



School Committee Code of Conduct 2023/2024

Holmesdale Community Infant School is a member school of the Greensand Multi-Academy Trust (“the Trust”). This Code of Conduct is based on the Governance Handbook & Academy Trust Handbook and should be read in conjunction with the Trust’s current Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation.

This Code sets out the expectations of and commitment required from us as members of the School Committee for Holmesdale Community Infant School. It promotes effective working practices that are mutually supportive and respectful of roles & responsibilities across the Trust. As holders of public office, we will abide by the seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles):

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

We recognise and support the principles set out in the [charity governance code](#).

In addition, we will comply with the Department for Education’s Competency Framework for Governance, which expects all those involved in governance to be:

- Committed
- Confident
- Curious
- Challenging
- Collaborative
- Critical
- Creative

The School Committee has the following core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

As individual governors, we agree to fulfil these core functions through adherence to the following principles & commitments:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the role and responsibilities of the School Committee and that of the Headteacher and the executive leaders of the Trust as outlined in the Department for Education (DfE) Governance Handbook (October 2020) and have ensured that we are familiar with the guidance within the Governance Handbook;

- We accept that our role is strategic and focused on the three core functions;
- We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our Scheme of Delegation;
- We will develop and share the ethos and values of our Trust;
- We will actively support and challenge the Headteacher and executive leaders and be constructive and respectful when holding them to account;
- We will respect lines of demarcation and the role of the Headteacher and not involve ourselves in the day-to-day management of the school;
- We acknowledge that being a governor involves the commitment of time and involvement in school life and to our own individual professional development;
- We understand the requirement to attend meetings and will make every effort to be present at all meetings. If this is not possible, we will submit our apologies and explanation, at least 24 hours in advance of a meeting, to the Clerk to the School Committee;
- We will prepare for meetings by reading all relevant paperwork and attend meetings and visits prepared to make an informed and positive contribution, and observe meeting/visit protocols;
- We will actively involve ourselves in the work of the School Committee and develop our knowledge of the school through regular visits and involvement in school activities;
- We will regularly reflect on our individual knowledge, skills and experiences relevant to governance and how these impact on individual and collective training and development needs of the School Committee. We will access appropriate training and development activities in order to contribute to effective governance of Holmesdale Community Infant School;
- We will always reflect open governance and act appropriately;
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the School Committee has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the School Committee when we have been specifically authorised to do so;
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, transparency and compliance with statutory regulations, our full names, date of appointment, appointing body, terms of office, roles on the School Committee, together with records of our attendance at meetings and relevant pecuniary and business interests will be published on the school and Trust website;
- We accept that information relating to governors will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get Information About Schools), some of which will be publicly available;
- We accept that the approved minutes and any agenda and papers considered at a meeting will be made available to any interested person upon request;
- We will have regard to our responsibilities under [The Equality Act 2010](#) and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all;
- We will act as the local ambassadors for our Trust & uphold the reputation of the Trust at all times;
- We agree to adhere to Trust policies and procedures, including submitting a completed and signed DBS declaration at the start of each academic year.

Collective Responsibility

- We will champion the voices of our local community and stakeholders;
- We will establish effective working relationships with our Trustees;
- We will strive to work as a team where professional relationships are actively promoted, maintained and respected with leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local communities;

- We will always act in the best interests of the whole school and the Trust and not represent individual or group interests;
- We will express views appropriately, openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications;
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each Governor's contributions are valued equally;
- We will consider how our decisions may affect the Trust and local community;
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the School Committee. We will not speak against decisions outside School Committee meetings, irrespective of our personal views, and always present a united front;
- We will support the role of the Chair in leading the SC and in ensuring appropriate and effective governance at all times.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality at all times, both inside or outside of the Trust when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families, even after we leave office;
- We will always exercise discretion when discussions regarding school/Trust business arise outside School Committee meetings;
- We will not reveal the details of any School Committee vote, including our own and other Governors' voting intentions or history;
- We will follow the Trust's Data Protection Policy & Data Retention & Destruction Policy when using, storing, sharing & disposing of personal data, including confidential papers;
- We will inform the Trust's Data Protection Officer, Wendy Hill, immediately if we believe there has been a personal data breach.

Conflicts of interest

- We recognise that a conflict of interest can arise when an individual's personal or family interests conflict with those of the school. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the School Committee and the school in general for recording in the Register of Interests, including the following:
 - links with individuals, businesses, contractors etc.;
 - directorships, shareholdings or other appointments where the school may purchase goods or services from or who are directly employed by the school; and
 - interests of related persons such as parent, spouse, co-habitee, child or business partners where influence could be exerted by that person over a governor or a member of staff.
- We will declare any potential conflict at the start of any meeting;
- We will also ensure that individual entries in the Register of Interests are regularly reviewed and updated;
- We will withdraw, for an appropriate length of time, from any meeting or discussion of the School Committee when our governor colleagues agree that there is a conflict of interest;
- We will always give careful consideration to perceived and clear conflicts of interest.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe a Governor’s action or behaviour during a meeting have breached this Code, we will always challenge this openly during that meeting;
- If we believe that a breach of the Code of Conduct has happened outside a meeting, this should be raised with the Chair and addressed with the outcome reported at the next School Committee meeting;
- If a Governor’s action or behaviour requires investigating, this will be undertaken by the Chair. In the event that it is the Chair’s action or behaviour that is being questioned, the Vice Chair will investigate;
- The School Committee, when considering breaches of this Code, recognises its statutory powers to suspend and or remove Governors and will apply these appropriately;
- The School Committee will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes.

Suspension of Governors

If a Governor’s action or behaviour is considered of such significance that it constitutes a breach of confidentiality or threatens to bring the school, School Committee, Trust, or the office of governor into disrepute, the School Committee can consider suspension for a period of up to six months.

Removal from Office

The School Committee in determining whether to remove, rather than suspend a Governor, will make reference to the Trust’s Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation in considering whether:

- There have been repeated grounds for suspension;
- Serious misconduct has occurred which either threatens to bring the school, School Committee, Trust or governance into disrepute;
- There has been serious or repeated failure to contribute meaningfully to the effectiveness of governance at the school, such as non-attendance at meetings, not engaging in training or not participating in meetings;
- They have engaged in conduct aimed at undermining British values;
- The actions of the governor are sufficiently detrimental and compromise the operational efficiency of the school.

N.B. The decision to remove a Governor from the School Committee must ultimately be considered and approved by the Trust’s Members and the Board of Trustees.

In signing this Code of Conduct, I accept the expectations implicit within it and agree to be accountable for my own conduct.

Signed:
Governor

Full Name: **Dated:**