

Cam Hopton Primary School **Governor's Code of Conduct**

1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all governors to follow. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that governors carry out their role with honesty and integrity, and help us to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. The code is based on the Governance Handbook. It should be read alongside our constitutional documents. Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, governors will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. The 7 Nolan principles of public life

As governors, we will follow these principles set out by the government at all times. They apply to anyone who holds a public office:

- **Selflessness** – we will act in the public interest.
- **Integrity** – we will not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare any conflict of interests.
- **Objectivity** – we will act and take decisions impartially, fairly, and on merit. We will use the best evidence and avoid discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** – we understand that we are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions. To make sure of this, we will be scrutinised where necessary.
- **Openness** – we will act and take decisions openly and transparently. We will not withhold information from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.
- **Honesty** – we will be truthful.
- **Leadership** – we will actively promote and support the above principles and will challenge poor behaviour wherever it happens.

3. Governors' responsibilities

As governors, 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 school 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 individuals on the board we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We understand and respect the distinction between the role and responsibilities of the board and those of the school leaders.
2. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day to day management.

3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
4. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. 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.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).

Demonstrate our commitment to governance

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 understand and accept the time and workload commitments of the role.
3. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
4. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
5. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
6. We will participate in regular pre-arranged school visits in accordance with school policy.
7. 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.
8. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis to fill any gaps in the skills we need for effective governance.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will support and strengthen school leadership by providing constructive challenge to leaders, and holding them to account.
2. We will respect the role of the school leaders and avoid routine involvement in operational matters.
3. We will respect each other's views.
4. We will work together as a board to develop effective relationships with stakeholders.
5. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/ communities.
6. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
7. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.
8. We will follow the Equality Act 2010, and apply the principles of fairness and equality in everything we do.

Respect confidentiality

In the course of our role, we are sometimes privy to sensitive information. We will observe confidentiality when discussing this information and will not publicly disclose:

1. Information about sensitive matters Information about named individuals (such as staff, pupils and their parents).
2. Details of individual governors' contributions in meetings or how they may have voted.

Confidential information will never be:

1. Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority.
2. Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others.
3. Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for.

Our commitment to confidentiality does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately. We will maintain confidentiality even after we have left office.

Breaches of confidentiality

- In the event of a breach of confidentiality, we will inform the chair as soon as possible who will investigate the matter further.
- We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

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 in the best interests of the school 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.

4. Data Protection

We will follow the school's information security processes and measures and the school's data protection policy when using, storing, sharing and disposing of personal data.

Our commitment to data protection does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

Personal data breaches

We will inform the school's data protection officer immediately if we believe that there has been a personal data breach.

5. Social media

We will:

- Uphold the reputation of the school at all times.
- Maintain a professional presence online and carefully consider how we interact with the school community.
- Review privacy settings regularly to make sure we are happy with the information about us that is publicly available.
- Report any incidents of harassment we experience, or see towards governors to the chair of governors and the Headteacher.

We will **not**:

- Accept friend requests from pupils.
- Disclose any information which is confidential or would breach data protection principles.
- Make comments online about any members of the governing board or school community.
- Post any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media that may bring us or the school into disrepute.

The Full Governing Board agrees that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy, or as needed. It will be ratified by the Full Governing Board.