



St Sebastian's RC Primary School

CES Model Code of Conduct for Governors

This code of conduct has been approved and adopted by the governing body for the use of all governors on:

This will be reviewed: December 2024

Signed by Chair of Governors: Zoe Ogden, 10.10.2023

- This document will be available to view on the school's website.
- All governors are required to sign an undertaking which can be found overleaf

As a member of the Governing Body of the school I commit to, I:

- Will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school
- Will not act in any way that is detrimental and/or prejudicial to the interests of the Catholic education in the Diocese and the school
- Have read, understood and will adhere to this Code of Conduct and to the declaration in Appendix I: The Nolan Principles
- Have read and understood any Diocesan and legal criteria for appointment and continued eligibility as a governor
- Can confirm to the best of my ability I am eligible as a governor
- Declare that I am not disqualified by law from appointment or eligibility as a governor
- Agree to DBS checks and any other relevant checks being conducted that may be required by law or good practice
- Understand that any refusal to do so may result in the termination of any appointment

Signed by the Governor: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Type of Governor: _____

- Acceptance to the Code of Conduct is required by signature annually from every Governor at the beginning of each academic year
- Signed copies of this code from each Governor should be retained by the Clerk

The Role of the Governing Body

As a Governing Body, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that we comply with our legal and canonical duty to ensure that the Catholic character of the school is preserved and developed and that this duty permeates everything that we do.

We understand that Foundation Governors are required, at the cornerstone of their role, to ensure this objective is achieved. However, **all** Governors have a duty to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school in order to fulfil the objects set out in its governing documents.

Our Three Core Strategic Functions:

In accordance with our legal obligations, we endeavour to operate at a strategic level, leaving the school's senior leadership responsible and accountable for the operational day to day running of the school. It is by achieving these aims that we can be sure that our school has effective governance. Therefore, our core strategic functions are to:

1. Ensure clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Hold the senior leadership to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the school and its pupils; and for the internal organisation. Management and control of the school including performance management of staff; and
3. Oversee the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

We understand that the Catholic church expects Catholic schools to promote and uphold high standards, including academic standards as an integral part of its educational vision for the holistic formation of children and young people.

As Governors we agree to our collective responsibilities as follows:

- Preserving and developing the Catholic character of the school and this responsibility will permeate throughout all our actions within, and through all aspects of, the school and the local community
- Ensuring that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed, which includes the provisions of Canon Law*
- Ensuring the Curriculum Directory and Bishops' statements of Religious Education; and
- Any Diocesan directives relating to schools are adhered to

As Governors we agree to:

- Conduct the school in accordance with its instrument of Governance and in particular its ethos statement
- Support and implement the policies and procedures of the diocese {and religious order}, including the Diocesan Bishop's policies on education, including Religious Education, any admissions guidance issued by the Diocese, and the expectations of the Diocesan Bishops issued collectively, specifically the Bishops' memorandum on the appointment of teachers in Catholic schools
- Respond to the needs of the Catholic community as a whole as represented by the Diocesan Bishop, complying in all respects with Diocesan requirements, always with due care and diligence
- Protect, promote and serve the Diocese in the ministry of our role as governors faithfully and in particular in compliance with Diocesan protocols for a committed working relationship between the Diocese and the school
- Consider not only the interests of the school, but the interests of other Catholic schools, colleges, academies and Catholic education throughout the Diocese
- Consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools, colleges and academies
- Attend relevant training including Diocesan training; Governor induction and CPD, as required by the Diocese
- Understand the purpose of the Governing Body and our role as Governors and the role of the Senior Leadership Team
- Accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore will only speak on behalf of the Governing Body when we have been specifically asked to do so
- Accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Body meetings
- Maintain our 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
- Encourage transparency and acting appropriately
- We will undertake the role, regardless of our personal interests and with no attempt to benefit individually by easier access to school staff, the Local Authority or the Salford Diocese. Our sole interest is the education of all children within the school we support in an equitable fashion, without fear or favour.

*This means the Canon law of the Catholic church from time to time in force, which includes the 1983 Code of Canon Law, and any particular law such as legislation of the Bishops' Conference, directives of the Diocesan bishop and legislation of the school's religious order {if any}

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body, accepting our fair share of responsibilities
- We will get to know the school well and positively respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities
- We will visit the school, with visits arranged in advance, completing a Record of Visit
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for continuous training and development as required by the Diocesan education service, and will undertake that relevant training and any mandatory training as may be required by law
- We accept that in the interests of transparency only relevant personal information will be published on the school's website We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work on the Governing Body, accepting our fair share of responsibilities
- We will commit to attend all meetings. When we cannot we will explain in advance why we are unable to. In the case of an emergency contact with the Chair of Governors will be made
- We will evaluate our effectiveness as a Governing Body by way of completing a skills audit and a self-evaluation form on an annual basis
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for continuous training and development as required by the Diocesan education service, and will undertake that relevant training and any mandatory training as may be required by law

Relationships

In all our relationships we shall exercise stewardship and draw on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ in that:

- All relationships will be built on the core values of the Gospel based on the Beatitudes summarised as: faithfulness and integrity; dignity and compassion; humility and gentleness; truth and justice; forgiveness and mercy; purity and holiness; tolerance and peace and service and sacrifice
- We will comply with Diocesan protocols for a committed working relationship between the Diocese and the school
- We will ensure that we continually communicate with and, where appropriate, seek support and guidance from our Diocesan education service
- 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 ensuring appropriate conduct both in meetings and at all times
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account 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 with the Diocese, Parish, the Senior Leadership Team, staff, parents, pupils, the Local Authority and other relevant agencies

Confidentiality

- We will observe confidentiality in all circumstances in particular in relation to matters concerning specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside of the school, unless there is a lawful reason for disclosure
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the business of the school arise outside a Governing Body meeting. Such conversations go against the Code of Conduct
- We will exercise care and skill when communicating through social media
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing Body vote

Conflicts of Interest

- We will always act in the best interests of the charitable objects set out in the governing documents of the school
- 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 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 website
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting, should the situation arise

Breach of the Code of Conduct

- If we believe this Code of Conduct has been breached, we will promptly raise this issue with the Chair of Governors, consult with the Diocese, determine the investigatory process {if any}; the Governing Body will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties in more constructive ways
- Should it be the Chair of Governors that we believe has breached this Code of Conduct, the Vice Chair of Governors will investigate

Appendix I: The Nolan Principles

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