

Code of Practice for Governors

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the aims and ethos of the particular school.

1. The purpose of the governing body

The governing body is the schools' accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of both EGA and Copenhagen schools and for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending successful schools which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being. Over the past decade the responsibilities of governing bodies have grown; and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda has meant that schools are now accountable for children's health and well-being in the community and for a wide range of extended services provision out of school hours.

2. The governing body:

2.1 Sets the strategic direction of the schools by:

- Setting the values, aims and objectives for the schools
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- Setting statutory targets
- Agreeing the schools' improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure

2.2 Challenges and supports the schools by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:

- The implementation and effectiveness of statutory policies and documents
- The achievement of children
- The implementation and impact of the schools' improvement strategy
- The budget and the staffing structure

2.3 Ensures accountability by:

- Validating or challenging the grades in the Self Evaluation Form of both schools
- responding to external adviser and Ofsted reports when necessary
- holding the Executive headteacher and Headteacher to account for the performance of the school
- ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed in significant decisions that affect them
- making available information to the community

2.4 Appoints and performance manages the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the schools, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the governing body.

2.5 For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;

- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and evaluate their own performance.

3. The role of a governor

In law the governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority Community, Foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the success of the schools as a whole.

4. General

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher as set out above
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body 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 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.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents.
- 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 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 affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

5. Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on at least one committee or working group.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend, explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the schools well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our monitoring visits to each school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the Executive Headteacher / Headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Executive Headteacher / Headteacher.

6. 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.
- We will support the chair in her role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and will take into account 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 Executive Headteacher / Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

7. 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
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting
- The work of the governing body is reported in the minutes which should be made available to all interested parties, except for Part 2 items (which are confidential), and should be made available in both schools to all staff e.g. via a notice board copy, and to all parents via website
- As a staff or parent governor we will report back to those we represent once draft minutes have been circulated and provided that there is no breach of confidentiality.
- We will report the outline of the main arguments taking care to report accurately and not to breach a confidence of the governing body
- We will not report to others on how individuals voted, comments made by individuals or individual discussions
- Even if we personally voted against the final decision we will support the corporate decision-making process, and take ownership of the outcome

8. Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

9. Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- 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 body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a

majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension by the governing body.

- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (held as a separate document)

September 2016

The Federated Governing Body of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School and Copenhagen School adopted this code of practice on 2nd July 2013

Governors will sign the Code when first appointed and if/when their terms of office are renewed.

Undertaking:

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the schools at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Body, the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher or staff.

Signed

Printed name

Date:

Appendix: The 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 material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

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.

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 the wider public interest clearly demands.

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 promote and support these principles by leadership and example.