



Code of Conduct for the Governing Board

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of and commitment required from Local Governing board (LGB) Members in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

The governing board has adopted the following principles and procedures:

THE ROLE OF THE LGB

As a governing board, our overarching responsibility is to ensure that we comply with our legal and canonical duty to ensure that the Catholic character of the school is preserved and developed. This duty permeates everything that we do.

We understand that Foundation Governors are required, as 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.

(1) OUR THREE CORE STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS:

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

Our core strategic functions are to:

1. Ensure clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Hold 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 the performance management of its staff; and
3. Oversee the financial performance of the school and make 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.

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

For governing boards to carry out their roles effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously.
- Committed to the key characteristics and behaviours expected of the role, as set out in [A Competency Framework for Governance \(DfE 2017\)](#)
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals.
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task.
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

(2) ADHERENCE TO THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES, CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING & THE CODE OF CANON LAW

In carrying out our functions we will adhere to the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

- **Selflessness** – acting solely in terms of the public interest and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family or our friends.
- **Integrity** – taking all steps to not place ourselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence us in the performance of our official duties.
- **Objectivity** – in carrying out public business, being impartial and making choices fairly and on merit.
- **Accountability** – acknowledging that we are accountable for our decisions and actions to the public and submitting ourselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to our office.
- **Openness** – being as open and transparent as possible about all the decisions and actions that we take and giving reasons for our decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – being truthful in everything we do and declaring any private interests relating to our public duties and taking steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – at all times promoting and supporting these principles by our leadership and example.

Furthermore, we will abide at all times by the Church's social teaching, which is a rich treasury of wisdom about building a just society, and ensure that our School is imbued with the key themes that are at the heart of Catholic social tradition, namely:

- **Dignity**
- **Solidarity**
- **The common good**

- **The option for the poor**
- **Peace**
- **Care for creation**
- **The dignity of work and participation**

(3) WE AGREE TO OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AS FOLLOWS:

Role & Responsibilities

1. We will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school and this responsibility will imbue all of our actions within, and through all aspects of, the school and the local community.
2. We will ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed, which includes the provisions of:
 - **Canon law;¹**
 - **The Religious Education Directory and Bishops' statements on religious education; and any directives issued by the Diocesan Bishop.**
3. We will conduct the school in accordance with its Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation
4. We will support and implement the policies and procedures of the diocese including the Diocesan Bishop's policies on education (including but not limited to religious education and any admissions guidance issued by the diocese) and the expectations of the Diocesan Bishops issued collectively, specifically the Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Staff in Catholic Schools;
5. 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.
6. We will protect, promote and serve the diocese in the ministry of our role faithfully.
7. We will consider not only the interests of the school, but the interests of other Catholic Schools and of Catholic education throughout the diocese.
8. We will undertake to discharge our duties with due care and diligence.
9. We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
10. We will attend relevant training including diocesan training, induction training and continuing professional development training, as required.
11. We understand the purpose of the Governing Board and our role and the role of senior leadership.
12. We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing 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.

13. We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside of Governing Board meetings.
14. 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 which includes the promotion of staff wellbeing, we will strive to be an employer of choice.
15. In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school, we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Board.
16. We will actively support and challenge the senior leadership.
17. We will uphold the reputation of the school, diocese and Catholic education as a whole at all times and to that end carefully consider and monitor our personal use of social media.
18. If we have been appointed as a Foundation Governor, we recognise and accept our responsibilities and we have signed the Declaration & Undertaking, a copy of which is attached as an appendix to this Code of Conduct.
19. We have returned the signed copy to the clerk.

Commitment

1. We acknowledge that accepting office involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
2. We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
3. We will arrive at meetings well prepared including reading all papers in advance.
4. We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and make positive contributions thereat, and where we cannot attend any meeting, we will explain in advance why we are unable to.
5. We will get to know the school well, and where appropriate to our appointment, we will positively respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in School activities.
6. Where appropriate to our role, we will visit the school, with all visits to the school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Board.
7. We will evaluate our effectiveness as a Governing Board by way of completing a skills audit and a self evaluation form on an annual basis, we will also ensure that our effectiveness is regularly externally reviewed.
8. 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.
9. We accept that in the interests of transparency, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Governor (where appropriate) and the body

responsible for appointing us, will be published on the school's website and anywhere else as required by law.

Relationships

1. 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.
 - Service and sacrifice.
2. We will comply with Diocesan Protocols for a committed working relationship²;
 3. We will ensure that we continually communicate with and, where appropriate, seek support and guidance from the diocesan education service and any education officer appointed by the religious order (if any).
 4. We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
 5. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications.
 6. We will support the chair in ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
 7. We will be prepared to answer queries from others 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.
 8. We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the diocese, parish, the senior leadership, staff and parents, pupils, the local authority, other relevant agencies, and the local community.
 9. We will follow the Equality Act 2010 and be fair and equitable in all that we do.

Confidentiality

1. We will observe confidentiality in all circumstances, in particular in relation to matters concerning specific members of staff or pupils, both inside and outside the school, unless there is a lawful requirement for disclosure.
2. We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the business of the school arise outside of Governing Board meetings.
3. We will exercise care and skill when communicating through social media.

² Delete for religious order schools or if the protocols have not been issued.

4. We will not reveal the details of any Governing Board vote.

Conflicts of interest

1. We will always act in the best interests of the charitable objects set out in the governing documents of the school.
2. 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 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.
3. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.

(4) BREACH OF THIS CODE

1. If we believe this code has been breached, we will promptly raise this issue with the Chair, consult with the diocese and determine the investigatory process (if any); the Governing Board will only use suspension and/or removal (which is at the absolute discretion of the Ordinary or religious superior for foundation appointments) as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
2. If we believe it is the Chair that has breached this Code, the Vice Chair, will investigate unless the Vice Chair is connected in which case another member of the Governing Board will be appointed to investigate.
3. Acceptance of this Code is confirmed by signature annually by every Governor (at the beginning of each academic year), but Governors are not released from their duties under the Code by any failure to so sign.
4. Signed copies of this Code from each Governor should be retained by the Clerk.
5. E signatures are acceptable.

Appendix 1

Governor Declaration & Undertaking*:

I, *(insert name)*

am a committed and practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church and I regularly practice

at the parish of Holy Family & All Saints, Witham

A copy of the Diocesan definition of a practising Catholic can be found on the Diocesan website:

www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Definition-of-a-practising-Catholic-2024.pdf

I have read and understood the criteria for appointment and, to the best of my knowledge, am eligible for appointment. I confirm that I will inform the Diocese of Brentwood in the event that I am no longer eligible for appointment.

In offering to serve as a Foundation Governor within the Diocese of Brentwood, I undertake that I will serve the Bishop of Brentwood 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.

As well as the undertaking given earlier, I will undertake:

- To preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school to which I am appointed;
- To ensure that the school operates in accordance with the Diocesan trust deed and their particular ethos statement, which includes the provisions of:
 - Canonlaw;
 - The Curriculum Directory and Bishops' statements on religious education; and
 - Any Diocesan directives relating to schools/academies;
- To confirm that the school operates in accordance with its Instrument of Government or Articles of Association and in particular its ethos statement;
- To become familiar with, to support and implement the policies and procedures of the Diocese, including the Bishop's policies on education, including religious education, and the directives issued by the Bishops collectively, specifically the Diocesan Guidance on Academies, the Memorandum of Understanding and the Diocesan Protocols, the Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools and the Admissions Guidance, and to represent those policies and directives to the Catholic Education Trusts and any local governing committee or other committees established in respect of the schools;
- To consider not only the interests of the school, but the interests of other Catholic schools and academies and of Catholic education throughout the diocese;
- To respond to the needs of the Catholic community as a whole as represented by the Bishop;

- To attend relevant Catholic training and induction training, as soon as possible; and
If appointed as a Foundation Governor, in all actions, serving as a witness to the Catholic faith.

I declare that I am not disqualified from being a Governor. I confirm that I agree to Disclosure and Barring Service checks being made on me or any subsequent checks that may be required by law or good practice. I understand that any refusal to do so will 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 of Brentwood, including the sharing of data with third parties where required, in accordance with diocesan policy [\[link to Diocesan Privacy Statement\]](#).

I will comply with the Model CES Governor Code of Conduct and shall tender my resignation as a Governor if in breach or my circumstances change, so as to contravene the diocesan expectations at any time during the tenure of office. I will also resign as a Governor if, in the opinion of the Diocesan Bishop, my resignation would be in the best interests of Catholic education.

I understand and accept that the appointment and removal of Foundation Governors is at the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop and that, because of the nature of the decision-making process, the Diocesan Bishop 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.

*copied from Brentwood Diocesan Nomination Form 2025

Governor signature:

Governor Name:

Date:

APPROVED AT LGB 7 OCTOBER 2026