



St Joseph's College

Code of Conduct for Governors

2022 / 23

The purpose of the Governing Board

The Governing Board is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards and for the fostering and preservation of the Catholic ethos and following the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. The Governing Board aims to ensure that students are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

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 apply the highest standards and will:

1. act within our power
2. promote the success of the trust
3. exercise independent judgement
4. exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
5. avoid conflicts of interest
6. not accept benefits from third parties
7. declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements

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 individuals on the Board we agree to:

Fulfil our roles and 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 Catholic ethos and values of our school and its distinct nature as an Edmund Rice 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 not discriminate against anyone 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, with all visits pre-arranged in advance with the Academy's Governance Professional and undertaken within the framework of the National Governance Association document 'A guide to school visit for Governors and Trustees'.
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 on-going basis.
8. If acting as trustees on the Trust Board, we accept that we may be held responsible up to the limit in the Articles of Association, were the school to go bankrupt.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members, the Academy's Governance Professional and school staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. We will communicate with other staff members via the Headteacher, Governance Professional and /or Chair of Governors only.
4. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
5. 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 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) and Companies House, some of which will be publicly available.

Breach of this code of conduct

1. If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair/Vice Chairs and the Chairs/Vice-Chairs will investigate; the Governing Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
2. We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any Governor shall be raised at a meeting of the Governing Board, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of Governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the Governing Board.

Date of last review: September 2022

Adopted by St Joseph's College Governing Board on 27th September 2022

This code will be reviewed at the first Governing Board meeting of each school year.

Undertaking:

As a member of the Governing Board I will always have the well-being of the students and the reputation of the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will not say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Board, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed
Date:

Printed name