed to the Vice-chairperson
- (ii) by agreement of the Governing Board, passed to the Chairperson of another school Governing Board to investigate

All complaints from other than school staff must be in writing, which includes email to the **Clerk to the Governing Board** via the school office. No member of the school staff, including the Headteacher, should be involved in the investigation of a complaint against a governor other than as a witness.

Members of staff should report their complaint to the Headteacher who will then report it to the Chairperson. Staff should not submit a complaint against a governor without first notifying the Headteacher.

Staff may seek advice from their professional association to determine whether their issue constitutes a complaint or a formal grievance under the school's grievance procedure.

Where the complaint cannot be resolved at an initial meeting with the complainant, the Chairperson will meet with the governor concerned and put to them the complaint in order for them to make a response before an investigation commences.

If appropriate, it will be acknowledged that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, one or more of the following may be offered:

- (i) an explanation
- (ii) an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- (iii) an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- (iv) an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- (v) an undertaking to review of this Code of Conduct in light of the complaint
- (vi) an apology

Breaches of this Code of Conduct / School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code / School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013, another Governing Board member, such as the Vice-chairperson will investigate
- The Board will only use suspension / disqualification from the Board as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways
- Due note is made of the provisions of regulation 17(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (see [Appendix B](#)).

Adopted / updated by the Board of Priory CE Primary School:

Date:

Signed (Chair)

Signed individually by Board members at the beginning of each school year:

Date:

Signed (Print name)

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.

Suspension of Governors

Regulation 17(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013

17.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (4), the governing body may by resolution suspend a governor for all or any meetings of the school, 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 or her employment;
- (b) that the governor is the subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal, the outcome of which may be that the governor is disqualified from continuing to hold office as governor under Schedule 6 to the Constitution Regulations 2007 or Schedule 4 to the Constitution Regulations 2012;
- (c) 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 body or the office of governor into disrepute; or
- (d) that the governor is in breach of the duty of confidentiality to the school or to any member of staff or pupil at the school.

(2) A resolution to suspend a governor from office does not have effect unless the matter is specified as an item of business on the agenda for the meeting.

(3) Before a vote is taken on a resolution to suspend a governor, the governor proposing the resolution must at the meeting state the reasons for doing so, and the governor who is the subject of the resolution must be given the opportunity to make a statement in response before withdrawing from the meeting in accordance with regulation 16(b).

(4) Nothing in this regulation may 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 body during the period of their suspension.

(5) A governor may not be disqualified from continuing to hold office under paragraph 5 of Schedule 6 to the Constitution Regulations 2007 or paragraph 9 of Schedule 4 to the Constitution Regulations 2012 for failure to attend any meeting of the governing body while suspended under this regulation.