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1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct is to be used as a basis for clarifying the behaviour and conduct expected of all school governors. Whilst recognising that every governing board works and operates differently according to the type of school, there is nevertheless a general expectation of the standard of behaviour that is acceptable.

There is no statutory framework for enforcing such a Code of Conduct. However, The School Governance (Constitution) (England) regulations 2012 enables the possible removal of governors where behaviour is unacceptable. In adopting this Code of Conduct governing bodies are setting their own standards of behaviour and it is hoped that governors will be mindful of this Code of Conduct in all their actions.

This Code is based on guidance given by the Department for Education (DfE). Their website address should you want more information is www.education.gov.uk

Governing bodies who adopt this Code of Conduct will need to ensure it is given to all members and that new members are supplied a copy. The Code of Conduct will be reviewed on the date given above.

 <p>Woodford County High School for Girls</p> <p>SCHOOL POLICY</p> <p>Governors' Code of Conduct Policy</p>	Effective Date: 24 th September 2024	
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2. In carrying out our responsibilities we will show

Good commitment by:

- 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 Board, attend regularly and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development.

Good relationships by:

- We will strive to work as a team.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with our head teacher, staff, parents, the LA, other relevant agencies and the community.

3. In carrying out our responsibilities we are committed to the following:

Aims & Standards

- The purpose of our governing board is to help the school provide the best possible education for its pupils. To be achieved by strongly focussing on:
 - Setting the vision and strategic direction of the school
 - Holding the Headteacher to account for its educational performance
 - Ensuring financial resources are well spent.
- Behaving 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.
- Being accountable to those who established and fund the school and also to parents and the wider community for the way we carry out our functions.
- Acting at all times in accordance with the requirements laid down in Acts of Parliament, statutory regulations and the school’s articles of Government.
- Acting, at all times fairly, without prejudice, and in accordance with the principles laid down by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (“Nolan Committee”). These are attached as Appendix A.

Collective Responsibility

- The Governing Board is a corporate entity and acts as a group. No one category of governor has any right to act individually, except when the Governing Board has given delegated authority to do so (or when the Chair of Governors has to take urgent action).
- The strength of a Governing Board lies in the talents and commitment of its members, and in their ability to work together as a team for the good of the school. Every governor has an equal right to participate and to state his or her views. No governor has the right to expect preferential treatment because of his or her status on this or any other board or group.

- Governors are elected or appointed by different groups – including parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and the LA. Although elected or chosen by other groups each governor has a responsibility to make up his/her own mind about issues that are considered by the Governing Board. Once decisions are made by the Governing Board, individual governors are bound by them and are expected to support and abide by them.
- In situations where a governor feels their ability to be impartial is challenged by being a member of another body (such as an elected member or member of staff) they will discuss this with the whole Governing Board and be clear with the Governing Board what links they will make between the two bodies.
- Governors should recognise and support the head teacher with his/her responsibilities for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and for advising on and implementing the Governing Board's strategic framework.
- Governors have a responsibility to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as they have responsibility for staff, will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer. Concerns about individual members of staff will be dealt with through the Head teacher and not aired publicly.
- Governors have a duty to get to know the school and respond positively where possible to opportunities to involve themselves in school activities

Conduct

- Governors will treat each other with respect and courtesy and will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will not bring the school into disrepute.
- All governors will encourage the open expression of views at all our meetings, but we accept collective responsibility for the decisions that are made by the Governing Board or its committees. This includes times when we may individually disagree with the decision but the majority of the Governing Board support it.
- Governors will only speak outside of the meetings on behalf of the Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so. We accept that this is with the exception of the Chair who we accept sometimes has to do this on behalf of the Governing Board but will then report back to the Governing Board after the event.
- Governors will not become involved in individual complaints or disagreements that parents/carers have with the school except where authorised by the Governing Board to do so (e.g. when asked to investigate a parental complaint). If anyone approaches us with a complaint, we will advise them to contact the school and follow the Complaints Procedure that has been adopted by the Governing Board.
- In discharging our responsibilities and actions as governors we will always be mindful of the responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school and as governors our actions will be seen as representing the whole Governing Board of the school.
- All governor visits to the school will be notified to the Head teacher in advance



Respecting confidentiality

- The Governing Board decides if an item for discussion is confidential and all governors are expected to abide by that decision. Individual governors are expected to respect that confidentiality and not disclose information deemed as confidential in any other forum.
- All reports to the Governing Board and its committees are public documents after the meeting has considered them and must be available at the school to anyone wishing to view them unless the governing board decides they are confidential.
- All governors regardless of whether they hold another office (such as an elected member or member of staff) will still respect that confidentiality.

4. The Governing Board will remain effective by:

- Reviewing our practices and membership from time to time
- Publishing an annual statement to explain how we have fulfilled our responsibilities.
- Ensuring that we have a high-quality professional clerk

5. General Data Protection Regulation 2018. (GPDR)

In the undertaking of their duties, governors are required to comply with the requirement of the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018. (GPDR)

- Governors should use their assigned WCHS e-mail accounts for correspondence on any school business
- Governors are provided with relevant documents prior to each meeting. All such documents must be left with the Clerk after the meeting for shredding. If a governor is unable to attend a meeting it is their responsibility to shred the associated paperwork.
- Governors should delete electronic copy of paperwork associated with meetings when it has served its purpose. (Governors are reminded that they can access copies of past agendas and minutes in the secure 'OneDrive' Governor folder in office 365). There is no need to store such information on personal computers or on home devices.

6. In being a governor, we acknowledge that:

In some circumstances if my conduct falls below the required standards the Governing Board may have the power to:

Suspend

- If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a governor, we will do so by following the Procedures Regulations so as to ensure a fair and objective process.

Remove

- We recognise that removing a governor from office is a last resort, and that it is the appointing bodies which have the power to remove those they appoint.
- If the need arises to use the sanction of removing a governor, we will do so by following the Constitution Regulations so as to ensure a fair and objective process.



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Appendix A - Principles of Public Life

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

Governors hold a public office and are expected to abide at all times by the principles governing those in public life. These principles apply at all times and should also guide the work and operation of the Governing Board.

These principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take all decisions 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 friends.

(In the case of school governors this means not seeking to pursue a policy or course of action solely because it benefits family or friends and recognising that the reason for holding office is for the benefit of all the children at the school not one particular group in isolation. In cases where a governor has a pecuniary or direct interest, they should declare this and not take part in the decision-making process).

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making 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 this.

(Governing bodies should be mindful of the reasons for determining information as confidential in cases other than when individuals are named or directly affected by any others in or at the school).

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 public interest.

Leadership

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