

Code of Conduct for School/Academy Governing Boards

Introduction

This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from school governors and trustees in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. Governing Boards and Trusts are responsible for standards in their schools and are held to account for this by the Local Authority (maintained schools) Academy Sponsors (academy schools), Ofsted and DfE.

School governors make a vital contribution to the lives of children. Schools and academy trusts should aim to recruit, induct and continuously develop high calibre governors with the relevant skills/experience. Governor/trustees skills should be reviewed on an annual basis or when relevant. All governors should demonstrate the following competences:

- a strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for children;
- the inquisitiveness to question and analyse;
- the willingness to learn;
- collaborative and creative;
- good inter-personal skills;
- appropriate levels of literacy in English (unless a governing board is prepared to make special arrangements);
- sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data.

Three core strategic functions

Governing boards should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b) Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

As governors/trustees on the board we agree to the following:

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the head teacher.
- We accept that our role is strategic and focused on the three core functions. We will not involve ourselves in the day to day management of the school or attempt to micromanage senior 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 governing 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 the governing board 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.
- 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 will actively support and challenge the head teacher.
- We will ensure that the school follows all relevant policies and procedures to ensure that young people in need of protection are effectively safeguarded.
- We will follow the policy/procedures established by the governing board or Trustees in relation to criticism or complaints affecting the school.