

**Code of Conduct for the Hill West Primary
School Local Governing Board**



HILL WEST
Primary

FOUR OAKS

Adopted by the Governing Board of Hill West Primary School September 2015

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Introduction

This code sets out the expectations on 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.

Core Strategic Functions of a Governing Body:

Establishing the strategic direction

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability

- Appointing the Headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Engaging with Stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Headteacher.

Headteacher's responsibilities:

- Day-to-day management of the school
- Implementation of policy
- Operation of the curriculum

Governors' responsibilities:

- Determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.

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.

All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed within different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.

- 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 government 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 Headteacher.

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 why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities and events.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board and agreed with the Headteacher.

Visiting the School

- Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school. However, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to the school in order to see Governors' policies in action and to understand how the school works.
- The total number of visits per term should be agreed in advance with the Headteacher. Too many visits can be disruptive to pupils' learning.
- The date and timing of a visit should be arranged in advance with the Headteacher and other Staff involved.
- Visits should have a clear focus, linked to a school policy, a curriculum area or an aspect of the school development plan.
- If a Governor is going to spend time in a classroom, this should be discussed with the class teacher so that both are clear how long the Governor is coming for, what they are going to look at and what they are going to do.
- Governors should understand that their visits do not replace professional inspections or the monitoring role of the headteacher. Governors should not make judgements about the effectiveness of the teaching that they see.
- If Governors are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen this should be passed to the Headteacher.
- After the visit, the Governor should report back, either orally or in writing to the Governing Body.

We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake all relevant training opportunities.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, honestly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other Governors and Stakeholders within the learning community.
- 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 Schools within the Multi Academy trust, local authority, other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will actively develop and build relationships outside of our direct 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.

Whilst governors are entitled to disclose the decisions made by the governing body, unless it was agreed as a confidential item by the governing body, governors are **not** entitled to identify the views expressed by individual named governors.

- 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.

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, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- 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 governing body.

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 Governor, 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.