

# Code of Conduct for Foundation Governors

**PLEASE READ, SIGN AND RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS**

This Diocese of Chelmsford, acting through its Diocesan Board of Education, Governors Code of Conduct sets out the expectations and commitment required from School Governors, Trustees and Academy Committee/Local Governing Board members for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the Diocese. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' includes academies and Free Schools, and it applies to all levels of school governance. Foundation Governors should read, sign, return and retain a copy for their records prior to appointment.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. I agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

### Selflessness

I will act solely in terms of the public interest.

### Integrity

I will avoid placing myself under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence me in my work. I will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for myself, my family, or my friends. I will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### Objectivity

I will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### Accountability

I am accountable to the public for decisions and actions taken by the governance board and will submit myself to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### Openness

I will act and participate in making 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

I will be truthful.

### Leadership

I will exhibit these principles in my own behaviour. I will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. I will focus on the core governance functions:

1. that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
2. that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
3. the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 3 Core functions from the Governance Guide for Maintained Schools  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-maintained-schools/1-effective-governance>

*The Diocese recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:*

4. ensuring that the theologically rooted Christian vision of the school is developed and upheld and is the lived experience of all involved in governance and the school community.

In addition, I will reference in my thinking and contributions the education visions of:

- a) The Church of England, “deeply Christian, serving the common good”
- b) The Diocese of Chelmsford, “Promoting life in all its fulness through education across Essex and East London.”

### **3. As an individual board member, I agree to:**

#### **3.1 Fulfil my role & responsibilities:**

- a) I accept that governance is strategic and so will focus on the core functions rather than involve myself in day-to-day management.
- b) I will contribute to the development, sharing and lived experience of the theologically rooted Christian Vision, the ethos and values of the school.
- c) As a foundation governor, I commit to the specific role of ensuring the Church school’s theologically rooted vision and Christian distinctiveness of the school is reflected in all aspects of school life, according to the school’s trust deed.
- d) I agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- e) I will work collectively with the other governors for the benefit of the school.
- f) I will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding individuals to account.
- g) I will consider how decisions may affect the school, the church, the Diocese, and local community.
- h) I will stand by the decisions that are made by the governance boards as a collective.
- i) Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, I will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- j) I will only speak or act on behalf of the board if I have been given the authority to do so in advance by the board.
- k) I will contribute to the responsibilities of the board as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
- l) When making or responding to complaints, I will follow the established procedures and not take personal action on behalf of a complainant.
- m) I will strive to uphold the school’s reputation in my private communications (including on social media and in all conversations).
- n) I will have regard to the governing boards’ responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010 and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

#### **3.2 Demonstrate my commitment to the role**

- a) I acknowledge that accepting office as a foundation governor involves the commitment of a significant amount of time and energy including praying for the school.
- b) I will involve myself actively in the work of the board, and accept my fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
- c) As a foundation governor, I will pay particular attention to preparedness and contributing to any [Section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools \(SIAMS\)](#).
- d) I will make every effort to attend all meetings and where I cannot attend explain in advance why I am unable to.
- e) I will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.

- f) I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve myself in school activities.
- g) I will visit the school and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe the Schools Visit Policy.
- h) When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), I will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- i) I will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing my individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- j) I will complete the relevant training provided by the Diocese and the Local Authority (LA) within the first six months of my appointment.

### **3.3 Build and maintain relationships.**

- a) I will strive to work as a member of the governance team (including school leaders) in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- a) I will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from the church, the Diocese, and our local community/communities.
- b) I will express views openly, courteously, and respectfully in all our communications in and outside of meetings.
- c) I will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
- d) I will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct at all times.
- e) I am aware that the diocese, through the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) may remove from office any foundation governor in line with the Diocesan Removal Policy, whose conduct in the view of the Board, does not fulfil their role in accordance with the DBE's expectations or whose conduct is not in keeping with the Christian character and Church school ethos.

### **3.4 Respect confidentiality**

- a) I will observe complete confidentiality inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- b) I will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- c) I will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- d) I will maintain confidentiality even after I leave office.

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

- a) I will declare any business, personal or other interest that I have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the register of business interests.
- b) I will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
- c) If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, I will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- d) I accept that in the interests of open governance, my full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school website.
- e) I accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- f) I will act as a governor, not as a representative of any particular group.
- g) I accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information about Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

## **5. Breach of this Code of Conduct**

- a) If I believe this Code has been breached, I will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate
- b) The governing body will only use suspension of a governor or recommend removal of a foundation governor, as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways
- c) Should it be the chair that I believe has breached this Code, another governing board member such as the vice chair will investigate
- d) I am aware that the diocese, through the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) may remove from office any foundation governor in line with the Diocesan Removal Policy, (See Foundation Governors Appointment Policy Appendix B) whose conduct in the view of the Board, does not fulfil their role in accordance with the DBE's expectations or whose conduct is not in keeping with the Christian character and Church school ethos

**6. Regulations**

- a) I understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.
- b) I am aware of the provisions contained within the relevant regulations relating to school governance:  
  - The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1034/pdfs/uksi\\_20121034\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1034/pdfs/uksi_20121034_en.pdf)
  - The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1624/pdfs/uksi\\_20131624\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1624/pdfs/uksi_20131624_en.pdf)

**Personal Undertaking:**

As a member of the governing board, I will always have the well-being of the staff, the children and young people, the effective running of the school and the school's reputation at heart. I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, Christian Vision, values, and Church school ethos. I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the governing board, the headteacher, the staff or Diocese. The nomination form confirms that I have signed this Code of Conduct.

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**Signed by:** [Full Name of prospective Foundation Governor] on [date]

**Signed:**

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Code of Practice agreed by the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education on [Date]

Signed: *The Right Reverend Roger Morris, Bishop of Colchester* Date: *January 2025*

**Chair of Chelmsford Diocese Board of Education**