

Governor's Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards

St Mark's (CofE Aided) Primary School

The Governing Board has the following Core Strategic Functions:

Establishing strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values and objectives for the school / trust ensuring its distinctive Christian ethos and upholding the school's trust deed
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the lead headteacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation
- Implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the schools improvement strategy

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent, and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

In law, the Governing Board is a corporate board which means that no governor can act on their own without proper authority from the full governing board.

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations and commitment required from governors in order for the Governing Board to effectively carry out its work.

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Roles and Responsibilities

- I agree to uphold and promote the distinctive Christian ethos of the school and ensure that it is reflected in the way in which the school is led
- I will be mindful of my responsibility to maintain and develop the Christian ethos and reputation of the school. My actions within the school and local community will reflect this
- I will ensure that communications and decisions taken by the school are in line with Church of England policy and practice,
- I understand the purpose of the board and the role of the executive leaders
- I accept that I have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given me delegated authority to do so and therefore will only speak on behalf of the governing board when I have been specifically authorised to do so

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- I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that I will not speak against majority decisions outside of the governing board meetings
- I have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and in so far as I have responsibility for staff, I will fulfil all that is expected of a good governor
- I will encourage open governance and will act appropriately
- I will consider carefully how governance decisions may affect the church, the community and other schools
- I will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. My actions within the school and local community will reflect this
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints, I will follow the procedures established by the governing board
- I will actively support and challenge executive leaders
- I will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that I work with others collectively for the benefit of the organisation
- I will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that may undermine such arrangements
- I agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- I agree to follow the safeguarding guidance and processes as set out in the school's policies. I understand the significance of safeguarding in protecting children and adults from harm, and will endeavour to ensure a culture of positive and vigilant safeguarding exists at St Mark's.
- When formally speaking or writing in my governing role, I will ensure that my comments reflect current organisational policy even if they may be different to my personal views
- When communicating in my private capacity (including on social media) I will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of governors and the school
- I acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- I will involve myself actively in the work of the governing board and accept my fair share of responsibility, including service on committees and working groups where needed
- I will make every effort to attend all meetings and where I cannot attend, I will explain, in advance if possible, why I am unable to attend
- I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve myself in school activities
- I will visit the school with all visits arranged in line with the visit policy
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity, I will maintain my underlying responsibility as a governor
- I will consider seriously my individual and collective needs for induction, training and development and will undertake regular relevant training
- I accept that in the interests of open governance, my full name, date of appointment, terms of office, role on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing me will be published on the school website
- In the interests of transparency I accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors

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Relationships

- I will strive to work as part of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all my communications with other governors, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings
- I will support the chair in the role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times
- I am prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and I will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved
- I will seek to develop effective working relationships with the executive leaders, staff and parents, the local authority, the diocese, the church and other local churches and relevant agencies and the community

Confidentiality

- I will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside the school
- I will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside of a governing board meeting
- I will not reveal details of any governing board vote
- I will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately

Conflicts of Interest

- I will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people I am connected with) that I have in connection with the governing board's business in the 'Register of Business Interests' and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting I will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time
- I accept that the 'Register of Business Interests' will be published on the school website
- I will declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of a meeting or appropriate time should the situation arise
- I will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representation of any group

Ceasing to be a governor

- I understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after I leave office

As a governor, I agree to adhere to the 7 principles of public life

- *Selflessness* – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of public interest
- *Integrity* – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that may try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships
- *Objectivity* – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

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- *Accountability* – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this
- *Openness* - Holders of public office should act and make decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld for the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so
- *Honesty* – Holders of public office should be truthful
- *Leadership* – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviours. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

Breach of this code of conduct

If I believe this code has been breached, I will raise the issue with the chair who will investigate further. The governing board will use suspension / removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any disputes. Should it be the chair that I believe has breached this code, the Vice Chair will investigate.

This code of conduct has been adopted by the Governing Board of St Mark's school on 29 January 2020.

I have read this code of conduct and agree to abide by the code.

Please complete the form at www.stmarksprimary.net/induction to confirm that you have read and agree to this code of conduct.