

Code of Conduct for Governors

Rationale

This code of conduct outlines the standards and expectations of Governors at Meadows First School. The code will outline the roles and responsibilities of the governors and headteacher. At Meadows First School the headteacher is responsible for the day to day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation of the curriculum. Governors have a responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.

Aims

- People who become school governors make a positive contribution by giving of their time and bringing their experience to help the school provide the best possible education for each of its pupils by enabling staff and pupils to reach the highest standards of achievement.
- All governors are expected to contribute to the development of the school in setting the strategic framework within which the school operates; determining the character, aims and ethos of the school and developing and monitoring school policies, plans and procedures.
- Governors need to have a clear understanding of the role of the head teacher which, through his/her day to day organisation and management of the school, is to deliver the curriculum through the implementation of policies, plans and procedures agreed by the governing body.
- The aim of the code, therefore, is to provide governors with a clearer understanding of their role and provide a framework within which they will be able to carry out their duties effectively.

Commitment

- Those accepting the office as a governor will need to be mindful that the role does require a significant level of commitment.
- Governors will be expected to regularly attend meetings of the full governing body, committees and working groups. Regular non-attendance at full governing body meetings can lead to eventual disqualification.
- Governors should ensure they attend meetings promptly and for the full duration.
- Governors should ensure they are prepared for meetings by reading all papers beforehand.
- Governors should attend induction and other relevant training courses in order to aid their development.
- Governors should make every effort to get to know the school and involve themselves in school activities.
- All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and be willing to carry out their fair share of responsibilities including serving on committees and working parties and taking on links with curriculum subjects and areas of special responsibility.

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Relationships

- Governors should operate as a team and always in the best interests of the school.
- Governors should recognise that each member of the governing body has equal status irrespective of their appointing body (ie parents, staff, LA or the governing body) unless particular responsibilities are conferred on them by the full governing body.
- Governors should listen to and respect the views of others and be loyal to collective decisions made by the governing body.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the head teacher, senior management team, teachers, support staff, parents, LA and other relevant agencies where appropriate.

Confidentiality

- Decisions reached at governing body meetings are normally made public through minutes and reports, however, governors should ensure confidentiality, when required, in respect of the discussions on which the decisions were based.
- Individual governors should observe complete confidentiality in all matters discussed at governing body meetings especially in relation to matters concerning staff or pupils and also any other matters agreed by the governing body. Failure to comply can lead to disciplinary action.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of caution when involved in sensitive issues arising outside the governing body which may have an impact on the work of the governing body or the operation of the school.

Conduct

- Governors must accept collective responsibility for all decisions taken by the governing body, that is, they do not have the legal authority to act individually except when the governing body has delegated authority for them to do so.
- Governors should never speak out against decisions, in public or in private, outside the governing body.
- Governors have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice with the overall good of the school overriding any personal feelings or individual concerns they may have.
- When discharging their duties governors will need to be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school and act in the best interests of the school.
- Apart from very specific instances where the chair has to act or take decisions on behalf of the governing body, governors should recognise that they have no individual powers and should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when specifically authorised.
- Governors should be able to express their views openly within meetings but should ensure that they relate to matters proper for discussion by the governing body.

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- Governors' decisions should always take account of the views of staff, parents, pupils, community and other interested parties and governors will need to be mindful of how their decisions may affect all interested parties.
- Governors who wish to raise matters for discussion by the full governing body should make a request to the chair for the item to be included at the next meeting's agenda, giving at least 14 days prior notice. Some items may be brought up at meetings but only with the chair's permission.
- Governors have the right to request any matters discussed at meetings to be recorded in the minutes, subject to confidentiality.
- Governors will be required to declare any personal or financial conflict of interest arising from a matter before the governors or from any other aspect of governorship and should not use their position as governor to benefit him/her or other individuals or agencies.
- When governors are unable to attend meetings they should ensure that the clerk to the governors is notified in advance of the meeting.
- All governors' visits to the school should be carried out within a framework that has been established by the governing body and agreed with the head teacher.
- Governors should be aware of the procedures established by the governing body for responding to criticism or complaint relating to the school.

Visiting the School

- Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school. However, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to the school in order to see governors' policies in action and to gain an understanding of how the school operates.
- All governors should visit the school during the academic year to undertake their duties and roles and responsibilities in relation to monitoring the effectiveness of the school.
- The number of visits by governors should be agreed in advance with the Headteacher but should be no more than three per academic year.
- Visits should have a clear focus linked to a school policy, curriculum area or an aspect of the school development plan.
- If a governor is going to spend time in a classroom this should be discussed with the class teacher in advance so that both parties are clear as to how long the visit will last and the purpose and nature of the discussion or observation.
- Governors should understand that their visits do not replace professional inspections or the monitoring role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- If Governors have any concerns about their visit both prior and after the event they should speak to the Headteacher immediately.

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- After the visit, the governors should report back orally and/or using the agreed format for written feedback. Any written report must be read and agreed by the Headteacher prior to it being shared with any member of staff.

Meetings

- Individual governors do not have any authority in school.
- It is the collective decisions of all the governors together that carry authority.
- The activities that governors undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for the times when the governing body 'goes live' - in a meeting.

As a governor, I expect:

- People to attend regularly and be punctual;
- An agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before the meeting;
- An agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;
- A Chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point;
- My contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;
- The decision making process to be quite clear;
- Governors to work together;
- Governors to take collective responsibility for decisions;
- Minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

As a Governor, I will:

- Attend regularly and be punctual;
- Read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;
- Bring my papers to the meeting;
- Make relevant and positive contributions;
- Listen to and consider what other people want to say;
- Accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.

Code of Conduct Date of Ratification	Signed Chair of Governors	Signed headteacher
September 2022	A Lynch	S Hewitt