

Green Park School
The Code of Conduct for Governing Boards and Governors at Green Park School

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Role:	Headteacher
Committee approving Policy	Full Governing Board
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Signed by Chair of Committee	Ms Linda Guest – Chair of Governors

Our Mission

Green Park aims to provide access to high quality education and learning experiences, both in school and in the community and seeks to maximise each pupil's achievement as part of his or her lifelong learning. It is the school's aim to be a centre of Educational Excellence in the heart of the community.

As governors / trustees, we will focus on our strategic functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

This will take place through:

- A rigorous analysis of pupil progress and attainment.
- Clear processes for overseeing and monitoring school improvement.
- A transparent system for the performance management of the Headteacher and school leaders.
- Effective oversight of the performance of all other employees.
- A regular cycle of meetings.

As individuals on the board we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day to day management.
2. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school/s.

3. We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
5. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
6. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
7. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
8. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.

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.

- 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- 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.
9. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
 10. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.

11. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
12. We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school/s and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.

3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

The Governing Board is responsible for making sure the school's money is well spent with effective controls for managing within available resources. They should do this by ensuring they have at least one Governor with specific skills and experience of financial matters, but everyone on the board should have a basic understanding of the financial cycle and legal requirements.

The Governing Board should play a strategic role and leave the running of the school to the Headteacher they have appointed. The Governing Board must not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school.

Ways of Working

- The way the Governing Board operates and organises itself should be kept under review.
- The Governing Board should consider how to use their powers to delegate functions and decisions to committees or individual Governors.

- The Governing Board must review the establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the Governing Board annually .
- The Governing Board must meet at least three times a year.
- Headteachers and Chairs should work together to ensure that meetings are well planned at appropriate intervals and that agendas are fit for purpose.
- The Governing Board must appoint a Clerk to Governors to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and ensure the Governing Board operates efficiently and effectively.

The Headteacher

- The Headteacher's responsibilities include the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the educational performance of the school.
- The Headteacher will deliver the aims of the Governing Board through the day-to-day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy and the delivery of the curriculum.
- It is the Headteacher's legal duty to provide the Governing Board with all the information they need to do their job well. This means they should help the Governing Board access the data published by the DfE and Ofsted. They should also provide regularly a wide range of other management information so that the Governing Board can monitor different aspects of life in the school throughout the year.
- The Headteacher must comply with any reasonable direction of the Governing Board.
- The Headteacher is accountable to the Governing Board for the performance of all his or her responsibilities.

The Chair

- The Governing Board must appoint a Chair to lead and manage the Governing Board.
- The Chair plays a crucial role in setting the culture of the Governing Board and is first among equals, but has no individual power.
- The Chair may only make decisions or act on behalf of the Governing Board if: The Governing Board have delegated that decision to the Chair of Governors
- The Chair is of the opinion that a delay in exercising a function would be detrimental to the school, anyone who works at the school or any pupil at the school or their parent. The Chair is the principle link between the Governing Board and the Headteacher. The Headteacher and Chair should meet regularly

at mutually convenient times to discuss school matters and the Chair should be a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement.

- The Chair works with the clerk to set Governing Board agendas and approves draft minutes of Governing Board meetings.

The Vice-Chair

- In the absence of a Chair of Governors, the Vice-Chair will take on that role.

Chair of Committees

- Chairs of committees work with the Clerk to set committee meeting agendas and approve draft minutes for those meetings. They have responsibility for ensuring that if a function of the Governing Board has been delegated to the committee or a function of the Governing Board has otherwise been exercised by the committee, it is reported to the Governing Board.

All Governors

In law, the Governing Board is a corporate body, which means that no Governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the Governing Board. All Governors carry equal responsibility for decisions. If a function of the Governing Board has been delegated to an individual, the individual must report to the Governing Board in respect of any action taken or decision made.

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 i.e. Staff, Parent, Community, Local Authority, Foundation, Co-opted.

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

- Be committed to improving education and welfare for all pupils.
- Prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand.
- Ask questions to clarify understanding and gain assurances.
- 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 Board.

- 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 Board's statutory requirement to promote community cohesion.
- Promote British Values with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- 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 (below) 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.