



# Critical Friends

## Code of Conduct for the Governing Body

School Name: Brentnall Community Primary School

The governing body has adopted a number of principles and procedures which set out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors and trustees in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

These principles and procedures, collectively known as the 'Code of Conduct for the Governing Body', are outlined in this document in the following sections:

- Element A - Purpose of the governing body and the Code of Conduct
- Element B - Governing body core strategic functions
- Element C - Individual Pledges (A framework for governance)
- Element D - High-level school performance indicators
- Appendix

## **Element A - Purpose of the governing body and the Code of Conduct**

The governing body of Brentnall Community Primary School is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards.

The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a school which provides them with a successful education and supports their well-being, and is committed to working in partnership with the headteacher to provide this.

Brentnall Community Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

It was agreed that a robust framework was necessary so that school governors and senior leaders can set the strategic direction for the school, and that governors can use to hold senior leaders to account.

The Code of Conduct allows governors and senior leaders to take a broader and longer-term perspective and facilitates a framework for annual reporting.

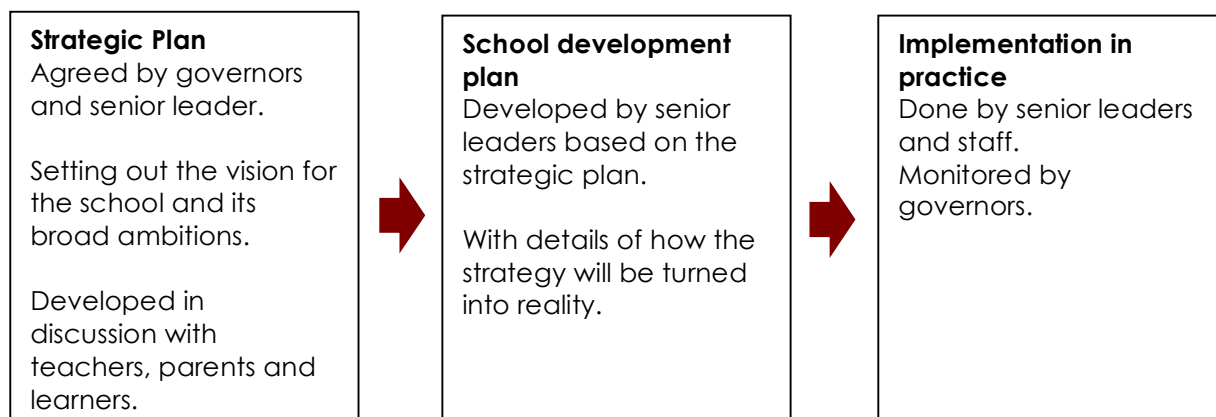
Its purpose:

- To set out the purpose of the governing body
- To set out expectations and commitment required from school governors
- Describe the appropriate relationship between individual governors, the whole governing body and the leadership of the school

The code of conduct is discussed thoroughly before it is accepted, and is reviewed, updated and signed annually by all governors and senior leaders.

## Element B - Governing Body Core Strategic Functions

### Strategic Plan and Vision



Every school needs to have a long-term strategic plan, based on a shared vision, from which annual school development plans can be derived, with the governing body monitoring these plans. It helps governors understand where the line lies between their strategic responsibilities and the management responsibilities of the headteacher and senior leaders.

The governors agree how the school will implement its strategic plan in practice, and they then monitor its progress. Governors will monitor:

- Recruitment, retention and training of specialist and non-specialist staff, both teaching and non-teaching;
- Performance management of staff;
- Implementation of delegated financial responsibility, checks and balances;
- Behaviour policy and its implementation; and
- Policy for deployment of resources – including buildings and equipment.

The governing body works with the headteacher and senior leaders to agree a strategic plan for the next three to five years. The senior leaders then turn the strategic plan into a school development plan, which is updated each year, and implement in place.

### Meetings

The Governing Body will give sufficient notice of meetings and distribute paperwork to all governors in good time, at least a week before the meeting and will avoid tabling paperwork at meetings wherever possible.

The Governing Body will ensure that meetings are chaired effectively, so that the chair:

- Keeps to the agenda;
- Paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance;
- Draws on all members for contribution; and
- Keeps discussion to the point.

Governors have a duty to declare any private interests relating to the public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest).

The Governing Body will ensure that accurate draft minutes are produced promptly after a meeting and ensure that they are circulated prior to and agreed at the following meeting.

### Governing Body Functions

The governing body has three core functions for the school:

- Provide strategic direction for the school;
  - Ensure accountability, otherwise known as holding the headteacher to account for improving the school; and
  - Ensuring financial health, probity and value-for-money.
1. Provide strategic direction for the school
    - Set Vision, Values, Aims and Objectives of the school;
    - Agree the policy framework for achieving the Aims and Objectives with clear KPIs;
    - Agree the School Improvement Strategy, and the School Improvement Plan (SIP), including approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure; and
    - Meet statutory duties.
  2. Ensure accountability, otherwise known as holding the headteacher to account for improving the school
    - Appoint and performance manage the headteacher who 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;
    - Monitor, review and evaluate the staffing structure and assist the headteacher in making appointments; and
    - Monitor, review and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework;
    - Monitor, review and evaluate progress against targets;

- Monitor, review and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the School Improvement Strategy;
  - Sign off and contribute to the school's self-evaluation report;
  - Respond to Ofsted reports when necessary;
  - Monitor progress towards targets;
  - Engage with stakeholders;
  - Ensure parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate;
  - Make information available to the community; and
  - Behave as "**critical friends**" to the school at all times. This includes offering support, constructive advice, a sounding board for ideas, a second opinion on proposals and help where needed. On occasions, this will include challenging and asking questions of the head teacher, such as holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school.
3. Ensure financial health, probity and value-for-money
- Set, monitor, review and evaluate the budget structure;
  - Monitor spending against the budget;
  - Ensure value-for-money is obtained; and
  - Ensure risks to the school are managed.

## Element C - Individual Pledges (A framework for governance)

The role of the governor is to contribute to the work of the governing body in raising standards of achievement for all students. This involves providing a strategic view for the school, acting as a “**critical friend**” to the senior leadership team and ensuring accountability.

The governing body has three core functions for the school:

- Setting the strategic direction
- Holding the headteacher to account for improving the school
- Ensuring financial health, probity and value for money

These core functions are consistent with the criteria that Ofsted will use to judge the governing body.

To meet these expectations, the governing body agrees basic principles about the way it works. For governing bodies to carry out their roles 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
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance

The idea behind having a framework for governance is that it sets out how the governing body is expected to function. As individuals, the governing body pledge to meet our duties, which have been structured under the headings: roles and responsibilities, commitment, relationships, confidentiality, conflicts of interest and breach of the code.

- Roles and responsibilities
  - Be responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.
  - Understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the headteacher, recognising that the headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and implementation of the curriculum.
  - Aware of and accept the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life (see Appendix).
  - Unless the board has given us delegated authority to do so, we will not speak on behalf of the governing board.
  - Accept that all Governors have equal status and, although appointed by different groups (i.e. parents, staff, local authority), our overriding concern will be the welfare of the school as a whole.

- Accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board and support majority decisions.
  - Acting fairly and without prejudice, we will participate in the best interests of the school as a whole and not on our own individual interests or as a representative of any group.
  - Encourage open governance and act appropriately.
  - Carefully consider how our decisions may affect the school as well as the local community and other schools.
  - Be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school.
  - We will actively support and challenge the headteacher.
  - We will follow the procedures established by the governing body in making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school.
  - We will use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither our personal/professional reputation, or the school's reputation, is compromised by inappropriate postings.
  - We will report any evidence of fraud, corruption or misconduct to an appropriate person or authority.
- Commitment
    - Acknowledge that accepting office as governor involves the commitment of considerable amounts of time, effort and skills.
    - Become actively involved and accept fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and/or working groups.
    - Strive to attend all meetings and offer apologies in advance when unable to.
    - Get to know the school well and involve ourselves in school activities, where appropriate.
    - Visit the school, having arranged in advance with the staff and headteacher and in line with framework established by the governing board.
    - Consider individual and collective training and development needs, and undertake relevant training.
    - Support leadership development and succession planning within the school.
    - Prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand.
    - Attend relevant meetings promptly, regularly, and for the full time, unless exceptional circumstances prevail.
  - Relationships
    - Work as a team and promote effective and constructive working relationships with the headteacher, staff, parents local authority and any other relevant agencies within the community, acknowledging the time, effort and skills committed by those involved, and seek to develop such relationships.

- Enter into open, courteous and respectful communications with other governors and acknowledge all views.
  - Support the chair in ensuring appropriate conduct at meetings and all other times when in a governing body capacity.
  - Answer questions from other governors regarding our delegated functions and respond truthfully to any concerns expressed.
- Confidentiality
    - Observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside of school.
    - Exercise prudence when discussions regarding school business arise outside of a governing body meeting.
    - Details of any governing body vote will not be revealed.
    - We will, upon ceasing to be a governor, continue to work to the principles in this Code of Conduct, particularly those relating to confidentiality.
- Conflicts of interest
    - Any pecuniary or other business interest that the governor(s) have in connection with the governing board's business will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests (and, subsequently, in the minutes?), with the governor in questions offering to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time if any such conflicted matter arises.
    - Similarly, any personal interests, such as friend and family connections, will be declared and the governor(s) will leave the room.
- Breach of the code
    - Any allegation of a breach of this Code of Conduct 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 by the governing body.
    - If it is believed that the code has been breached, the issue must be raised 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.
    - In the event that it is believed to be the chair that has breached the code, another governor, such as vice chair, will investigate.
    - We are aware of the provisions of regulation 17 (1) of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 4 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachme>



[nt\\_data/file/270783/school\\_governance\\_regulations\\_2013\\_departmental\\_advice.pdf](https://www.data.gov.uk/data/file/270783/school_governance_regulations_2013_departmental_advice.pdf))

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

**The Governing Body of Brentnall Community Primary School adopted this code of practice on {date}.**

**Undertaking:**

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 say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the governing body, the headteacher or staff.

**Signed:**

**Printed Name:**

**Date:**

## Element D - High-level school performance indicators

High-level school performance indicators, encompassing all outcomes for an effective school, are used by governors to report annually to parents. They are linked to the high-level performance information that governors need to monitor the performance indicators. The performance indicators are agreed in detail between the governing body and the senior leaders, based on a shared vision of what the school is aiming to achieve.

School performance indicator	Example of performance information for measurement
Do learners at this school achieve to their potential?	KS2 numeracy and literary points score distribution Progress against appropriate measures (SEN) RAISEonline and Fischer Family Trust Data
Are learners at this school inspired by their teachers?	Raising attainment and increasing levels of progress? Parents ratings of how likely they would be to recommend the school? Ofsted data about teaching quality Objective surveys commissioned from an external provider?
Do learners enjoy coming to this school?	Attendance rates? (Is this applicable to primary?) Parent and learner surveys? Participation/attendance in after-school clubs?
Are relationships among learners good at the school?	To be decided?
Are learners at this school self-confident?	To be decided?
Do learners at this school have multiple opportunities to experience success?	Range of opportunities available at the school (music, drama, sport, dance, etc.) in addition to academic opportunities.
Does the school have good community relations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the school outward-facing in the community?</li> <li>Does it support the community, and does the community support it?</li> </ul>	To be decided?
Are learners taught in a healthy and safe environment?	Performance against 'Healthy Schools' criteria?

Not all of the performance measures are quantitative: some of the most important outcomes do not lend themselves to simple quantitative measurement. Outcomes are therefore monitored through a combination of narrative and quantitative measures. For some of the measures, there is limited external data to compare with

or use as benchmarks, so the school will learn from tracking own performance over time.

There is no statutory requirement for schools to report annually to parents, but the governors of Brentnall Primary School feel it is very good practice to do so. The performance indicators will form the basis for reporting to parents.

## **Appendix**

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

(taken from the Second Report of the parliamentary Committee on Standards in Public Life or "The Nolan Committee")

#### Selflessness

Holders of the 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### Leadership

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

The 7 principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, education, social and care services

The principles also apply to all those in other sectors that deliver public services.

They were first set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 and they are included in the [Ministerial code](#).

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