

Hemingford Grey Primary School Governing Body

Code of Conduct for 2021/22

This code of conduct sets out the behaviour and professional standards required from Hemingford Grey Primary School governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life¹:

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.

THE GOVERNING BODY HAS THE FOLLOWING CORE STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values and ethos of the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards school improvement targets
- Ensuring the performance management of all staff
- Contributing to school self-evaluation
- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

AS INDIVIDUALS ON THE GOVERNING BODY WE AGREE TO:

Fulfil our roles & responsibilities

- We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on the core functions.
- We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
- We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures.
- We will work collectively for the benefit of the school and only speak or act on behalf of the governing body if we have the authority to do so.
- We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body and will stand by the decisions that we make.
- We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
- Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may put pupils at risk, we will speak up.
- We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- We will publish on the school website the structure and remit of the governing body and any committees, and the full names of the chair of each.
- We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
- When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
- We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Demonstrate our commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant 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 committees or working groups.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, and ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the headteacher and undertaken within the policy established by the governing body. When visits are difficult or not allowed for health or safety reasons, we will find other ways of ensuring we know the school well and stay involved in school activities.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent/carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- We will confirm our eligibility to be a governor in writing and inform the clerk immediately if there is a change.
- We accept that as governors we need to have an enhanced DBS check and Section 128 check on appointment.

Build and maintain relationships

- We will strive to work as a team and create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.

- We will express our views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of leading the governing body and ensuring appropriate conduct.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and 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 develop effective working relationships with the school leaders, staff, parents, and other relevant stakeholders from our local community.
- We will ensure that an appropriate balance is reached between providing challenge and support to the headteacher.
- We will disclose any relationships with other governors or staff at the school, and allow this information to be published on the school website.

Respect confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff, pupils or parents (both inside and outside school).
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body discussion or how governors vote, unless agreed.
- We will exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We understand that the requirements of confidentiality will continue to apply after we leave office and will ensure that any information relating to the school is returned to the school.
- We will only use secure emails and ensure that confidential and sensitive data is kept securely, both paper and electronic versions.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business and will record these in the Register of Business Interests, and accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise, and if a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- 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 body.
- We will not use the governing body to enhance or influence the education of our own children or those personally known to us or pursue personal agendas.
- We accept that a governor paid to work at the school, other than the headteacher, must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to the pay or performance appraisal of any particular person working at the school.
- We accept that the headteacher must withdraw and cannot vote in relation to their own pay or performance appraisal.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, 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.
- We will ensure the same information will be published for associate members, making clear whether they have voting rights on any of the committees to which they have been appointed.
- We accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

