

Governor Code of Conduct for Schools in the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, their articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation. The document will be available to view via the school's website. Governors are required to sign the declaration in Appendix 2, and the Clerk to the Governing Body will retain the signed declaration. Foundation governors are also reminded of the standard declaration that is required on appointment, in Appendix 3.

The term 'governing board' in this document means the board of directors of the Catholic academy trust company.

As a governing board, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that we comply with our legal and canonical duty to ensure that the Catholic character of the academy trust company 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 this objective is achieved. However ALL governors have a duty to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the academy trust company in order to fulfil the objects set out in its governing documents.

The governing board has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Setting and ensuring values and objectives for the school;
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets;
- Meeting statutory duties.

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Holding the senior leaders to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the academy trust company;
- Appointing the Headteacher;
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets;
- Performance managing the Headteacher;
- Engaging with stakeholders;
- Contributing to school self-evaluation.

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget;
- Monitoring spending against the budget;
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained;
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.

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 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 social 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 at the heart of Catholic social tradition 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. Options for the poor and vulnerable;
5. The dignity of work and the rights of workers;
6. Solidarity; and
7. Care for God's creation¹.

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the academy trust company. This responsibility will permeate throughout all of our actions within, and through all aspects of, the academy trust company and the local community;
- We will ensure that the academy trust company is conducted in accordance with all its governing documents, which include the provision of:
 - Canon law²;
 - The Curriculum Directory and Bishops' statements on religious education; and
 - Any Diocesan directives relating to schools.
- We will conduct the academy trust company in accordance with the diocesan trust deed, its Articles of Association, and any Scheme of Delegation adopted by the academy trust company;
- We will support and implement the policies and procedures of the Diocese, 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 Bishops' 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 any Diocesan Protocols for a committed working relationship between the Diocese and the academy trust company;

¹ <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>

² 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 such as legislation of the Bishops' Conference, directives of the diocesan bishop and legislation of the school's religious order (if any).

- We will consider not only the interests of the academy trust company, but the interests of other Catholic schools, academies and colleges and of Catholic education throughout the Diocese;
- We will undertake to discharge our duties as governors with due care and diligence;
- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the executive leaders;
- 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 or its delegated agents. 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 school and those schools in the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this;
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board;
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders;
- 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 executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- We agree to adhere to 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 organisation.

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 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 (or a nominated senior leader) and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board;
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor;
- 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 consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, 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 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'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

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; and
 - Service and sacrifice³.
- We will comply with any Diocesan Protocols for a committed working relationship between the Diocese and the academy trust company;
- We will ensure that we continually communicate with and, where appropriate, seek support and guidance from our diocesan education service;
- 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;

³ Christ at the Centre: a summary of why the Church provides Catholic schools, Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- 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 Diocese, parish, senior leaders, staff and parents, pupils, the local authority, other relevant agencies, and the local 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, unless there is a lawful requirement for disclosure;
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting;
- We will exercise care and skill when communicating through social media;
- 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 always act in the best interests of the charitable objects set out in the governing documents of the academy trust company;
- We understand that a conflict of interest or a conflict of loyalty shall not be deemed to occur solely from the fact that any governor is also a trustee, charity trustee, governor of any Catholic school, Diocese, or religious order, or of any other charity which permits its land to be occupied by a Catholic school or schools or other educational institutions⁴;
- 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;
- 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.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair, consult with the Diocese, determine the investigatory process (if any); the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;

⁴ 98A of Multi Academy Trust model Articles of Association for Catholic Schools (February 2015)

- 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.

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL**

This Code of Conduct has been approved and adopted by the Academy Trust Company on 31st January 2018 and will be reviewed in October 2018.

Signed by Chair of the Governing Body: _____

Signed by Headteacher: _____

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL**

As a member of the governing board of **Notre Dame High School**, I confirm that:

- I will preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school;
- I will not act in any way that is detrimental and/or prejudicial to the interests of Catholic education in the Diocese and the school;
- I have read, understood and will adhere to this Code of Conduct, including the seven principles of public life;
- I have read and understood the Diocesan and legal criteria for appointment and continued eligibility as a governor, and I confirm that to the best of my knowledge I am eligible to be a governor;
- I declare that I am not disqualified by law from appointment or eligibility as a governor;
- I agree to DBS and other relevant checks being conducted that may be required by law or good practice, and understand that any refusal to do so may result in the termination of my appointment as a governor.

Name:	
Designation:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Foundation Director of a Single or Multi Academy Trust Company Declaration †

- * I am a 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 serve the Diocese of [Diocese][or religious order] in the ministry of foundation director and in compliance with the Diocesan Protocols with my Diocese.

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 director in the Diocese of [Diocese][or religious order], I undertake that I will serve the [Diocesan Bishop][or Religious Superior] faithfully in this ministry. If appointed, I declare that I will be able and willing to give priority to my duties as a director and will undertake to discharge those duties with due care and diligence.

I undertake to the [Diocesan Bishop][Religious Superior]:

- To preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Academy Trust Company to which I am appointed, and all the academies within it;
- To ensure that the Academy Trust Company is conducted in accordance with the governing documents of the Academy Trust Company which includes the provisions of:
 - Canon law⁵
 - 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 schools].
- To conduct the Academy Trust Company and all its academies in accordance with the [diocesan] trust deed;
- To uphold the objects of the Academy Trust Company upon appointment and before and during the exercise of any duties as a director⁶;
- To conduct the Academy Trust Company and its academies in accordance with its Articles of Association any Scheme of Delegation adopted by the Academy Trust Company;
- To become familiar with, to support and implement the policies and procedures of the Diocese [and the 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 collectively, specifically the Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools;

⁵ 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 such as legislation of the Bishops' Conference, directives of the diocesan bishop and legislation of the school's religious order (if any).

⁶ 45A of Multi Academy Trust model Articles of Association for Catholic Schools (February 2015)

- To consider not only the interests of the Academy Trust Company but also the interests of other Catholic schools, academies and colleges and of 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, director induction and continuing professional development training, as required by the Diocese;
 - In all actions, serving as a witness to the Catholic faith.
- I declare that I am not disqualified by law from appointment as a director.
- I confirm that I agree to a barred list check 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 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 [or religious order], including the sharing of data with third parties where required, in accordance with diocesan [or religious order] policy.

I undertake that I shall tender my resignation as a director if my circumstances change so as to contravene the diocesan [or religious order] expectations at any time during the tenure of office or if, in the opinion of the Ordinary [or Religious Superior], 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 absolute discretion of the Ordinary [or Religious Superior] and that, because of the nature of the decision-making process, the Ordinary [or Religious Superior] 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.