



**THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL**  
**- A Community Academy -**

**Code of Conduct for the School Governors**

Originator	Reviewed by	Date of Review	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date	Website
School			Board of Governors	05/09/16	September 2017	Yes

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## Code of Conduct for the School Governors

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from the school governors and trustees in order for our governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.
- 1.2 It is based on the National Governors' Association Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The DfE has high expectations of governing bodies. They are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For maintained schools this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'.

### 3. The National Framework

- 3.1 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).
- 3.2 **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.
- 3.3 **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.
- 3.4 **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.
- 3.5 **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.
- 3.6 **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.
- 3.7 **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.

3.8 **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

#### **4. The Board of Governors' Core Strategic Function**

4.1 The governing board has the following core strategic functions:

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

4.2 Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

4.3 Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

#### **5. Our Agreement**

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

5.1 Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the headteacher.
- We review our Scheme of Delegation annually.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We always aim to move towards consensus, but there will be occasions where it will be necessary to take a vote. The main arguments on either side will be recorded impersonally. We remember to ask ourselves the question: "How will this decision benefit the education of the pupils of the school?"
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against

majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.

- 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 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 board.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher.
- We will evaluate our organisation and performance as a governing body regularly to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness. We will also conduct regular skills audits to ensure our continued fitness for purpose.

## 5.2 Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will participate in any induction process offered by our governing body.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, 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 why we are unable to.
- 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 to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board and agreed with the headteacher.
- We recognise the importance of our individual and collective skills which we use in the best interests of the school.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We are prepared to take on additional responsibility as required in order to ensure effective succession planning.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing body, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website, along with all other information required by law.

## 5.3 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 will provide constructive feedback to the chair regarding his/her performance of the role and accept feedback on our own performance.
- 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 headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

#### 5.4 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 board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We understand that all reports to and minutes of the governing body, or its committees, are public papers after the meeting has considered them and are made available at the school to anyone wishing to inspect them, unless we decide they should be confidential.
- We will exercise great caution when using electronic communication including social media in relation to governance matters. We will not mention school business or the names of individuals on sites such as Facebook.
- When we resign from the Governing Body (for whatever reason) we will return to the school all governing body paperwork and delete any governing body electronic documents held by us personally
- We will continue to observe complete confidentiality, as outlined above, beyond our term of office

#### 5.5 Conflicts of Interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We 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.
- 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 board.

## **6. Breach of this code of conduct**

- 6.1 If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- 6.2 Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## **7. Confirmation of Agreement**

- 7.1 This Code of Conduct was agreed by the governing body of the John of Gaunt School on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at which time the governors in office were:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Governor category</b>	<b>Term of office expires on</b>
Elaine Baldwin	Staff	28/09/2018
Derek Barber	Local Authority	12/07/2019
Sarah Bergg	Appointed	15/05/2020
Toby Corden	Appointed	12/07/2019
Kevin Eames	Appointed	13/10/2018
Mike Gunston	Headteacher	
Louise Hamilton	Appointed	10/04/2020
Andrew Hawkins	Appointed	30/10/2019
Rachel Martin	Appointed	09/06/2017
Matt Palmer	Staff	12/10/2019
Peter Ramsay	Staff	28/09/2018
Liz Summerson	Appointed	16/07/2019
Helen Thorne	Parent	14/07/2018
David Whewell	Appointed	30/10/2019
Andy Williams	Parent	12/07/2019
Debbie Youngs	Parent	07/01/2018

- 7.2 This code will remain in place unless and until it is superseded by a vote of the full governing body of the John of Gaunt School.