

The Orchard School

Governing Body Code of Conduct 2023/24

This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from members of the governing body, at **The Orchard School**.

As holders of public office, governors always conduct themselves in accordance with the seven principles of public life (the Nolan Principles):

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Governing Bodies have the following core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

As individual governors we agree to fulfil these core functions through adherence to the following principles and commitments:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the role and responsibilities of the governing body and the headteacher/executive leaders as outlined in the Department for Education (DfE) Governance Handbook (January 2017).
- It is the responsibility of all governors to ensure that they are familiar with the guidance contained within the Governance Handbook (January 2017).

Commitment

- We acknowledge that being a governor involves the commitment of time and involvement in school life and to our own individual professional development.
- We will actively involve ourselves in the work of the governing body, including serving on committees/working groups and making regular visits to the school.
- We will prioritise attending all meetings and if this is not possible we will submit our apologies and explanation at least 24 hours in advance to the clerk to the governing body.
- We will develop our knowledge of the school through regular visits and involvement in school activities.
- We will reflect on our individual skills and experiences, relevant to governance, and how these impact on individual and collective training and development needs of the governing body. We will access appropriate training and development activities in order to contribute to effective governance of the school.

**The Governing Body of The Orchard School adopted this Code of Conduct on:
28 September 2023**

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Collective Responsibility

- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body. We will not speak against decisions outside governing body meetings.
- We will act in the best interests of the whole school and not represent individual or group interests.
- We will work as a team where professional relationships are maintained and respected.
- We will express views appropriately, openly and courteously in all our communications.
- We will support the role of the chair in ensuring appropriate and effective governance at all times.

Confidentiality

- We will observe confidentiality at all times, particularly regarding individual members of staff or pupils at the school. We will not discuss the content of meetings until such time as the governing body approves the public minutes at its next meeting.
- We will always exercise discretion when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote, including our own voting intentions or history.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record relevant business and pecuniary interests in the Register of Interest. This will include interests arising from relationships between governors or between governors and school staff, including spouses, partners and close relatives.
- We will declare any potential conflict at the start of each meeting.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe a governor's action or behaviour has breached this code we should always aim to challenge this openly during the meeting. If we believe a breach has happened outside a meeting this should be raised with the chair for discussion at the next meeting.
- If a governor's action or behaviour requires investigating, this will be undertaken by the chair. In the event that it is the Chair's actions or behaviour that is being questioned, the vice chair will investigate.
- The governing body, when considering breaches of this code, recognises its statutory powers to suspend and or remove governors.

Suspension of governors

- If a governor's action or behaviour is considered of such significance that it constitutes a breach of confidentiality or threatens to bring the school, governing body or the office of governor into disrepute, the governing body can consider suspension for a period up to six months.

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Removal from office

- The governing body in determining whether to remove, rather than suspend a governor will make reference to the *School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017* and statutory guidance issued in August 2017 in considering whether:
 - There have been repeated grounds for suspension.
 - Serious misconduct has occurred which either threatens to bring the school, governing body or governance into disrepute.
 - There has been serious or repeated failure to contribute meaningfully to the effectiveness of governance at the school, such as non- attendance at meetings, not engaging in training or not participating in meetings.
 - They have engaged in conduct aimed at undermining British values.
 - The actions of the governor are sufficiently detrimental and compromise the operational efficiency of the school.

Name: Signature.....

Date: