



*'Doing our best to achieve our best'*

## **Clarendon Primary School, Nursery & Family Centre**

# **Governor Code of Conduct**

*This has been adapted from the NGA's model code of conduct document.*

### **Introduction:**

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community and should be read in conjunction with relevant law.

### **The governing body has 3 strategic functions. These are:**

- Establishing strategic direction, by:
  - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values and objectives for the school
  - Agreeing the school development plan with priorities and targets
  - Meeting all statutory duties, particularly those relating to the safeguarding of children
- Ensuring accountability, by:
  - Appointing the headteacher
  - Monitoring the educational performance of the school and its progress against agreed targets
  - Performance managing the headteacher
  - Engaging with stakeholders
  - 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 organisation are managed

The governing body will also ensure that other key players with a stake in the organisation get their voices heard by:

- Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results
- Reaching out to the school's wider community and inviting them to play their part
- Using the views of stakeholders to shape the school's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures

### **Role & Responsibilities**

Members of the school's governing body are expected to:

- understand the purpose of the governing body and its strategic role
- understand how the role of the governing body works with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff as well as how it differs from these roles in school
- accept that they have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given them delegated authority to do so, and therefore will only speak on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically authorised to do so
- accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that they will not speak against majority decisions outside governing body meetings

- have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice. With regards to having responsibility for staff, they will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer
- encourage open governance and will act appropriately
- consider carefully how their decisions may affect the community and other schools
- always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school as well as the other school they work with. (Actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.)
- when making or responding to criticism or complaints, follow the procedures established by the governing body
- actively support and challenge leaders
- accept and respect the difference in roles between the governing body and staff, ensuring that they work collectively for the benefit of the organisation
- respect the role of the leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements
- agree to adhere to the school's rules, code of conduct, policies and the procedures of the governing body as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- when formally speaking or writing in their role as a school governor, ensure comments reflect current organisational policy even if they may be different to their personal views
- when communicating in their private capacity, (including on social media) be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation
- avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing body

### **Commitment:**

As a member of the school governing body, governors will:

- acknowledge that accepting office involves the commitment of significant amount of time and energy
- involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept their fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees / working groups
- make every effort to attend all meetings and where they cannot attend explain in advance why they are unable to
- get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve themselves in school activities
- visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance, and undertake this within the framework established by the governing body
- when visiting the school in a personal capacity, (i.e. as a parent or carer), will maintain their underlying responsibility as a governor
- consider seriously their individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- accept that in the interests of open governance, their full name, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing them will be published on the school's website
- in the interests of transparency, accept that information relating to governor committee members / working groups will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors. (Get information about schools)

### **Relationships:**

As a member of the school governing body, governors will:

- strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all communications with other governing body members, the clerk to the governing body and school staff both in and outside of meetings

- support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
- confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities' any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life, (see annex below) or which may place pupils at risk
- be prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed
- will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved
- seek to develop effective working relationships with the school leaders, staff and parents; the governing body; the local authority and other relevant agencies; and the community

### **Confidentiality**

As a member of the school governing body, governors will:

- observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting
- not reveal the details of any governing body vote
- ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately

### **Conflicts of interest**

As a member of the school governing body, governors will:

- share any pecuniary or other business interests that they have with the governing body's business, (including those related to people they are connected with) and if any such conflicted matters arise in a meeting offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. This information should be recorded on the Register of Business Interests
- accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website
- declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise
- 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 by them

### **Ceasing to be a member of the governing body:**

Governors ceasing to be a member understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after they leave office.

### **Breaching this code of conduct:**

If we believe that this code has been breached, governing body members will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate. **(N.B – The governing body will only use suspension / removal from office as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways)**

Should it be the chair that governors believe have breached this code, another governing body member, such as the vice chair, will investigate.

### **Conduct adaptation:**

This code of contact was agreed and adopted by the governing body of Clarendon Primary School in March 2020.

Date reviewed: Summer Term 2023

Review date: Summer Term 2026

## **Annex 1**

### **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.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful

**Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## Annex 2

### The Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

*The Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, these aren't just fine words, they are meant to support a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.*

1. **Selflessness** - School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
2. **Integrity** - School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
3. **Objectivity** - School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.
4. **Accountability** - School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness** - School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty** - School and college leaders should be truthful.
7. **Leadership** - School and college leaders should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles, and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

- a. **Trust:** *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*  
We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.
- b. **Wisdom:** *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*  
We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.
- c. **Kindness:** *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper*  
We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.
- d. **Justice:** *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*  
We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.
- e. **Service:** *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*  
We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.
- f. **Courage:** *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people*  
We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.
- g. **Optimism:** *leaders are positive and encouraging*  
Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.