



# Atherstone & Bedworth Heath Nursery Schools & Warwickshire Early Years Hub

## Code of Conduct for Governors Sept 2023-2024

### Aim of Our Code of Conduct

At Atherstone and Bedworth Heath Nursery School Federation, we recognise and value the effort taken by members of the Governing Board who contribute towards our school. We encourage your assistance and acknowledge that many school activities and processes would be at risk if it were not for your help. As a result, we want to make sure that your time spent as part of the Governing Board is productive and enjoyable.

This Code of Conduct outlines what is expected from all members of the Governing Board and is aligned with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#), which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour.

### Core Functions of Governance

Members of the governing board will focus on the three core functions of governance:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

The Governing Board of Atherstone and Bedworth Heath Nursery School recognise the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

The board will ensure it understands and meets the following key features of effective governance:

1. Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy
2. Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance
3. People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
4. Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
5. Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
6. Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance

All governors are required to fulfil their duties in line with the law, the '[Governance handbook](#)' and '[The Seven Principles of Public Life](#)'. In addition, all governors will be expected to be:

- Committed
- Confident
- Curious
- Challenging
- Collaborative
- Critical
- Creative

**As individual governors, we agree to:**

**Fulfil our roles and responsibilities:**

1. Accept that our role is strategic and, therefore, focus on the core functions of the governing board rather than the day-to-day management of the school.
2. Develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
3. Adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. Work collectively for the benefit of the school.
5. Be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
6. Consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
7. Stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
8. Speak up and bring to the attention of the relevant authorities any actions or decisions which conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk.
9. Only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
10. Fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
11. Follow established procedures when making or responding to complaints.
12. Strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
13. 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**

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
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 arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol. Visits may be in the format of face to face meetings, Microsoft Teams meetings.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, 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.

## **Behave appropriately**

1. We will pay due regard to their position of public office and adhere to 'The Seven Principles of Public Life.'

Selflessness                    **We will act solely in terms of the public interest.**

Integrity                      **We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.**

Objectivity                    **We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and 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 the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.**

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. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.**

2. We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills demonstrated in the execution of delegated functions by other members of the board.
3. We will take into account any concerns expressed about their delegated function and be prepared to answer queries from other governors regarding their role.
4. We will act in the best interests of the school and its pupils; governors will not act in a manner that will bring the school into disrepute.

## **Build and maintain relationships**

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings
3. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally

## **Respect confidentiality**

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. 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 board'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.
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 as a governor, not as a representative of any group.
6. 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 website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information about Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

## **Ceasing to be a Governor**

1. We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after we leave office.

## **Breaching the Code**

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

If a member of the Governing Board breaches this Code of Conduct, the matter will be raised with the Chair of Governors, who will investigate the concern. In the event that it is believed the Chair of Governors has breached this Code of Conduct, another member of the Governing Board will undertake the investigation.

The Governing Board will attempt to resolve any difficulties or disputes in a constructive manner before suspension or removal is considered. The Governing Board will only suspend or remove a governor from their post as a last resort. If the need arises to suspend a governor, the Governing Board will ensure a fair and objective process by implementing the following procedure:

- A resolution to remove a governor from office will be included on an agenda and circulated to all members of the governing board.
- A meeting will be held and the resolution to remove the governor from office will be fully explained.
- Governors will give due and careful consideration to the reasons given to remove the governor from office.
- The governor whom it has been proposed to remove from the governing board will be given the opportunity to make a statement in response to the resolution to remove them from office.

- Within 14 days of the first meeting, a second meeting will be held and an item specifying that the governing board will confirm their decision included on the agenda.
- Any elected staff or parent governor who has been disqualified from their role and removed from office will be disqualified from serving as a governor and holding office for a period of five years. This period is taken from the date immediately after the day they were disqualified from their elected role. Given the consequence of the five-year disqualification period, the governing board’s power to remove an elected parent or staff governor will only be used in exceptional and serious circumstances which may include the following:
  - Serious misconduct
  - Repeated serious incompetence
  - Engagement in conduct which aims to undermine fundamental British values
  - Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the governing board
  - Actions that are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the school

If an investigation is needed, the Chair of Governors is advised to inform Governor Services for advice and support.

A governor who has been removed from the governing board has the right of appeal. The governor should exercise their right of appeal by writing to the School Governance Professional / Clerk to Governors within **10 working days** of their removal from the governing board, making clear the reasons for their appeal.

On receipt of an appeal, the governing board will establish an independent appeal panel. The appeal panel will comprise of a panel of three governors and membership may include a governor from another school or an appropriate representative from the Local Authority.

If a governor is removed from the governing board, the Chair of Governors must inform Governor Services of the investigation and the outcome.

**Monitoring and Review**

We agree that this Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually, and it will be endorsed by the Full Governing Board.

By signing this code of conduct I am agreeing to the terms within

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**Signature**

**Print Name**

**Date:**