



*What I learn today, prepares me for tomorrow.*

# Governing Body

## Terms of Reference

Policy Location:	Written:	Review Due:	Person Responsible:
Staff Share -> Policy Library	September 2024	September 2025	Mark Phillips, Headteacher All staff

## **Our Governor Code of Conduct**

### **We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

#### **Selflessness**

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

We will avoid placing 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 and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

We will be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

#### **We will focus on our core governance 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

#### **As individual board members, 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.
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.
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).
13. We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

#### **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 well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school 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 (for example, 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 work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
4. 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's website.
5. We will act as a governor; 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 website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information about Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

## Our Committee

Following a Full Governing Body discussion in July 2024 it was decided that the '[Circle Model](#)' of governance (put simply, a Governing Body without committees) is a model that we would like to adopt.

### **Governors appreciated the advantages of the model including:**

- Fewer meetings
- Everyone knowing everything
- No repetition of committee work, especially for those who previously attended both committees
- Everyone has the opportunity to be involved in decision making
- Agendas are easier to plan
- No confusion regarding delegation
- It is usually very straightforward to pull together a group of governors (committee, panel, working group) if required.

Governors also considered the potential disadvantages detailed in the article (including the danger of long meetings, lack of time for detailed discussions and a commitment from governors to school visits) but felt that none were insurmountable.

### **To make the model work successfully all governors will need to accept that:**

- Full Governing Body meetings may need to be longer at times to allow discussions to take place
  - The onus would be on all governors to fully read any relevant documents from the shared drive in preparation for meetings
- Governors would need to commit to making regular school visits
- An additional 'Planning Meeting' would need to take place early in each school year in order to set priorities and dates

## Specifics

### **Membership**

The Governing Body should consist of 10 members, ex clerk.

Headteacher Governor, Staff Governor, Chair/s, Authority Governor, Parent Governor x2, Co-opted x6, associate governors (no voting rights)

### **Quorum**

The Quorum must be five Governors.

### **Roles**

#### **Co-Chairs**

- To ensure the business of the Governing Body is conducted properly, in accordance with legal and Northumberland County Council delegation requirements.
- To ensure meetings are run effectively, focusing on priorities and making the best use of time available, and to ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- To establish and foster an effective relationship with the Headteacher based upon trust and mutual respect for each other's roles. The Chair has an important role in ensuring that the Governing Body acts as a sounding board to the Headteacher and provides strategic direction.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

To meet as required but at a minimum of once per term. Three full meetings and three interim meetings.

## Regular Agenda

Regular Agenda	Responsibility
Apologies & Absence	Clerk
Matters for AOB	Any member
Review minutes of previous meeting	Chair
HT Report inc safeguarding, curriculum, finance, staffing	SLT
Residential Report	TG
Governor Monitoring Visits	Govs
Clerk's items/LA updates	Clerk/MP
AOB	Chair
Date of next meeting/review agenda	Chair

## Specific Meeting Focus

	Whole Governor Meeting		Interim Governor Meeting	
	Date	Specific Focus	Date	Specific Focus
<b>Autumn</b>		Election of roles, Pecuniary interest, SDP, SEF, Roles & Responsibilities		School policies to agree Financial review- indicative budget, SFVS, Premiums, Pay
<b>Spring</b>		Health & Safety Audit Health & Safety Policies		SIP report Curriculum, Assessment & Pupil Progress Budget setting
<b>Summer</b>		Admissions Staffing inc CPD		SDP, SEF, SIP report Impact of curriculum/EHCPs

## Specialist Committees

Specialist Committees	Members	Date
HT appraisal	JS & DR	Oct 24
Finance- Pay, SFVS, Budget, Premiums	Interim Govs	Nov 24
Complaints	TBA	As required
Staffing- disciplinary, conduct, health	TBA	As required
Task and Finish Groups	TBA	As required

## Governor Responsibilities

Governor	Responsibility
	SLT link
	English
	STEM- Science & Maths
	Residential Provision
	Curriculum & Careers
	Humanities
	PE/Forest School
	The Arts- Art, DT and Music
	Safeguarding- PHSE and RE
	IT- inc. Cyber security and Digital Safety
	Health and Safety
	Finance/Policy