

## **The Elton High School Governing Body Code of Conduct**

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Governing Body of The Elton High School will operate. Governors will abide by the Seven Nola Principles of Public Life. These are:

- Integrity – avoiding placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try to inappropriately influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other benefits for ourselves, family or friends.
- Objectivity – we will act and take decisions impartially, fairly, on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability – we are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to scrutiny as necessary.
- Openness – we will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- Honesty – we will be truthful.
- Leadership – we will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

**As Governors of The Elton High School, we will focus on our strategic functions:**

1. Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including agreeing the School improvement strategy with priorities and targets.
2. Ensuring accountability, by holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its students and the performance of staff. Additionally, Governors should contribute to School self evaluation.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent and decisions made represent value for money. This will include setting and monitoring the School budget and ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.
4. Engaging with stakeholders and ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

**As individuals on the Governing Body, we agree to:**

**Fulfil our role and responsibilities.**

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions of determining, monitoring and reviewing School policies, plans and procedures.
2. We recognise the Headteacher, in consultation with School staff, is responsible for the implementation of policy and day to day management of the School.
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our School.
4. We shall fully co-operate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as DBS checks.
5. We agree to adhere to School policies and procedures, as set out by the relevant governing documents and the law, ensuring the School meets statutory responsibilities.
6. We will work collectively for the welfare of the students and wider benefit of the School.
7. All Governors have equal status, regardless of their method of appointment or category.

8. We will be candid but constructive and respectful, when holding senior leaders to account.
9. We will consider how our decisions may affect others schools and the local community.
10. We will stand by the decisions that we or our delegated agents make, as a collective and will not speak against majority decisions outside Governing Body meetings.
11. The Governing Body and individual Governors, have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
12. The Governing Body should encourage open and transparent government, except where rules of confidentiality or data protection apply.
13. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place students at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of relevant authorities. The Seven Principles of Public Life are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
14. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
15. We will strive to uphold the School's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).

**Demonstrate our commitment to the role.**

1. Accepting the role of Governor, involves a commitment of time and energy. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body and accept our fair share of our responsibilities, serving on Committees or working groups, where required. The Governing Body will ensure that responsibilities are shared amongst all Governors.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend, explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will get to know the School well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in School activities.
4. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
5. We will visit the School and when doing so, will make arrangements with relevant staff, in advance and observe School protocols, as approved by the Governing Body and Headteacher.
6. When visiting the School in a personal capacity (ie as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this Code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
8. We will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the School and Governing Body.
9. We will promote and secure the welfare and well being of students and staff, as far as possible.
10. We will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (eg Safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

**Build and maintain relationships**

1. The Governing Body should strive to operate as a team, in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.

2. We will develop effective working relationships with School leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
3. We will respect the remit of and engage constructively with, relevant authorities and other schools.
4. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with Governing Body members and staff, both inside and outside meetings.
5. We will support the Chair in his/her role in leading the Governing Body and ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and other times.
6. We are prepared to answer queries from Governors, in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed. We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills, that have been committed to any delegated function, by those involved.

#### **Respect confidentiality**

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of the School, when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, students or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately, either in paper or electronic form.
4. We will exercise the greatest prudence, at all times, when discussions regarding School business arise outside a Governing Body meeting. This duty is of particular importance in relation to potentially contentious issues.
5. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

#### **Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent**

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the Governing Body's business and these will be recorded in the Register of Business Interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty, at the start of any meeting, should the need arise. All potential conflicts of interest must be declared to the Governing Body as appropriate.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the School's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the School as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, the following information will be published on the School's website: our full names, date of appointment, term of office, roles on the Governing Body, attendance record, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Governor and the body responsible for our appointment.

#### **Conduct of Governors**

1. Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective decisions.
2. Governors should allow others to express their views and opinions, without interruption.
3. Governors should only speak on behalf of the Governing Body, when they have been authorised to do so.

4. In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the School, Governors should follow policy and procedures established by the Governing Body.
5. Governors should follow agreed procedures when wishing to make critical comment on any aspect of the School.
6. Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the School; their actions in meetings and within the School and community should reflect this.
7. All referrals from third parties to any individual Governor, should be referred to the Chair of Governors, unless it refers to the Chair. In this case, it should then be referred to the Vice-Chair of Governors.
8. If we believe this Code of Conduct has been breached, the issue should be raised with the Chair of Governors, who will investigate. The Governing Body will only use suspension or removal from the Governing Body, as a last resort. Resolution of any difficulties or disputes, should be sought in constructive ways, prior to this step. We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this Code, will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions. Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this Code, another Governor, such as the Vice-Chair will investigate.

Signed

Chair of Governors  
March 2023