



## Code of conduct

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors and committee members in order for the Governing Board to properly carry out its work within the school and its community.

### The purpose of the Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall accountability for the school. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The Governing Board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

### The Governing Board:

- Sets the strategic direction of the school by:
  - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school
  - Agreeing the policy framework for achieving the vision and objectives
  - Meeting statutory duties
  - Agreeing the school improvement strategies which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structures
- 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 improvement strategies
  - The budgets and the staffing structures
- Ensures accountability by:
  - signing off the School Improvement Plans
  - 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 communities
- Appoints and performance manages the Headteacher who will deliver the objectives (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy frameworks and school improvement strategies, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the Governing Board.

For Governing Boards 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; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

## **The role of a governor**

In law the Governing Board is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full Governing Board;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made; and
- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, or Community), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

## **General**

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Board and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix.
- We are aware of and accept our duties and responsibilities as laid out in the Articles of Association of The Westgate School.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We must not initiate, or be drawn into, any discussion relating to the school on Social Media Sites.
- 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 government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Board meeting.
- 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 Board.
- We acknowledge that we represent the School and will dress in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct

## **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 Governing 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 in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Board and agreed with the Headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.

- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.
- We accept 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, 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 Companies House's national database of directors and 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, committee members, the Clerk to the Governing Board and school staff both in and out 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 governors 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 Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

### **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 Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing 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 Governing Board's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will declare any relevant interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We will act in the best interests of the School as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

### ***Ceasing to be a governor or committee member***

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

***Breach of this code of practice***

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the Governing Board should 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, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

The Governing Board of **The Westgate School** adopted this Code on 16 September 2013.

Last review: **18 September 2019**

**Governors will sign the Code of Conduct at the first Governing Board meeting of each school year.**

## **Undertaking:**

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

Signed .....

Printed name .....

Date: .....

## **Appendix: 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.