



St Michael's Easthampstead C of E, VA,  
Primary School

Governance Code of Conduct

Date reviewed by LGB	Autumn 1 2025
Date approved by Governing Body	15 September 2025
Date of next review	Autumn 1 2026
Published	Website (School Policy Documents)

## **Code of Conduct**

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

Once adopted by the governing body, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law, articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

### **We will abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

#### **Selflessness**

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.

### **We will focus on our core governance functions:**

- ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation, its pupils and the performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.
- ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

### **As individuals we agree to:**

#### **Fulfil our roles & responsibilities**

- We accept our role is strategic so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management and avoid actions that may undermine such arrangements.

- We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school and be mindful of our responsibility to maintain the reputation of our school within the school and the local community.
- We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- 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 will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
- We will fully cooperate with requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, including disclosure and barring checks.
- We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- 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 place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
- We will fulfil our responsibilities to school staff, ensuring a safe working environment, support for their wellbeing, and acting fairly and without bias.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
- We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
- We will have regard to our responsibilities under [The Equality Act](#) and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

### **Demonstrate our commitment to the role**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- 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 where required.
- 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, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- Where attendance at a meeting is virtual, we will observe the protocol associated with virtual meetings.
- We will get to know the school well and welcome opportunities to be involved in school activities.
- We will visit the school; with all visits arranged in advance with the Headteacher/relevant staff. We will observe the visits framework established by the governing body and observe school protocol.

- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

### **Build and maintain 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 clerk to the governing body and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of leading the governing body and ensure appropriate conduct both inside and outside of meetings.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each governor's contributions are valued equally.
- We will be prepared to answer queries from other governing body members in relation to any delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed. 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 school leaders, staff and parents and other relevant stakeholders from local agencies and our local community.
- We will champion the voices of our school community and stakeholders.

### **Respect Confidentiality**

- We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- 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.
- We will practice good ICT security, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance.
- We will use our allocated school email address for all electronic correspondence relating to governance and ensure that confidential correspondence is not shared or forwarded to addresses outside of the governing body.
- We will use AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini) with caution. We acknowledge that AI may assist with drafting or research, but that it must not be used to process personal data, confidential or sensitive material unless this use is compliant with Trust policies and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). We recognise that AI-generated content may be inaccurate, biased or incomplete, and must always be reviewed and verified before use in any decision-making. We noted that the DfE guidance highlights the need for responsible AI use in education, especially with regard to safeguarding, fairness, and data protection. We accept that misuse that compromises confidentiality or governance standards, may breach this Code of Conduct.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

## **Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent**

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest (including those related to people we are personally connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will act as a governor; not as a representative of any group.
- 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 accept that in the interests of open governance, 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.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database of governors (Get Information About Schools) some of which will be publicly available.

## **Ceasing to be a governor**

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office

## **Breach of this code of conduct**

- We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions including suspension or removal from the governing body as a last resort.
- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

**Adopted by:** St Michael's Easthampstead Primary School Governing Body **on** 15 September 2025.

**Signed:** Louise Hodkinson [*Chair of Governors*]



*The governing body of St Michael's Easthampstead CE Primary School agrees that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full governing body.*