

Horniman Primary School Code of Conduct for Governors

The role of the governing body

The governing body is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well being.

The governing body:

- Sets the strategic direction of the school by:
 - Setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
 - Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
 - Setting challenging goals and targets
 - Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure

- Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:
 - The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
 - Progress towards targets
 - The implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
 - The budget and the staffing structure

- Ensures accountability by:
 - signing off the school's own self-evaluation report
 - responding to Ofsted reports when necessary
 - holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school
 - ensuring parents, carers and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
 - making available information to the community

- Appoints and conducts the appraisal of the headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the governing body.

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The role of a governor

In law the governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority co-opted, foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

The Governing body accepts the following principles and procedures:

General

- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect members of the school community and other schools.

- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will attend full governing body and relevant committee meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time and send apologies in advance with reasons when we are unable to do so.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups and visits to the school.
- 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, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing body, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- We also accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the Department for Education's national database for governors (Edubase).

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with our head teacher, staff, parents, carers, the Local Authority, other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the governing body in meetings and from our visits to school as governors.
- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the governing body, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the school arises outside the governing body.

Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means we will not speak out against decisions, in public or private, outside the governing body.
- We will abide by the agreed protocol for meetings.
- We will observe the same principles of courtesy, confidentiality and collective responsibility when communicating online as we would in other forms of interaction.
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

- We understand that we should not get involved in or know details of individual cases such as complaints, grievances or disciplinary issues (except in carrying out our statutory function as governors in formal procedures) but should refer individuals to the Headteacher or other person or agency as appropriate.
- Our visits to school will be undertaken within the framework established by the governing body, in agreement with the head teacher and staff.
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.

Suspension and Removal

- 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.
- 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.

The Governing Body of Horniman Primary School adopted this code of practice on 16 November 2016.

Governors will sign the Code when first appointed and if/when their terms of office are renewed.

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).

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act 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 their friends.

Integrity

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

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public 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.

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 the public interest.

Leadership

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