

Code of Conduct and Charter for the Governing Body

Code of Conduct

The following is not a definitive statement of the responsibilities of the governing body or individual governors, but a shared understanding of the broad principles by which we will operate. It is compatible with the aims and ethos of the school.

The Nolan Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life (known as the Nolan Principles) apply to all public office-holders, including appointed, elected and ex-officio school governors.

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

All governors at Giles Junior School are expected to uphold these principles.

1. **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should act solely in the public interest.
2. **Integrity**
Holders of public office must avoid obligations to people or organisations that might seek to influence them inappropriately. They must not act to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. All interests and relationships must be declared and appropriately managed.
3. **Objectivity**
Holders of public office must act impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny required.
5. **Openness**
Holders of public office should act and make decisions in an open and transparent manner, withholding information only where there are lawful reasons.
6. **Honesty**
Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. **Leadership**
Holders of public office should exhibit and promote these principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Principles and Procedures

1. We are responsible for determining, monitoring and reviewing the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.
2. We recognise that the Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and the operation of the curriculum.
3. All governors have equal status. Although appointed or elected by different groups, our overriding concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.
4. Governors have no legal authority to act individually unless delegated by the governing body.
5. We will act fairly and without prejudice and will fulfil all legal expectations relating to our responsibilities as, or on behalf of, the employer.
6. We will encourage open governance and transparency.
7. We will consider carefully how our decisions affect other schools.
8. We will support the mission and vision of the school.

Commitment

9. Accepting office involves a significant commitment of time and energy.
10. We will attend meetings regularly and participate actively, including serving on committees or working groups.
11. We will get to know the school well and take opportunities to engage in school life.
12. We will consider seriously our individual and collective training and development needs.
13. If unable to attend a meeting, we will notify the Clerk in advance.
14. We will check emails and Governor Hub at least weekly and respond as required.
15. We will review all circulated documents and respond by any specified deadline.

Relationships

16. We will work as a team.
17. We will develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents, the Local Authority, relevant agencies, the community and, where appropriate, other schools.

Confidentiality

18. We will observe confidentiality regarding governing body proceedings and school visits.
19. We will maintain strict confidentiality, especially regarding individual staff or pupils.
20. We will exercise caution if contentious issues arise outside meetings.

21. We will adhere to GDPR obligations and report any suspected data breaches immediately to the Data Protection Officer.

Conduct

22. We will encourage open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for decisions made.
23. We will speak or act on behalf of the governing body only when authorised to do so.
24. We will follow all school policies and procedures.
25. We will follow established procedures when responding to criticism or complaints.
26. Visits will be undertaken using the agreed framework and in consultation with the Headteacher.
27. We will uphold the ethos and reputation of the school and will not act in ways that bring the school or governing body into disrepute.
28. We will treat staff, pupils, parents and fellow governors with respect.
29. Governors with children at the school will use standard school systems and processes for all parent matters; their role as governor does not afford additional entitlement.

Suspension

30. A governor may be disqualified from office if they fail to attend any full governing body meeting for six months without approved leave of absence.
31. Suspension will only be used when necessary and in accordance with the relevant regulations to ensure fairness and objectivity.

Removal

32. Removing a governor is a last resort. Appointing bodies hold the power to remove the governors they appoint.
33. Any removal process will follow the Constitution Regulations to ensure fairness and transparency.

Safeguarding

34. We will follow the school's safeguarding procedures as set out in the relevant policies (Safeguarding, Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Online Safety) and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 35. We will ensure our safeguarding training is always up to date.
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Governors' Charter Overview

This charter defines the guiding principles and practices that governors will follow in carrying out their duties. It also outlines general expectations of school staff.

Introduction

Governors act as a “critical friend,” setting the strategic direction of the school and supporting the Headteacher and staff in delivering agreed priorities. The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management and the curriculum.

Governors hold the school to account through:

- Timely and informative reports from the Headteacher and committees
- Evaluation of formal governor visits, including classroom visits
- Committee and working group discussions
- Challenging and probing questions

Governors' Expectations

The governing body expects that:

- The school's vision and mission are upheld at all times
- All pupils are supported to achieve their full potential
- Teaching is consistently at least “good”
- Pupil behaviour is consistently good
- Pupils are active participants in their own learning
- Parents/carers are engaged in supporting progress
- Staff take ownership of their professional development
- Progress data is analysed effectively
- Recruitment processes are rigorous
- Best practice is shared
- All approved policies and procedures are implemented
- Governors are fully informed on key matters (e.g., attainment, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance, finances, premises, SIP progress, community links)

Effective Governance

Governors will work collaboratively with the Headteacher and staff by:

- Contributing to the SIP and SEF
- Monitoring progress and attainment
- Participating in recruitment
- Undertaking relevant training
- Supporting policy development and financial and premises management
- Conducting regular skills audits

- Celebrating staff and pupil achievements
- Ensuring statutory duties are fulfilled
- Upholding the principles of the 7 Habits and Leader in Me

Holding the School to Account

Governors will ask challenging questions and consider:

- Is this in line with the school's strategy and vision?
- Will this improve outcomes?
- Are resources adequate and well-used?
- Are targets ambitious?
- Is additional support needed?
- Is the information sufficient and clear?
- Is this in the best interests of pupils?

Documents should be read prior to meetings, and questions may be posted on Governor Hub to support effective discussion.

Clerking

- A Clerk will be appointed to minute meetings and provide procedural advice.
- Agendas will be issued at least 10 calendar days before meetings.
- Documents will be circulated via Governor Hub at least 7 days before meetings.
- Minutes will record key details and will be issued within two weeks of the meeting.
- Committee minutes and working party notes will be recorded appropriately.

Review

This Code of Conduct and Charter will be reviewed annually. Governors will sign to confirm their acceptance at the first meeting of the Autumn Term, or upon appointment.

Next Review: December 2026

Distribution

This Code of conduct will be issued to:-

- a) All governors
- b) Members of school staff (as required).

This Policy is signed digitally on Governor Hub following ratification.

