



## Section 1 – Code of Conduct for Governors

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within our schools and the community.

### The governing board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the schools
- Agreeing the school improvement plans for each school with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Executive Head teacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the schools and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Executive Head teacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation for each school

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budgets
- Monitoring spending against the budgets
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisations are managed

### As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

#### Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Head teacher.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the 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.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- 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 open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our schools. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.

- In making or responding to criticism or complaints or our own concerns we will follow the procedures established by the governing board – see 311 Complaints Policy
- We will actively support and challenge the Head teacher through the articles of governance
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;
- We will respect the role of the Head teacher and his/her responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- We agree to adhere to each of the school’s rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views;
- when communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisations – see appendix 1
- when communicating with other governors (including by email) we will not undermine any of the school’s policies (particularly the ability of the governing body to have an untainted committee to hear staff and parent complaints)

## 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 board, 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 schools well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities at each school.
- We will visit the schools, with all visits arranged in advance with the Head teacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board – see appendix 2
- When visiting the schools in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training. – See appendix 3
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, photos, 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’s website.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE’s national database of governors (Edubase).

## Relationships

- 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, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members 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 Head teacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

## 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.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

## Conflicts of interest

- 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 website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

## Ceasing to be a governor/trustee/academy committee member

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office
- All governor papers held by a retiring governor will be handed in to the school office for appropriate disposal

## 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 board 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 board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

## The seven principles of public life

(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).

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

**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.

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

**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.

**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.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful

**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.

Adopted by the governing body of Leven CE (VC) Primary School on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2018

## Section 2 - Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### From 216d Social Media Policy

##### Governors

- **Staff/governors interacting with each other online;**
- Governors are advised not to be “friends” with members of staff online, however the school fully understands that Governors will hold genuine friendships with members of staff on Social Media sites, but advises Governors to take extreme care should the school be mentioned online and have a duty to act responsibly and adhere to any confidentiality agreements. Should Governors be “friends” with members of staff online they would need to declare this to ensure that conflicts of interest do not occur.
- **Reasons for this include:**
- Potential for a conflict of interest where a governor is on a selection panel/disciplinary panel where a “friend” is involved;
- Due to the role of the governing body and its general responsibility for the conduct of the school, it is sensible to maintain a certain level of separation between governors and staff.
- **Application of this Policy to school governors;**
- many of the above points have equal application to governors. All governors should ensure that they comply with the spirit of this Policy.
- Though governors would not be subject to the same disciplinary process as staff, there are still forms of redress available where a governor behaves in an inappropriate manner. The appropriate procedures would be followed in such cases.

### Appendix 2

#### Governor visits policy

##### 1. AIMS

1. Visits should be undertaken as part of a strategic programme to:
  - improve governor knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses
  - monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the development plan
  - assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties.
1. Before visiting the school the governor(s) should:
  - inform the school of the visit and seek approval from the Headteacher of the arrangements
  - ensure that they are familiar with health and safety procedures including what to do in the event of a fire.
2. After visiting the school the governor(s) should:
  - complete a visit report outlining the objectives and results of the visit
  - report back to the committee or governing body as appropriate
  - provide constructive feedback as appropriate.

## 2. OVERVIEW

Visiting the school is the best way to learn how it functions, and to keep under review how it operates so that you can increase the governing body's first hand knowledge, informing **strategic** decision making. Through visits governors will have the opportunity to observe policies and plans being implemented on a day-to-day basis, and their findings should help the whole governing body and its committees make well-informed judgements about progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the school improvement plan. It may not though be possible for every governor to be available during the day - this will depend on personal and work commitments. However, **all** governors should do **some** visits; the frequency and type of visit will vary according to availability and role.

Visits should generally relate to the priorities determined by the School Improvement Plan and cover a wide range of schoolwork. Each visit should be agreed and have a clear purpose.

Governors should arrange these visits with the head teacher who has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school.

## 3. GOVERNOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for the:

1. Strategic View - Values, Mission, Vision
2. Critical Friend - Monitoring and evaluating school improvement
3. Ensure Accountability - High Standards, value for money, agreed aims and objectives

## 4. GOVERNOR RIGHTS

Governors do not have any rights of access to the school.

## 5. GOVERNOR VISITS ARE NOT:

1. A form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of the teacher
2. An opportunity to check on the progress of own children
3. An opportunity to pursue a personal agenda
4. An opportunity to monopolise school/teacher time
5. An opportunity to pursue issues that relate to the day-to-day management of the school other than as agreed with the Headteacher or SMT.

## 6. PREPARING FOR A VISIT

1. Check the agreed policy for governors' visits
2. Clarify the purpose of the visit. Is it linked to the School Improvement Plan? What are the relevant school Policies? How does this determine the activities I am interested in?
3. Discuss an agenda with the head teacher, and or subject leader/co ordinator well in advance. Make sure that the date chosen is suitable.
4. Use the school visits pro forma
5. Send the proposed agenda to the staff involved. Ask how they want governors to integrate into the lesson or learning walk? It might be possible for you to see a copy of any documents beforehand. Discuss with the co ordinator if any supporting information is available, Ofsted report, improvement plan, performance data.
6. Be clear beforehand exactly what you are looking for. Try to prepare questions and submit to staff in advance.

## 7. DURING THE VISIT

1. Remember you are making the visit on behalf of the governing body, it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the governing body.
2. Be punctual, courteous and considerate at all times, respecting the professional roles of the head teacher and staff.
3. Decide with the teacher how you will be introduced and what your role in the class will be.
4. Get involved with the children.
5. Remember it is a visit not an inspection.
6. Observe discretely.

7. Don't distract the teacher during the lesson but be prepared to talk and show interest.
8. Interact, don't interrupt.
9. Listen to staff and pupils.

## 8. TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

**Teachers and support staff** will at all times be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by the governing body to the school.

They will make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits so as to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the evidence that could be shared with governors. See Annex A for a list of things which governors could examine/explore. Whenever practical they will invite their link/curriculum governors to relevant staff meetings and training sessions.

Questions will be invited from governors, while being sensitive to issues of confidentiality. See section 13 for examples of questions which could be asked. Although these focus on literacy, numeracy and SEN, many of the questions can easily be adapted to other areas of the curriculum.

## 9. AFTER THE VISIT

1. Discuss what you have observed with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about. For example, did your presence have any impact on the atmosphere in the classroom? If so, how?
2. Refer to the purpose of the visit. Consider together whether it has been achieved
3. Thank the teacher for supporting you in your role as a governor. Be open, honest, positive.
4. Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind and share the report with the Head Teacher for agreement that it is a true reflection of the visit.
5. Reflect: how did that go? Has the visit enhanced relationships? Have I learnt more about the school? Have I gained more confidence in helping the governing body fulfil its duties?

## 10. REPORTING YOUR VISIT

1. Write a short summary 'as a lay governor' of what you learned during the visit and the overall impression that was made. This will be easier if the visit had a focus. See Appendix C for a report format.
2. You must circulate a draft to the head teacher and staff involved for them to check the accuracy and clarity. Be prepared to amend it. Aim to achieve a report that is agreed by all those involved.
3. Circulate this at the next appropriate meeting.

## 11. VISIT FOCUS

Although not an exhaustive list visits may focus on:-

1. Particular subjects, key stages or classes
2. The use made of the building or the site
3. The condition and maintenance of the premises
4. Special educational needs
5. Literacy and numeracy
6. The use of ICT equipment
7. The impact on the school of any changes, e.g. reduced classes in key stage
8. Impact of specific targets identified in the School Improvement Plan
9. Impact of Staff Development Training

## 12. INFORMAL VISITS

Visits may also take place in an informal capacity. It is vital that everyone is clear about the capacity in which they are visiting and not to confuse the role.

1. Chair making a regular visit to the head teacher
2. Volunteering at school events/trips/in the class
3. Obtaining information from the office relating to meetings
4. As a parent to speak to a teacher in relation to your own child.

## 13. MEETINGS WITH SUBJECT LEADERS

### **To ask subject leaders/co ordinators**

1. What is your vision for the subject? Do you have a set of minimum expectations?
2. What were the Ofsted findings about the subject? (This question is mainly for Literacy, maths, science and ICT. Other subject may have been the focus of a curriculum inspection)
3. What are the strengths of the subject? How do you know?
4. How do you keep a track of standards and progress across the school in this subject?
5. What improvements have you made/planned for this year in the subject?
6. What resources does the school have for the subject and how are these organised? Are there any additional resource needs?
7. How do you help develop other teachers' skills in teaching this subject?

### **Questions about teaching English/Maths**

#### **Achievements and attitudes**

8. What are the broad trends in the school's achievement in English/Maths?
  - a. Compared with similar schools?
  - b. In relation to the national rates of increase?
  - c. In relation to the national picture in terms of gender?
9. Where have we improved? Do we know why?
10. Are there differences between the achievement of different year groups, and if so, why?
11. How do our results in English/math's compare with other subjects?
12. What aspects of the subject do pupils find easy and which hard?
13. Are there significant differences in reading, writing or maths between?
  - a. Girls and boys
  - b. Pupils with special educational needs
  - c. Very able pupils
  - d. Pupils with English as an additional language and the others
  - e. The majority and any other minority groups, such as travellers?
  - f. The majority and Pupil Premium pupils
14. In meetings to understand how much pupil progress is being made you could **look at**
  - a. Key Stage 1 and 2 test results
  - b. Pupil progress data across each year
  - c. The work of a range of pupils - average, below average and above average
  - d. Other evidence, Special Needs

15. How are pupils with special educational needs integrated into the daily literacy/math's lessons
16. Management of the subject?
17. How is the role of the English/math's co ordinator developing?
18. Does the school improvement plan match the identified needs?
19. How has the budget for this area been spent?
20. Is there a need for additional resources for any aspect of the work?
21. How much additional adult support does each class have? How do you decide how to deploy additional support?
22. (Literacy only) What type and how do you ensure there are a range of reading books available that cater for all abilities, cultural backgrounds and tastes, especially boys? How well do pupils use the library? What links does the school have with the local library?
23. How does the school use all its resources (books, materials and displays, as well as electronic media) to promote reading and writing/numeracy?

Question	Possible features of answer	Notes of answer
Help me to understand how you plan your lessons: how do you get from the National Curriculum to deciding what Karen or Tom will be doing in Science today?	National Curriculum Key stage plan Scheme of Work Year/termly/weekly/daily plans Individual plans	
How do you judge how well pupils are learning and making progress?	Questioning in lessons Marking Assessments, including tests SATs Target-setting and achieving Value-added data	
What learning resources are available to your pupils and how do they learn effectively?	ICT - access to computers Use of library Classroom library Use of basics like pens and pencils. Good labelling	

	Borrowed resources	
How do you cope with the needs of different pupils?	Boys v. girls Most able/ SEN English as an Additional Language Badly Behaved Disabled	
How do you decide to seat children and arrange the classroom? Does it ever vary and why?	Ability groups Mixed or single age groups Boy-girl patterns Different for different activities	
How do you encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning?	Regular contact Reports Parent evenings Letters Diaries	

### Communication

1. How are parents kept informed of progress?
2. How do you gather parents views?
3. What steps are taken to encourage parents to support their children in reading/writing at home?

## 14. ATTENDING STAFF MEETINGS

It is not appropriate for *Governors* to attend staff meetings, apart from in exceptional circumstances. Discussion in staff meetings should not be constrained by having an observer. *Governors* are able to talk to the Subject leaders about the staff meetings relevant to their subjects.

## 15. POTENTIAL BENEFITS

## To governors

1. Recognise and celebrate success
2. Develop relationships with staff
3. Get to know the children
4. Recognise different teaching styles
5. Understand the environment in which teachers teach
6. Monitor policies in action
7. Find out what resources are needed and prioritise them
8. Deepen understanding and increase confidence and knowledge
9. Inform decision making

## To teachers

1. Ensure governors understand the reality of the classroom
2. Get to know governors
3. Understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
4. Have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
5. Highlight the need for particular resources (including human resources)

## 16. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF GOVERNORS' SCHOOL VISIT POLICY

This policy should be monitored and reviewed annually at the Summer Term Governors' Scrutiny Committee Meeting.

1. Are our visits achieving the potential benefits we identified?
2. Have there been any unexpected benefits?
3. How can we make our practice even better?

## 17. VISIT RECORDING FORM

## GOVERNOR VISIT

Governor:	Staff/Areas Visited
Date:	
Focus of Visit	
To discuss	
Discussions/Observations/Questions	
Conclusions/Action/Areas for Development	

## Appendix 3

### Governor Induction

#### From 309 Induction policy

Governors have a vital role to play in providing support, advice and guidelines for the school.

To enable the fulfilment of this role all new governors should be given current relevant school information, policy documents and School Improvement Plan data.

The Chair of Governors is responsible for the induction of new governors.

When a governor joins a committee the chair of the committee is responsible for their induction.

Then named governors for governor training with the help of the Clerk of Governors should provide the following information and resources:

- Opportunities for a tour of the school meeting staff
- A welcome meeting with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors
- School prospectus including staffing, Ofsted and KS2 test information
- DCFS information handbook on the role of governor
- Latest Local Authority Governor Induction Handbook
- School and Governing Body Policy document including Articles and Instruments of governors.
- Dates and times of whole governing body and sub committee meetings
- Access and information of previous governing body minutes
- latest governing body report to parent and school newsletters
- Information and access to governor courses (inc the role of the Governor as a Critical Friend)
- A copy of the Induction Policy
- A copy of the Scheme for Financing Schools

All new governors should be provided with a governor mentor to support with information, current policies and practice.

The Governors' training officer should arrange to discuss the success of the induction arrangements at least twice during the first year to improve the quality and relevance of the induction arrangements.