



## Code of Conduct for the School Governors

| Originator | Reviewed by | Date of Review | Approved by | Date of Approval | Next Review Date | Website |
|------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|---------|
| School     |             |                | Board       | 05/09/22         | September 2023   | Yes     |

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## ***“Excellence Every Day”***

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to make sure that all our students, regardless of their circumstances, discover their personal best and thrive academically, individually and socially.

We are relentless in driving high expectations and make no apology for ensuring high standards across the school. We will continually ensure every student achieves excellent results, with high-quality teaching and a first-class curriculum, underpinned by outstanding cultural capital experiences and exceptional pastoral care.

### **Values**

- **Excellence**
  - We strive for greatness in everything we set our minds to. We endeavour to do our very best and excel in all aspects of school life.
- **Respect**
  - We treat others in our diverse, inclusive community as we wish to be treated. We acknowledge individual differences yet join together in an uncompromising respect for each other.
- **Responsibility**
  - We understand that we own our actions. We work hard to understand our emotions and manage them effectively, whilst ensuring we put any mistakes right.
- **Resilience**
  - When we encounter challenges, we persevere and bounce back. We see setbacks as stepping stones to success and always give 100%.
- **Ambition**
  - Our ambition knows no limits. We will push ourselves to be the best version of ourselves to ensure success.



## Code of Conduct for the School Governors

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from the school governors and trustees in order for our governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.
- 1.2 It is based on the National Governors' Association Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The DfE has high expectations of governing bodies. They are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For maintained schools this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'.

### 3. The National Framework

- 3.1 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).
- 3.2 **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.
- 3.3 **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.
- 3.4 **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.
- 3.5 **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.



- 3.6 **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.
- 3.7 **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.
- 3.8 **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

#### **4. The Board of Governors' Core Strategic Function**

4.1 The governing board has the following core strategic functions:

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

4.2 Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

4.3 Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

#### **5. Our Agreement**

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:



## 5.1 Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the headteacher.
- We review our Scheme of Delegation annually.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We always aim to move towards consensus, but there will be occasions where it will be necessary to take a vote. The main arguments on either side will be recorded impersonally. We remember to ask ourselves the question: “How will this decision benefit the education of the pupils of the school?” and we work fairly for the good of children from all backgrounds.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will trust each other not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- 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 including demonstrating respect, kindness and understanding
- We will encourage open government, taking decisions in a transparent manner and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- 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.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will act calmly and rationally and follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher with fairness and courage.
- We will evaluate our organisation and performance as a governing body regularly to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness. We will also conduct regular skills audits to ensure our continued fitness for purpose.

## 5.2 Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will participate in any induction process offered by our governing body.



- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board with optimism, integrity, objectivity and kindness and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings, being conscientious and dutiful; and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- 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 to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board and agreed with the headteacher.
- We recognise the importance of our individual and collective skills which we use with wisdom in the best interests of the school.
- We will consider seriously with honesty and courage our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We are prepared to take on additional responsibility as required in order to ensure effective succession planning.
- 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, along with all other information required by law.

### 5.3 Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- We will be courageous in holding one another to account, 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 provide honest and constructive feedback with kindness to the chair regarding his/her performance of the role and accept feedback on our own performance.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and consider any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships through positive



leadership with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

#### 5.4 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 be trustworthy and reliable at all times
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We understand that in line with accountability and openness all reports to and minutes of the governing body, or its committees, are public papers after the meeting has considered them and are made available at the school to anyone wishing to inspect them, unless we decide they should be confidential.
- We will exercise great caution when using electronic communication including social media in relation to governance matters. We will not mention school business or the names of individuals on sites such as Facebook.
- When we resign from the Governing Body (for whatever reason) we will return to the school all governing body paperwork and delete any governing body electronic documents held by us personally
- We will continue to observe complete confidentiality, as outlined above, beyond our term of office

#### 5.5 Conflicts of Interest

- We will demonstrate selflessness and integrity by recording any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board'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.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.



## **6. Breach of this code of conduct**

6.1 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.

6.2 Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## **7. Further information**

7.1 The Board of Governors has also adopted in full the following 'Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education'.

### **The Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education**

The Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, it is not about the words but about supporting a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.

1. Selflessness School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
2. Integrity School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
3. Objectivity School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.
4. Accountability School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty School and college leaders should be truthful.





7. Leadership School and college leaders 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. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

- a. **Trust:** *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*  
We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.
- b. **Wisdom:** *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*  
We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.
- c. **Kindness:** *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper*  
We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.
- d. **Justice:** *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*  
We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.
- e. **Service:** *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*  
We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.
- f. **Courage:** *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people*  
We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.
- g. **Optimism:** *leaders are positive and encouraging*  
Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.



## 7. Confirmation of Agreement

7.1 This Code of Conduct was agreed by the governing body of the John of Gaunt School on 5 September 2022 at which time the governors in office were:

| Name              | Signature | Governor category | Term of office expires on |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Toby Corden       |           | Appointed         | 05/09/2025                |
| Daniela Coy       |           | Co-opted          | 04/09/2026                |
| Glyn Coy          |           | Co-opted          | 08/07/2026                |
| Kevin Eames       |           | Appointed         | 21/10/2022                |
| Pete Gear         |           | Appointed         | 05/11/2025                |
| Andrew Hawkins    |           | Appointed         | 07/07/2023                |
| Sarah Marsh       |           | Parent            | 06/09/2024                |
| Amanda McClean    |           | Parent            | 06/09/2024                |
| Sophia Oleszynski |           | Appointed         | 27/03/2026                |
| Ben Pope          |           | Staff             | 05/12/2025                |
| Gemma Pugh        |           | Appointed         | 27/03/2026                |
| Ben Saghiri       |           | Appointed         | 05/09/2025                |
| Martin Sandford   |           | Appointed         | 05/09/2025                |
| Jo Trigg          |           | LA                | 06/09/2024                |
| David Whewell     |           | Appointed         | 07/07/2023                |
| Matthew Woodville |           | Headteacher       |                           |

7.2 This code will remain in place unless and until it is superseded by a vote of the full governing body of The John of Gaunt School.