



Governor code of practice, 2023/24

Introduction

This code is based on the NGA *Code of Practice* and sets out the expectations on, and commitment required from, governors in order for the Governing Body (GB) to carry out properly its work within the school and the community.

Governors will sign the undertaking at the first GB meeting of each school year.

1 The purpose of the Governing Body

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

1.1 The Governing Body:

- a. sets the strategic direction of the school by:
 - setting the values, aims and objectives for the school;
 - agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives;
 - setting targets;
 - agreeing the school development plan which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure.
- b. challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework;
 - progress towards targets;
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the school development plan;
 - the budget and the staffing structure.
- c. ensures accountability by:
 - signing off the school's own self-evaluation report;
 - responding to Ofsted reports when necessary;
 - holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school;
 - ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate;
 - making available information to the community.
- d. appoints and performance manages the Headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school development plan, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the GB.

1.2 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;
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.



2 The role of a governor

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

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full GB;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- although appointed through different routes (ie. parents, staff, Local Authority, foundation, co-opted), the overriding concern of all governors is the welfare of the school as a whole;

2.1 At St Aidan's we expect all governors to:

- attend all full GB meetings (six meetings per year);
- sit on one of the three main committees (six meetings per year);
- become a link governor (non-staff governors only) in at least one curriculum subject area and visit the school for a meeting with the appropriate subject leader at least once a year and report on this to the GB in line with the agreed timetable;
- come prepared to meetings, eg. by reading papers in advance;
- attend governor training sessions, especially those on Safeguarding which must be kept up to date.

3 Governor undertaking

3.1 **General**

- I understand the purpose of the GB and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- I am aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life (Appendix 1).
- I accept that I have no legal authority to act individually, except when the GB has given me delegated authority to do so, and therefore I will only speak on behalf of the GB when I have been specifically authorised to do so.
- I have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and, in so far as I have responsibility for staff, I will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- I will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the GB or its delegated agents. This means that I will not speak against majority decisions outside the GB meetings.
- I will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- I 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 I will follow the procedures established by the GB.

3.2 **Remote meetings**

- I will attend virtual meetings if required using the online platform agreed by the governing body.
- I will behave appropriately, as in face-to-face meetings and in line with the instructions given by the host of the meeting.
- If instructed to do so, I will ensure that my microphone is on mute until I am invited to speak by the host.
- If I need to leave the meeting at any point for an appreciable length of time I will, if possible, explain this in the chat function of the online platform to enable the clerk to note my absence.
- I will ensure that I am alone in an appropriate, quiet room for the duration of the meeting;
- If recording the meeting, I will be clear that I am doing so and be conscious of sharing any personal information;

- I will not publicly share meeting IDs or passwords.

3.3 **Commitment**

- I acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- I will involve myself actively in the work of the GB and accept my fair share of responsibility, including service on committees or working groups.
- I will make every effort to attend all meetings and will explain fully in advance if I cannot attend. (Apologies will be noted in all cases, but accepted only in exceptional circumstances.)
- I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve myself in school activities.
- My visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the GB and agreed with the Headteacher.
- I will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- I am committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.

3.4 **Relationships**

- I will strive to work as part of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all communications with other governors.
- I will support our elected Chairs in their roles of ensuring appropriate conduct not only at meetings but at all other times.
- I will answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed.
- I will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

3.5 **Confidentiality**

- I will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- I will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a GB meeting.
- I will not reveal the details of any GB vote.

3.6 **Conflicts of interest**

- I will register any pecuniary or other business interest that I have in connection with the GB's business.
- I will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at any meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

3.7 **Breach of this code**

- If I believe this code has been breached, I will raise the issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; if it is the Chair who is believed to have transgressed, the Vice-Chair will investigate.
- I understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the GB, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to removal from the GB.



- I understand that the GB will only use removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties, transgressions or disputes in more constructive ways. Any person who has held office as a governor and removed from the governing body during their term of office will be disqualified from serving or continuing to serve as a school governor for five years from the date of their removal.

3.8 **Summary**

As a member of the GB I will:

- always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart;
- do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos;
- never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the GB, the Headteacher or staff.

Signature: Date:

Name of governor:



The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee (The Committee on Standards in Public Life), established by the then Prime Minister in 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.