

Governance Code of Conduct*

(for all involved in Governance roles within IFtL)



Inspiring Futures
Through Learning

*based on the NGA recommended Code of Conduct

Inspiring Futures through Learning greatly values the time and commitment of everyone involved in governance across IFtL and are truly appreciative that our governors and Trustees are volunteers, performing their role for the benefit of all children and staff in our schools. This Code of Conduct sets out the principles, expectations and levels of commitment we set of ourselves within these governance roles – these should be read in conjunction with the Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation documents for IFtL.

As individuals performing governance roles, we agree to:

In our School / Trust

- Ensure our vision and values are upheld and reflect the interests of all of our children and adults first
- Undertake to know our schools well including involvement in school activities
- Actively support and challenge executive leaders respecting the differences in roles and working collectively for the benefit of the organisation
- Fulfil our responsibilities as leaders within the School / Trust as defined
- Undertake to collaborate and share best practice with others in governance positions throughout the Trust

With our people

- Act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, fulfil all that is expected of a good employer
- Respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements
- Strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- Express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with others, both in and outside of meetings
- Seek to develop effective working relationships with all the School's / Trust's community stakeholders

In our community

- Carefully consider our impact on our wider communities
- Maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our School / Trust through our actions in school and the community
- 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 and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website
- Accept that information relating to those in governance roles will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get Information about Schools)

7 principles of public life and ethical leadership

Acknowledge and work within the seven (Nolan) principles of public life, particularly noting their application to School / Trust governance:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Role model ethical leadership by consistently displaying the following personal characteristics or virtues:

- Trust
- Wisdom
- Kindness
- Justice
- Service
- Courage
- Optimism

Commitment

- Acknowledge that accepting office into a governance role involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- Actively take part in the work of our governance body and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service in Link roles and working groups
- Make full efforts to attend (attending at least 80% of meetings), and where attendance is not possible, submit questions on paperwork in advance for discussion and send apologies
- Read all paperwork related to the meetings in advance and prepare thoughts and questions
- Visit the school (in the school day) at least once annually in relation to our governance roles, more frequently where our Link roles would determine this
- Consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development including fulfilling all compliancy and safeguarding requirements
- Attend the annual IFtL Governance Conference

Fulfil our role

- Know and understand our purpose and the strategic nature of our role
- Accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body
- Agree to adhere to the rules, policies and procedures of the governance body as set out by the relevant governance documents and law
- Act in the best interests of the School / Trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group
- Ensure our school visits are pre-arranged with school, are in line with the SDP and / or Link role responsibility and are reported back to the governing body in order to ensure understanding and discussion
- Declare conflict of interests for the Register of Interests but also as they arise



Communications and confidentiality

- Exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding School / Trust business arise outside of a governing body meeting
- Maintain our underlying responsibility as a governance role holder when visiting the school in a personal capacity (ie. parent / carer)
- Observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential, including the details of any votes or where they concern specific children or adults, both inside and outside of the School / Trust
- Ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views when formally speaking or writing in our governance role
- 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 only speak on behalf of the governing body when specifically authorised to do so
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the School / Trust
- Ensure that governance matters are not discussed through personal email or social media channels
- Access the meeting paperwork via the portal only and ensure personal log ins are kept securely
- Accept that requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a Governor / Trustee leaves office and all papers held will be disposed of by returning to the clerk

Breach of Code of Conduct

- Confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the Chair of Trustees and / or authorities' any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or which may place pupils at risk
- Ensure that, where we believe this code has been breached, to raise the issue with the Chair for investigation (raising with your Clerk or the Head of Governance where the Chair is believed to be part of the breach).

