

Code of Conduct for Governors and Governing Bodies

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour and conduct expected of all school Governors. It may be adopted as it stands or adapted to reflect different Governing Bodies' ways of working, the type of school or the aims and ethos of the school.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for 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 statutory targets
- agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget
- agreeing the staffing structure.

The Governing Body 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 strategy
- the budget and the staffing structure
- their own performance.

The Governing Body ensures accountability by:

- holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school
- ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- making information available to the community
- responding to advisory and Ofsted reports when necessary.

The Governing Body is responsible for the appointment and performance management of the Headteacher.

Ways of Working

- The way the Governing Body operates and organises itself should be kept under review.
- The Headteacher should have regard to Governors' work and other commitments when meetings are being arranged. Similarly Governors must have regard for the work-life balance of Headteachers when arranging meeting times.
- Headteachers and Chairs should work together to ensure that meetings are well planned at appropriate intervals and that agendas are fit for purpose.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will deliver the aims of the Governing Body through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy and delivery of the curriculum. The Headteacher will report appropriately to the Governing Body and ensure that they receive the information that they need to carry out their role. In addition to documents that Governors are required by law to approve, governing bodies should be provided with:

- Budget Statements
- The full RAISEonline Report
- Any other reports or information specific to the school that will support Governors in their role.

The Chair of Governors

The Chair is the principle link between the Governing Body and the Headteacher. The Headteacher and Chair should meet regularly at mutually convenient times to discuss school matters.

Governors

In law the Governing Body is a corporate body, which means that no Governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full Governing Body. All Governors carry equal responsibility for decisions.

The overriding concern of all Governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole, regardless of the route by which they were appointed and the type of Governor they are e.g. staff, parent, community, LEA, foundation, community.

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, Governors must be prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously. They should:

- prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand
- make every effort to attend meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time
- take responsibility for their own learning, training and development as a Governor

In addition they should:

- work as a member of a team at all times and be loyal to collective decisions made by the Governing Body
- recognise that all Governors have the same rights
- act in the best interests of the school at all times
- not do anything that might undermine the Governing Body's statutory requirement to promote community cohesion
- respect confidentiality
- listen to and respect the views of others
- express their own views clearly and succinctly
- declare any conflicts of interest
- take their fair share of work/positions of responsibility
- know, understand and work within the prescribed regulatory framework
- report any evidence of fraud, corruption or misconduct to an appropriate person or Authority
- adhere to the seven principles of public life originally published by the Nolan Committee
- ensure that communication undertaken via social networking sites is comparable to one to one interaction, meaning that all aspects of this code of conduct are taken account of when posting information, messages, pictures or video footage on-line.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

As recommended by the Committee on Standards in Public Life 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.

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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.

4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Agreement

In General

- a) We understand the purpose of the Governing Body and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- b) We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life.
- c) We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Governing Body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- d) 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.
- e) We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- f) We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Body meeting.
- g) We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- h) We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school and to promote community cohesion. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- i) In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Body.
- k) We understand that communication via social networking sites in a variety of formats is deemed comparable to one to one interaction for the purposes of this code of conduct.

Commitment

- a) We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of time and energy.
- b) We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups or as nominated Governors.
- c) We will prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand.
- d) We will make every effort to attend all meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time. Where we cannot, we will endeavour to explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- e) We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- f) Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- g) We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- h) We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.

Relationships

- a) We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- b) We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully. The Governor chairing a meeting is responsible for ensuring appropriate conduct at all times, and the other Governors are responsible for supporting the Chair in that role.
- c) 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.
- d) 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

- 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 Body meeting.
- c) We will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote.
- d) We will not reveal the details of discussions in Governing Body meetings or comments made by individual Governors at those meetings.

Conflicts of interest

- a) We will record any pecuniary interest that we have in connection with the Governing Body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- b) We will declare any personal or pecuniary interest in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Implementation of this Code of Conduct

- a) We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of conduct by any Governor shall be raised at a meeting of the Governing Body and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of Governors, shall be minuted.
- b) We understand that any Governor whose conduct is minuted twice in twelve months shall be suspended for a period of six months from the date of the second minute.
- c) We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003 which pertain to qualification and disqualification for the role of school Governor and grounds for suspension.

The Governing Body of Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Sports College adopted this code of conduct on 13th December 2011

Governors will review the Code at the first Governing Body meeting of each school year and agree to adopt it (or amend if necessary) (Action will be minuted). Anyone joining the Governing Body during the year will be advised that by joining the governing body they agree to abide by this code at the time of appointment (Action will be minuted).