

Chase Lane Primary School

Code of Practice for School Governors

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This Code of Practice sets out the level of expectation and commitment required of governors in order to serve Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery Unit. This is not an exhaustive list of do's and don'ts for governors individually or collectively, nor is it prescriptive or definitive on how governors should behave in office. It is intended as a guide for prospective governors to read and understand and for existing governors to follow.

As a reference document, it should be reviewed annually at the first full governing body of the Autumn Term and amended as necessary to ensure that the governing body offer the highest standards of professional conduct at all times when serving the school and community of Chase Lane Primary.



The Governing Body of Chase Lane Primary School adopted this code of practice for the first time on 20 November 2012. Subsequent amendments were agreed on 18 March 2014, 15 September 2015 and 13th September 2016.

Governors will review and sign the Code at the first governing body meeting of each school year.

Chase Lane Primary School Governing Body:

Sets the strategic direction of the school by:

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

Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:

- The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
- Progress towards targets
- The implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
- The budget and the staffing structure

Ensures accountability by:

- signing off the Self-Evaluation Form – not mandatory in schools
- responding to Ofsted reports
- holding the head teacher to account for the performance of the school
- ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- making available information to the community

Appoints and performance manages the head teacher;

- The head teacher will deliver the aims through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum and report appropriately to the governing body.

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 review their own performance.

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, Co-opted, Associate), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

General

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Head teacher 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 government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- 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.

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 committees or working groups.
- 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 school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the head teacher.
- 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 headteacher.
- We will commit, as far as is possible, to a full term of office and will aim to give at least 2 months' notice of intention to resign from office.
- We will uphold and abide by school policies and procedures, as far as they are relevant to our particular roles and category of governorship.
- Dates and times of meetings and school visits are circulated by the beginning of the Autumn term so that governors can diarise these well in advance.
- We agree to attend the full GB meetings and all the meetings on one sub-committee. (Finance and General Purposes Committee or the Curriculum Committee).
- There are three other dates in the year for school visits for us to become familiar with particular area of school life. We will attend at *least* one of these dates.
- We agree to respond to correspondence from Chairs of the GB/sub-committees as requested in order to ensure efficient planning of meetings.

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 their 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 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 head teacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

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.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

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.
- The Governing Body of Chase Lane Primary School believes that there may be a conflict of interests of a relevant person and the interest of the governing body, if any governor is a relative of or lives with someone (The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 schedule 1, pecuniary interest 1.b) who is employed at the school. Therefore the GB requires all governors who fit this criteria to declare such an interest and leave the meeting for any discussion and decision pertaining to, but not limited to, staffing structure and/or pay. For the avoidance of doubt, the GB considers such governors to have the same status as staff governors for any matters under discussion and requiring a decision and requires that they leave any meeting when staff governors are asked to leave.

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 should 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 from 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)

Undertaking to be signed by all members of Chase Lane Primary School GB

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children 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 ethos; I will never intentionally say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Body, the Head teacher 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).

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.