



## Upper Beeding Primary School

# Code of Conduct for Governors

March 2023

### About this Code

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

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 Head Teacher and senior leaders;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

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

### ***The Governing Board has the following core strategic functions:***

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school(s)/trust
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Head Teacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Head Teacher
- Engaging with stakeholders ensuring their voices are heard.
- 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 school are managed

***As individuals on the board we agree to the following:***

**Role & Responsibilities**

- a. We understand the strategic nature of our role and respect the Head Teacher and senior leaders' roles and their responsibility for the day to day management of the school. We will ensure that we work collectively for the benefit of the school and will avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- b. We are aware of, and accept, Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life. Where decisions and actions conflict with these or where they may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- c. We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so. We will only speak on behalf of the Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- d. We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents and agree that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Board meeting.
- e. 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.
- f. We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- g. We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- h. We will 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.
- i. In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Board.
- j. We will actively support the Head Teacher & senior leaders. We will be constructive and respectful when holding them to account.
- k. We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the Governing Board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- l. When formally speaking or writing in our governing role, we will ensure our comments reflect current school policy, even if they might be different to our personal views.
- m. When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media), we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school.
- n. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
- o. We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

**Commitment**

- a. We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- b. 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.
- c. We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we are unable to.

- d. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- e. We will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the Head Teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Board.
- f. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor and continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- g. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

### **Relationships**

- a. We will strive to work as a team and will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, senior leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
- b. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the Clerk to the Governing Board and school staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- c. We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.
- d. We will support the Chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct at all times.
- e. 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.

### **Confidentiality**

- a. 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.
- b. We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a Governing Board meeting.
- c. We will not reveal the details of any Governing Board vote.
- d. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

- a. We will declare and 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.
- b. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school website.
- c. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- d. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- e. We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
- f. We accept that in the interests of open governance, 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.

- g. 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, some of which will be publicly available.

### **Ceasing to be a Governor/Trustee/Academy Committee Member**

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

### **Breach of this 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 Board 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 Governing Board member, such as the Vice Chair will 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).

**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.

Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies Acceptance

I have read and understand the Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies and agree to abide by the principals and practice within the Code of Conduct.

I understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Name of Governor \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Governor \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Governing Board / Board of Trustees agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full Governing Board.

Adopted by the FGB on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Amended to include acceptance form 10/12/18

Reviewed, amended and agreed by FGB 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Interim review FGB 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – policy meets all suggested guidelines - agreed to move to annual review at May FGB as per NGA best practise guidance so policy is ready for annual signature by Governors in September.

Agreed FGB 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022

08/03/23 Updated to be in line with latest NGA model policy, with reference to Equality Act added.

Agreed at FGB 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023