

Code of Conduct for Shap C of E Primary School.

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing board to carry out its work properly within the schools and the community.

The Code applies to all the Governors of Shap C of E Primary School.

We will focus on our core governance functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

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

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Head Teacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Head Teacher
- Engaging with stakeholders and ensuring their voices are heard
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Approving the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.

Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard, by

- Engaging with stakeholders
- Evaluating engagement to inform and identify strengths and areas of improvement
- Ensuring the engagement is used to inform challenge and questions of school leaders
- Allowing easy, clear access to the appropriate Governor documents

As individuals board members, we agree to:

Fulfil our Role & Responsibilities

- We will accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in the day-to-day management.
- 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.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- We will work collectively for the benefit of the school and consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.

- Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life, or may put pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- 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.
- When making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- 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 will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role:

- 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 do so.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all relevant papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- 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 arranged in advance with the Head Teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor.
- We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.

Build and maintain relationships:

- We will develop effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, staff and parents, the local authority, other relevant agencies and the community.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.

Respect 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 not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
- We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interests and be transparent:

- We will declare any business personal or other interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business, and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- If a conflicted matter arises at a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting of the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will act as a governor, not as a representative of any group.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- We accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the Department for Education's national database (Get Information about Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

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 board will only use suspension/removal 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, another governing board member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

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).

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful

Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Adopted by Shap C of E Primary School Governing Board on 15 November 2023

Signed  (Chair of board)

The governing board of Shap C of E Primary School agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full governing board.