



## CES CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GOVERNORS

### THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The term 'Governing Body' in this documents includes the governing body of a Catholic voluntary aided school, federation or sixth-form college

The term 'School' in this documents includes a Catholic voluntary aided school, federation or sixth form college.

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, as the cornerstone of their role, to ensure that 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:

Further, 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 as effective governance. Our core strategic functions as Governing Body, therefore, are in:

1. Ensuring clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the appropriate 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. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

We understand that the Catholic Church expects Catholic school 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.

We understand that Canon 806§2 requires that Catholic schools are “..at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area” and that governors should be mindful of this requirement in all that they do.

We adhere to the Church’s teaching which is a rich treasury of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Several of the key themes that are of the heart of Catholic social traditional and which should permeate through our School are 1) life and dignity of the human person 2) call to family, community and participation 3) rights and responsibilities 4) option for the poor and vulnerable 5) the dignity of work and the rights of workers 6) solidarity and 7) care of God’s creation<sup>1</sup>

[1http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching-cfm](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching-cfm)

## **As Governors we agreed to our collective responsibilities as follows:**

### **Role & Responsibilities**

- We will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school and this responsibility will permeate throughout all of our actions within and through all aspects of the school and the local community;
- We will ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed, which includes the provision of:
  - Canon law;<sup>2</sup>
  - The Curriculum Directory and Bishops’ statement on religious education; and
  - Any Diocesan directives relating to schools
  - (Any religious order schools documents relating to the conduct of schools).
- We will conduct the school in accordance with its Instrument (and Articles) of Government and in particular its ethos statement;
- We will 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 Bishop’s Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools;
- We will respond to the needs of the Catholic community as a whole as represented by the Diocesan Bishop, complying in all respects with diocesan requirements;
- We will protect, promote and serve the Diocese in the ministry of our role as governors faithfully and in particular in compliance with Diocesan Protocols for the committed working relationship between the Diocese and the school.
- We will consider not only the interest of the school, but the interests of other Catholic schools, colleges, academies and of Catholic education throughout the diocese;
- We will undertake to discharge our duties as governors with due care and diligence
- We will consider carefully how our decision may affect the community and other schools, colleges and academies.
- We will attend relevant training including diocesan training; governor induction and continuing professional development training, as required by the diocese.
- We understand the purpose of the governing body and our role as governors and the role of senior leadership.

- We 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 we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have specifically authorised to do so.
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- We 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.
- 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.
- We will encourage transparency and will act appropriately.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affect the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body
- We will actively support and challenge the senior leadership.
- We will adhere to the Nolan principles set out in Appendix II.

## **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, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings 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 arranged in advance with the headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body.
- 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.
- We accept that in the interests of transparency, 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 our school's website and anything else as required by law.

## **Relationships**

In all our relationships we shall exercise stewardship and draw on the teaching 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<sup>3</sup>

- 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 for our diocesan education service
- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
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- 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 at meetings and at all times.

## **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, unless there is a lawful requirement for disclosure.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside of a governing body meeting.
- 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 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 interest 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.

## **Breach of this code of conduct**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension / removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

We are also reminded of the declaration signed upon appointment of a Foundation Governor (the basic principles of which are agreed by all of the governing body) which you can find in this Code of Conduct at Appendix I for Foundation Governors in Schools

## Copy of Foundation Governor of a School Declaration

\*I am committed and practising Catholic in good standing with the Church

\*I am a Catholic priest/deacon in the Diocese of (Diocese) (or religious order)

(\*delete as applicable)

I wish to offer to serve the Diocese of (Diocese) in the ministry of foundation governor.

I have read and understood the criteria for appointment and to the best of my knowledge am eligible for appointment.

In offering to serve as a foundation governor in the Diocese I understand that I will serve the Bishop faithfully in this ministry. If appointed, I declare that I will be able and willing to give priority to my duties as a governor and will undertake to discharge those duties with due care and diligence.

I undertake to the Diocesan Bishop

- To prevent and develop the Catholic character of the school to which I am appointed;
- To ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed which includes the provision of
  - Canon law<sup>4</sup>;
  - The Curriculum Directory and bishops' statements on religious education; and
  - Any diocesan directives relating to schools
  - Any religious order documents relating to the conduct of the school
- To conduct the school in accordance with its Instrument and Articles of Government and in particular its ethos statement;
- To become familiar with, to support and implement the policies and procedures of the diocese, including the Diocesan Bishop's policies on education including religious education and Admission 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 and to present at those policies and expectations on the governing body

- To consider not only the interest of the school but also the interests of other Catholic schools, colleges academies and Catholic education throughout the diocese;
- To respond to the needs of the Catholic community as a whole as represented by the Diocesan Bishop;
- To attend relevant training including diocesan training; governor induction and continuing

<sup>4</sup>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 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)

- professional development training as required by the diocese.
- In all actions serving as witness to the Catholic faith.

I declare that I am not disqualified by law from appointment as a governor. I confirm that I agree to be barred list check being made on me of any subsequent checks that may be required by law or good practice. I understand that any refusal to do so may result in the termination of any appointment.

I consent to the information given on this form and other information collected with it being held and processed by the Diocese, including the sharing of data with third parties where required, in accordance with diocesan policy

I undertake that I shall tender my resignation as a governor if my circumstances change so as to contravene the diocesan expectations at any time during the tenure of office or if, in the opinion of the Ordinary my resignation would be in the best interest of Catholic education

I understand and accept that the appointment and removal of foundation governors is at the absolute discretion of the Ordinary and that because of the nature of the decision making process, the Ordinary will not normally be able to engage in any discussion or correspondence with me and/or any third party where my nomination does not result in my appointment.

This is a copy of the standard declaration that is required from you on appointment as is set out in the Nomination form

# The Nolan Principles

(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)

## 1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

## 2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

## 3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

## 4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

## 5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

## 6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

## 7. Leadership

Holders of public office 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.

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**As a member of the Governing Body for the School I undertake that 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 interest of 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: Foundation Governor Declaration Form
- Will also adhere to Appendix II: 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 knowledge I am eligible 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 appointment.

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Dated</b>	
<b>Print Name</b>		<b>Type of Governor</b>	