



Date: Autumn 2023

# Code Of Conduct for Governors

Watcombe Primary School



TORBAY  
COUNCIL



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# WATCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Code of Conduct for Governors Policy:

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This policy was reviewed by Governors at the full governing body meeting on:

Autumn 2023

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This Code has been developed using best practice in other LA's. It provides a statement of the broad principles against which our Governors could operate.

### **General**

The **Head Teacher** is responsible for the day to day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation of the curriculum. The Head is the

governors" chief professional adviser, obliged by law to give them the information they ask for to help them carry out their legal duties.

**Governors** have a responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.

"The governing body shall conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school."

School Standards and Framework Act, 1988

The *Governing Body* will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its three key roles:

- to provide a strategic view of where the school is heading;
  - to act as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the school; - to hold the school to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of education it provides.
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- All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is to represent the community which the school serves.
  - Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
  - In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
  - Governors should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools.
  - Governors should encourage open government and should be seen to do so.
  - Governors do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual governors have power to speak or act for the school only when it is designated specifically to them by the whole governing body.

### **Commitment**

- Being a governor involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on the governing body of a school.
- All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept a fair share of the responsibilities including service on the

governing body committees and as "named governors" with specific roles/duties.

- Regular attendance at meetings of both the full governing body and committees is essential.
- Governors should know the school well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in school activities.
- Governors should ensure that Standards Fund or other designated resources are used to support governor training and their continuing professional development.
- All new governors must complete an induction course.

### **Relationships**

- Governors should strive to operate as a Team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the staff, parents, the LEA, their local community and the Association of Governing Bodies.
- Link Governors should develop effective relationships with the LEA and review and reflect on current needs.
- Governors should develop an open and honest relationship with the Head Teacher and all school staff.

### **Confidentiality**

- Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
- Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- Governors should exercise caution when responding where the discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body. They should encourage the issues to be brought to the attention of the governing body.

### **Conduct**

- Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.

- Governors should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically asked/delegated to do so.
- All visits to school should be undertaken within a framework which has been established by the governing body and agreed with the Head Teacher following consultation with staff. (See "Visiting the School").
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should refer to the school's Compliments and Complaints Policy for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community should reflect this.
- Any pecuniary interest that a governor may have in connection with the governing body's business must be recorded in the register of pecuniary interests.
- Where an interest is declared, the governor must leave the meeting while a relevant item is under discussion.
- Governor training and development is important and resources are available to support this. It benefits the school and individual governors, and can help to develop effective teamwork and contributes to school improvement. Governors are encouraged to undertake training to further their individual interests within the governing body and the work of the governing body as a whole.

### **Mentoring**

An experienced governor who acts as a mentor to new governors can provide support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the governing body. Governors should be prepared to act as mentors, as required which will supplement the induction support through the LA and the school.

### **Meetings**

Individual governors do not have any authority in school. It is the collective decisions of all the governors together that carry authority. The activities that governors undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for the times when the governing body „goes live“ – in a meeting.

It follows that if a governing body is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial. Below is a suggested „Meetings Charter“. If the Chair, the Head, the Clerk and all the governors subscribe to, and implement, a charter such as this, the

governing body will be giving itself the best chance of coming to informed, collective decisions.

### **Meetings Charter**

**As a governor I expect:**

- people to attend regularly and be punctual;
- an agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before the meeting;
- an agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;
- a Chair who 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 contributions and keeps discussions to the point;
- my contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;
- the decision making process to be quite clear;
- governors to work together and to take others views into consideration;
- governors to take collective responsibility for decisions;
- minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

**Others can expect me to:**

- attend regularly and be punctual;
- read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;
- bring my papers to the meeting;
- make relevant and positive contributions;
- listen to and consider what other people want to say;
- accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.
- add items to the agenda through the Chair or Clerk (at least 2 weeks before the governors meeting).

**Chairs of Governors and Chairs of Committees:**

**When I Chair a meeting I will endeavour to:**

- ensure the meeting starts and ends on a timely basis;
- ensure the agenda is adhered to;
- encourage all governors to contribute to discussions; ensure that the meeting is effectively clerked.

### Visiting the School

Many governors worry about making visits to School. The purpose of this section is to suggest how a visit could be conducted in a way that allows Governors and staff to gain the most from the visit. Effective and focused visits can provide the governing body with a strategy to help carry out its responsibilities for monitoring school policies.

### Building Relationships

- School visits by Governors are an essential part of the Governor's role.
- Visits should be a good use of everyone's time – valued by both Governors and staff. Good visits are productive and make a significant contribution to the development planning process. Each visit should have a clear purpose and help to develop professional relationships within the school.

### Before the Visit

- Clarify the purpose of the visit with the Head and the School Leadership Team (SLT)
- Discuss and agree an agenda with the Head Teacher and the SLT well in advance. Make sure the date chosen is suitable for the purpose identified. Discuss with the Head Teacher if any supporting information is available – Ofsted report, Development Plan, performance data, relevant lesson plans.

### During the Visit

- Stick to the timetable – but be flexible if required. Remember why you are there. Don't lose sight of the purpose of the visit and keep focused on the theme of your observation.

- Decide with the teacher how you will be introduced and what your role in the classroom will be.
- Try to get involved. Avoid being conspicuous!
- Observe - discreetly. Remember that note taking is disconcerting for everyone - staff, students and Governors.
- Talk to the teacher - show interest. **Be courteous, not critical.**
- Make time during the visit to talk to people and to gather your thoughts.

**After the Visit**

- Discuss your observations with the Head and the SLT. Use this opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about.
- Make your notes as soon as possible after the observation - whilst they are fresh in your mind.
- Sleep on it - reflect on what you have seen.
- Type up your report on the attached form. Circulate it to the Head and the SLT for approval. An agreed report should be signed by the Governor, Head and the SLT and filed in the admin office.

**Reporting Back to the Governing Body**

An electronic copy of the report should be circulated to the Chair for inclusion into the next full Governors Meeting.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Governor responsible for:</b>	
<b>Visiting:</b>	
<b>Purpose of visit:</b>	
<b>Link to School Improvement Priorities:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<b>Minutes of meeting:</b>	



<b>Key issues arising / future actions:</b>	
<b>Date of next meeting:</b>	
<b>Impact statement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

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