

# Code of Conduct

## Guiding Principles

*Those who are in charge of Catholic Schools are to ensure ---that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area.*

Canon of the Catholic Church

*A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints.*

Pope Benedict – The Big Assembly

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the Governing Body to properly carry out its work within this Catholic school and the wider community.

Governors have accepted responsibility to govern – not just in a school – but in a school with a distinct faith foundation and consequential responsibility. Adherence to the Code of Conduct will assist governors in that great responsibility they carry and which is reflected in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in these words:

*Parents are the principal and first educators of their children.*

So, all schools exist to help parents to fulfil this duty and privilege of providing education. A short answer to the question “Why have Catholic schools and colleges?” is “so that Catholic parents can have the best opportunities for enabling their children to grow to responsible adulthood in the knowledge and love of God and neighbour” or, putting it another way, “to give their children the best opportunities to develop a deeply-rooted and fully mature Catholic faith and life”.

## Core Strategic Functions

The Governing Body has the following core strategic functions:

**1. To establish the strategic direction of the school, by:**

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

**2. To ensure accountability, by:**

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets

- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

**3. To ensure financial probity, by:**

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

## Commitments and Undertakings

### 1. Roles & responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Body and the role of the headteacher.
- 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 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 context of a Governing Body meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and insofar as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance 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, promote 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.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher.

### 2. 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 every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend, we will 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 staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Body and agreed with the headteacher.



- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and we will undertake relevant training.

### **3. Relationships**

- We will 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 headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

### **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 Body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote.

### **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 Governing Body 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

- 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.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this Code of Conduct, another governor (such as the Vice Chair, will investigate.
- We understand that any allegation of a material 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 from the Governing Body.
- We are aware of the provisions of [Part 3 of the School Governance \(Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#), as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of [Schedule 4 to the School Governance \(Constitution\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) relating to disqualification from the role of school governor (held as a separate document).



## Declaration of Consent

**The Governing Body of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School adopted this code of practice on [date].**

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

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: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....



## Appendix 1: The 5 Ws on the basis of which we self-evaluate (Section 48 Inspection)

**Welcome: Come**

We **WELCOME** all who come into this school in the name of Jesus himself.

**Word: Talk**

We **WELCOME** all who come into this school in the name of Jesus himself.

**Witness: Work**

We **WITNESS** Christ in the way we live our lives, form relationships and conduct ourselves.

**Welfare: Walk**

We make the **WELFARE** of all in our school, community and God-given world our concern.

**Worship: Pray**

We **WORSHIP** God Our Father in prayer, in action and in the way we live our lives.

## Appendix 2: 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.)*

### **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.

### **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