

# Governor Code of Conduct 2024 - 2025



*'Learning for the fullness of life' John 10:10*

<b>Statutory, recommended, or additional policy</b>	Statutory
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The purpose of this code of practice is to enable the governing body to fulfill its role of upholding the legally binding and historic foundation of the school as set out in the instrument of government. Ettington Church of England Primary School is a voluntary controlled school, which aims to serve our community by providing the best possible education with the context of Christian belief and practice and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The governing body should ensure that its work and mission is underpinned and framed by the Church of England's well-established vision for education; which can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/vision-education> , with Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' John 10:10 at its heart, for the common good of the whole community.

Our Schools vision is to place the child at the heart of everything we do and to model and scaffold our core Christian Values of Trust, Respect and Love. Working together, where everyone is a partner in learning; providing a safe, happy, caring and stimulating community, where children are given opportunities to reach their true potential.

As a school we hold to these values and firmly believe in providing our children with the opportunities to use and develop the gifts and talents they have been blessed with, to ensure that every child can flourish, in order that they can live a full life.

The principles of good governance are absolutely key to making a difference, this includes:

- The right people around the table with the right skills, knowledge and experience
- Understanding of the role and responsibilities
- Understanding that the governance board is a corporate body with equal status for all governors
- Good chairing
- Professional clerking
- Good open and honest relationships based on trust ensuring that the Christian Vision and values underpin relationships
- Knowing the school or academy - the data, staff, parents, pupils and the community
- Commitment to asking challenging questions
- Confidence to have courageous conversations in the interests of the children and young people
- Active involvement including regular training

Therefore:

- Governors should conduct themselves in line with the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Governors should uphold and demonstrate the school's values of; love, trust and respect in all their work.
- All governors should seek to uphold the Christian foundation of the school.
- Foundation governors in particular, aided by their colleagues, have a specific role in preserving and developing the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the school in accordance with the trust deed.

**The key roles of the Governing body are to:**

- Develop and uphold the Christian distinctiveness of the school and promote high standards. They must ensure that the students are attending a successful school which supports their holistic well-being and provides them with a good education.
- Challenge and support the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating progress against targets and ensuring good financial management of school funds.

- Hold the school leaders to account for the educational performance of the pupils and the performance management of staff.
- Oversee financial performance ensuring money is well spent.
- Ensure the voices of all stakeholders are heard.

## **Core Strategic Functions**

The Governing Board has the following **core strategic functions**:

1. Establishing the strategic direction, by:
  - Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school whilst maintaining the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
  - Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
  - Meeting statutory duties
2. Ensuring accountability, by:
  - Appointing the Headteacher
  - Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets
  - Performance managing the Headteacher
  - Engaging with stakeholders
  - Contributing to school self-evaluation
3. 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

## **Agreed Code of Conduct**

As individuals on the Governing Board we agree to the following:

### **1. Role & Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Board and the role of the executive leaders.
- We will work to ensure that Christian distinctiveness is embedded throughout the school and working with the SIAMS framework.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or any of its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Board meetings.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the Christian ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Board.
- We will actively support and challenge the school leaders.

- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Governing Board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the school.
- We will respect the role of the school's leaders and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules, policies and the procedures of the Governing Board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governance role we will ensure our comments reflect current school policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.

## **2. Commitment:**

- We acknowledge that being a governor requires a commitment of significant amount of time and energy and will have regard for this.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service as a Lead Governor or working groups.
- We accept that regular attendance at meetings of the board is essential. Where we cannot attend, we will explain in advance why we are unable to do so.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, within the framework established by the Governing Board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility for governance.
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher and senior leaders of the school.
- We are committed to upholding the Christian Ethos and values of the school.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training and ensure effectiveness of our own governance through self-evaluation.
- 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.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (GIAS).

## **3. Relationships:**

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the professional to the Governing Board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Governing Board members in relation to delegated functions and consider any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, senior leaders, staff, parents, the local authority, the church at parish and Diocese level and other relevant agencies and the community.
- We have a duty of care to all staff and to each other.

#### 4. Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school. This covers all forms of verbal and written communication, including the various forms of social media.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a Governing Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing Board vote.
- We understand the overall requirements of data protection and the various policies and procedure that have been implemented to ensure compliance.
- We will use the schools provided welearn email address, unless otherwise approved and ensure that all confidential papers and documents are held within school systems, such as GovenorHub and disposed of appropriately if printed.
- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office.

#### 5. Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the Governing Board's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest – or personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest -in a matter under discussion at a meeting and will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the Governing Board.

### Breach of this code of conduct

If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair of the Governors. The raised issue will be investigated; the Governing Board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another Governing Board member, such as the Vice Chair of the Governing Board will investigate.

### The seven principles of public life

We agree to work within the "The Nolan seven principles of public life"(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office must not placing themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in performance of their official duties. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## Undertaking:

As a member of the Governing Board of Ettington Church of England Primary School;

- I will do my utmost to always work to the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- To always have the well-being of the children, the staff 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 Christian ethos and the commitments set out in this Code.
- I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the local Governing Board, the Headteacher or staff.
- I agree to complete the Induction to School Governance training within a 6-month period of appointment or the nearest opportunity.
- I agree to complete Safeguarding and PREVENT training as soon a possible or at the nearest opportunity after appointment and annually thereafter.
- I agree to a DBS and 128 checks before my appointment to the role, and when necessary, thereafter.

Signed .....

Printed name .....

Date: .....