# Furneux Pelham School Governors' Code of Conduct 2026-27

## 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

*NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:*

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.


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2. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school as well as maintaining and upholding the school's religious ethos.
3. We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
4. We shall fully co-operate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance including disclosure and barring or right to work checks.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. 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.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act 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 board, 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 protocol.
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, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to 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 community including the local church and diocese.
2. We will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities and other schools.
3. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
4. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
5. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board 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 board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.
5. We will practise good ICT security, keep personal data safe and support GDPR compliance.

## Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board'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 as a governor, 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 board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information about Schools), some of which will be publicly available.

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions including suspension or removal from the governing body as a last resort.

**Adopted by:** Furneux Pelham School Full Governing Body on 16 September 2024

**Signed:**  **Dave Bromage**

Chair of the Full Governing Body Date: 7 September 2026

We agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually and will be endorsed by the Full Governing Body.

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See the attached appendix for the Governor's Job description.

# Governor role description

## Governors work together to carry out their core 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

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Governors must also ensure that the governing body complies with all legal and statutory requirements. Governors should seek the advice of the clerk to the governing board and other professional advice as appropriate.

## Governing body strategic responsibilities

Governing bodies work closely with headteachers and senior leaders. Headteachers are responsible for day-to-day management whereas the role of the governing body is strategic. As such, governors are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the school
- deciding the principles that guide school policies and approving key policies
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- setting the school's budget and ensuring it is managed effectively together with premises and other resources
- agreeing the school's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

## Monitoring and evaluating school performance

Governors must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the school's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the school is operating effectively in line with these policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external reporting on all aspects of school performance

- asking challenging questions of school leaders in order to hold them to account
- holding the headteacher to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies
- visiting the school to monitor implementation of the strategy and reporting back to the board (this could be in a link governor capacity)
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

## Panels and committees

When required, governors are expected to serve on panels or committees in order to:

- appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the headteacher and make pay recommendations
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

## Contribution to the governing body

Governors should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the governing body by:

- attending meetings (a minimum of 3 full governing board meetings and a number of committee meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior leaders and colleagues on the board
- getting to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

## Expenses

Where applicable, Governors should receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor and NGA recommends that a governing board should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and dependency care, but not loss of earnings.

## Helpful NGA resources

These resources can help governors to meet the expected standards set out in the code of conduct:

- Role descriptions for governors and trustees
- Guidance on school monitoring visits
- Webinar: complaints management
- Effective teamwork: a guide for governing boards

# Staff governor responsibilities

It is not the role of staff governors to represent staff or act as a spokesperson. The governing board should have systems in place to engage with staff.
Staff governors, like all governors, make strategic decisions and work together to:

- develop a vision and strategy for the school
- oversee financial performance and make sure money is well spent
- hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school
- engage with pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community to understand their views

A staff governor cannot be the chair or vice chair of the governing board.
While staff governors know their school well and likely have a good understanding of the education sector, they should participate in their board's induction programme to learn about governor duties, responsibilities and expectations.

**How staff governors manage conflicts of interest**
All governors must declare business or personal interests that might affect their ability to make impartial decisions.
As staff governors are often holding their line managers to account, handling conflicts of interest can be challenging. Conflicts arise where the issues being discussed affect the staff governor or their colleagues.
It is therefore not appropriate for staff governors to be involved in board discussions relating to:

- senior leader appraisal or recruitment
- staff restructuring
- pay decisions or reviews
- staff disciplinary, grievance or capability hearings
- exclusion or complaints panels (where they are reviewing their own headteacher's decisions)

Staff governors should declare their interest and remove themselves from discussion and voting on these matters.
In most cases, staff governors do not sit on a staffing and finance committee as the areas under scrutiny are more likely to result in a conflict of interest. Similarly, staff governors should not take on a link role.

**Maintaining confidentiality**
It is important for all governors to keep board matters confidential. Staff governors should avoid sharing any information away from governing board meetings or discussing board business with other members of staff. Where decisions do need to be shared with the wider staff body, the governing board should discuss what can be reported on and the staff governor should be clear on how this will happen.

**Governing effectively**
Effective staff governors:

- help other governors to understand the working of the school
- take responsibility for their learning and development as a governor, including attending training
- do not canvas the opinions of staff (they might want to let the governing board know the general feelings of staff but must use their own judgement in decision making)
- act impartially, making decisions that are in the best interests of pupils

We also encourage education professionals, such as teachers, middle leaders, senior leaders, and executive leaders to govern at other schools. This provides an opportunity for educators to grow professionally and is especially beneficial for aspiring senior leaders.

# Parent governor responsibilities

The role of a parent governor is no different to any other governor. Governing boards make strategic decisions and work together to:

- develop a vision and strategy for the school
- oversee financial performance and make sure money is well spent
- hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school
- engage with pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community to understand their views

Once elected, parent governors should make use of the induction training on offer as this will explain parent governor duties, responsibilities and expectations in detail.

**Offering a parent's perspective**

Parent governors offer a parental perspective to issues being discussed; however, they are **not expected to represent the parent body** or act as a spokesperson.

Bringing a parent's viewpoint to the board is important but should not be confused with the board's overall responsibility to engage with parents as a collective.

**Providing effective support and challenge**

Parent governors need to remain impartial, especially when posing challenging questions to school leaders. For example, if school uniform is discussed at a governing board meeting, parent governors may have opinions based on personal experience but should ensure their questions remain objective.

Rather than stating:

***"I've spoken to other parents, and we all agree that the uniform policy shouldn't change".***

A parent governor might instead ask:

***"Have parents been consulted on proposed uniform changes?"***

***"What opportunities are there to minimise the cost of this change to parents?"***

While all parents are concerned with their own child's best interests, governors must make strategic decisions that are in the best interests of the whole school community – governing boards work as a team to make collective decisions.

For example, if data indicates that pupil progress is falling behind expectations in a specific year group, it is appropriate to raise this in board meetings.

Ask: **"*What support is in place to ensure all pupils make good progress?*"**

Avoid asking: **"*What are you going to do to support my child to catch up?*"**

It is important to keep governing board matters confidential. Parent governors should avoid sharing concerns away from the board meeting or discussing with other parents. Instead, it may be helpful to discuss any issues with the governing board's chair.

**Managing complaints**

Governors may be approached by parents wishing to raise a complaint. However, it is not the parent governor's role to attempt to resolve individual issues. Instead, they should direct parents to the school's complaints procedure and avoid making promises to investigate the issue.

Similarly, if parent governors have concerns relating to their own child, they should use the school communication channels available to all parents and follow the complaints procedure where appropriate. Parent governors should not attempt to bring individual cases to the board.