



Coten End Primary School

Code of Conduct for Governors

Adopted by: Governors of Coten End School on 9th. May 2022

Signed:  [Chair of Governors]

The Governors of Coten End School agree that this code of conduct will be regularly reviewed, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full governing board.

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors for the governing body to carry out its work within the school and community properly.

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan 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.

We will focus on our core governance functions:

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 performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

As individual board members, we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
3. We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.

5. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
6. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
7. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
8. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
9. We will only speak or act on behalf of the governing body if we have the authority to do so.
10. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
11. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
12. We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
13. We will not discriminate against anyone 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 governing body, 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 protocols.
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.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local 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 member's contributions are valued equally.
4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the governing body and ensuring appropriate conduct.

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 body 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 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.
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, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
7. We accept that information relating to governing body members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

We also agree to follow the guidance outlined in:

- DfE Governance Handbook: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook> (see note 1)
- DfE Competency Framework for Governance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook> (see note 1)
- CEPS Governor Visits Protocol (appendix 1)

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

Note 1: This is guidance from the Department for Education that sets out its vision and priorities for effective governance by outlining the core role and functions of a governing body; it is our first point of reference on all the legal duties on our governing body, and it gives information about the support available to us to be effective.

Appendix 1

COTEN END PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNOR VISITS PROTOCOL

Introduction:

The governing body has a duty to oversee the strategic direction and policies of the school, to monitor its standards and be held to account for its conduct and performance.

Purpose:

- To assist governors and school staff in ensuring that governor school visits are structured, productive, fair and enjoyable for all concerned.

Rationale:

Governors are responsible for holding the work of senior leaders to account and for providing appropriate support and challenge. We are critical friends to the school. This can only be effective if governors know the school well. Visiting the school is the best way to learn how it functions, to keep under review how it operates and by increasing the governors' first hand knowledge informs strategic decision making. Governors also have a key role in validating the school's Learning Improvement Plan (LIP) and Self Evaluation (SEF) by visiting the school during the working day.

Protocol:

- Visits should be planned in advance and the purpose agreed. The LIP will usually inform the area(s) of focus. Any staff involved must be informed in advance.
- Governors should not make judgements about professional expertise of teachers, their teaching or classroom management unless they are properly qualified to do so and have been invited to do so as an agreed part of the visit.
- Governors should not use a school visit to pursue personal interests or concerns.
- Governors should not monopolise school/teacher time.
- Governors are expected to record their visit on the Governor Visit Record (WeLearn365 platform) and complete a Governor Monitoring Report (template attached).
- Governors are expected to comply with the school's 'Staff, Governors and Volunteers Code of Conduct' and reflect the high standards established at Coten End at all times.
- Confidentiality should be adhered to in relation to visits. Individual children or staff (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) should not be identified in any Governor Visit Report.

Coten End – Governor Monitoring Report

Guidance for completion:

- Reports should be completed for each visit or contact in support of LIP Monitoring or other requirements.
- Report content should be agreed between the author, staff and Headteacher. Once signed off, documents should be emailed to the Chair of Governors to be uploaded to the school 'welearn' platform.

Purpose:			
Date:		Report prepared by:	
Area linked to LIP:			

Questions Raised:
<i>Questions / queries raised as part of the monitoring activity</i>

Agreed Actions	Description	Who
1		
2		

Follow-up from any previously agreed actions (if applicable):

Summary (optional)