

ST STEPHEN'S CofE JUNIOR SCHOOL



Code of Conduct for Governors

Review Details:

Next review due:	September 2022
Committee responsible:	FGB
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Version	Approved by	Date approval	Key changes
1.0	FGB	September 2015	First Issue
2.0	FGB	September 2018	Updated in line with Integra recommendations

1. Introduction

A Government report on the role of school governors recommended that *'each governing body should adopt a code of conduct outlining the purpose of the governing body and describing the appropriate relationships between individual governors, the whole Governing Body and the School'*. This document has been prepared to ensure that St Stephens (Church of England) Junior School (SSJS) meets its obligations to have such a code of conduct.

It is based on material published in the 'Handbook for New School Governors', recommendations from the National Governors Association and material supplied by South Gloucestershire Council (Integra) Governor Services.

All members of the SSJS Governing Body will be asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understood this code of conduct and will do their best to adopt the principles defined.

If it believed that any governor has breached this code of conduct, the issue must be raised with the Chair, who will investigate. Should it be the Chair that is believed to have breached the code another Governing Body member, such as a Vice Chair, will investigate.

Breaches of the code can be punished by suspension or dismissal but this will be a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

2. Principles

2.1. General

As a Governing Body:

- We understand we are responsible for:
 - Establishing strategic direction, by:
 - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and strategic objectives for the school
 - Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
 - Meeting statutory duties
 - Ensuring accountability, by:
 - Appointing the headteacher
 - Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards 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 school are managed
- We recognise that the Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and the implementation of the curriculum. We will avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements
- We will actively both support and challenge the Headteacher
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Governing Body and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the school
- We accept we are responsible for monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures of the school
- We accept that all governors have equal status, and, although appointed by different groups, our overriding concern will be the best interests and the welfare of the school as a whole
- 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
- We accept 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 pupils and other schools
- At meetings we will encourage the open expression of views
- 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 meetings
- 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

2.2. Relationships

- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the Local Authority, other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors/ committee members, the Clerk to the Governing Body and school staff both in and outside of meetings
- 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 Governing Body 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

2.3 The Nolan Principles

- We will be guided by the 'The seven principles of public life' established by the Nolan Committee to advise on the standard of conduct for holders of public office:
 - Selflessness - We will act solely in terms of the school's interest and the public interest.
 - Integrity - We will not place ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests or relationships,
 - Objectivity – We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit using the best evidence without discrimination or bias.
 - Accountability - We are accountable to the school and the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to whatever scrutiny is necessary to ensure this.
 - Openness – We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the school and the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.
 - Honesty - We will be truthful.
 - Leadership - We will exhibit the above principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

2.4 Commitment

As a governor:

- I accept that being a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- I agree to involve myself actively in the work of the Governing Body and accept my fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups
- I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to visit the school and involve myself in school activities
- I will consider seriously my need for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- I will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where I cannot attend I will inform the Clerk to the Governing Body to explain why
- I will try to arrive punctually at meetings and attend for the full duration. I will inform the Clerk to the Governing Body if I intend to arrive late or need to leave the meeting early
- I will prepare for meetings by reading relevant material beforehand

2.5 Confidentiality

As a governor:

- I recognise the need to observe complete confidentiality, both inside and outside the school, when required to do so by the Governing Body, especially regarding matters

concerning individual members of staff or pupils. I will not divulge information about members of staff or pupils inappropriately

- I will exercise great care if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue of the school arises outside the Governing Body
- I will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote
- I will ensure any confidential material in my possession is held and disposed of appropriately
- I understand I owe a duty of mutual trust and confidence to the school, and fellow governors, which may be breached if unsuitable material is contained in any communication or correspondence, including all types of electronic communication, personal blogs, websites and social networking sites and I will gain the agreement of the Chair of the Governing Body and Headteacher prior to posting any content (written, vocal or visual) to the internet, or speaking to the media, which identifies me as a member of the Governing Body of SSJS
- I accept that these requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after I leave office

2.6 Conduct

As a Governor:

- At all times I will strive to work as a member of the team
- I agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the Governing Body as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- I will listen to and respect the views of others
- I will accept the decisions made by the Governing Body or its delegated agents and I will not speak out against such decisions in public, or in private, outside the Full Governing Body
- I will only seek to act on behalf of the Governing Body when I have been specifically authorised to do so
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school, I will follow, or direct the complainant to, the Complaints Procedure established by the Governing Body
- When making official governor visits to school I will follow the 'Code of Practice for School Visits' established by the Governing Body and will always be mindful of my responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), I will be mindful of my underlying responsibility as a governor
- When formally speaking or writing in my governing role I will ensure my comments reflect current school policy even if they might be different to my personal views
- When communicating in my private capacity (including on social media) I will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school
- I will declare an interest if an item under discussion at any meeting of governors impinges upon my personal, family or financial situation

- I will supply to the Governing Body information on any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people I am connected with) that I have in connection with the Governing Body business
- I will, should the situation arise, declare any conflict of interest at the start of any meeting and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting I will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time

2.7 Disclosure of Personal Information

Governors hold an important public office and their identity must be known to their school and wider communities. The SSJS Governing Body is required to publish information on its members on the school website and Department for Education's national database of governors

- In the interests of open governance, I agree that information relating to me as a governor of SSJS can be collected and published on the school's website.

This information to include:

- full name
 - category of governor
 - appointing body
 - term of office
 - the names of any committees served on and voting rights held
 - details of any positions of responsibility held such as Chair or Vice-Chair of the Governing Body or a committee of the Governing Body
 - details of any relevant business or pecuniary interest
 - details of any governorship roles held in other educational establishments
 - details of any relationships with other members of the Governing Body or school staff such as spouse, partner or relative
- In the interests of transparency, I agree that information relating to me as a governor of SSJS can be collected and logged on the Department for Education's national database of governors

This information to include:

- full name
- appointing body
- appointing date
- date term of office ends
- home postcode*
- direct e-mail address*
- date of birth*
- previous full name*
- country of birth*
- nationality*
- telephone number*

Note. Items marked with '*' will not made available to the public

- I understand that I have a responsibility to provide and ensure the accuracy of the information and may be in breach of this Code of Conduct should I fail to do so.

St Stephen's CofE Junior School – Full Governing Body

Code of Conduct Declaration

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and will do my best to adopt the principles defined.

Name Signature Date.....

Name Signature Date.....

Name Signature Date.....

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