



**'Learn, Endeavour, Aspire, Respect, Nurture'**

**GOVERNOR  
HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

# CONTENTS PAGE

	Page
Welcome	3
Vision, mission, values	5
Roles of the Governing Body	6
Timetable of meetings 2019-20	10
Sources of information	11
Rewards of being a governor	11
NGA Code of Conduct	12
Oxspring Primary School Governor Code of Conduct	17

# WELCOME

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Dear Governor

I would like to offer you a warm welcome to the Governing Body of Oxspring Primary School.

“The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

All boards, no matter what type of schools or how many schools they govern, have three core functions:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- **Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.” DfE Governance Handbook.**

**The governors at Oxspring Primary School have included a fourth function and that is ‘The Governing Body’s organisational efficiency and effectiveness: fitness for purpose’.**

At Oxspring there is provision for 13 governors; 4 parents; 1 staff; 1 Local Authority; 6 co-opted; and the Headteacher. The governors are there to represent the children not the people who elected or co-opted them.

All governors are encouraged to take an active part in the life and governance of the school. In addition they are given the opportunity to use and develop their own skills to

help the children gain as much benefit as they possibly can from their time at Oxspring Primary School.

As a Governing Body we have many responsibilities as well as facing challenges particularly when new initiatives and strategies are introduced, but by working together we can and do make a difference for the children at our school.

We are members of the National Governance Association (NGA) which offers very useful advice on its website [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) as well as emailing out a weekly newsletter in term time, and a hard copy of the bi monthly Governing Matters.

In addition the local Barnsley Governors' Association (BGA) holds regular training sessions as well as organising conferences throughout the year.

The Department for Education (DfE) also publishes a Governance Handbook. Please follow the link.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/788234/governance\\_handbook\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf)

I hope you will find being a Governor a pleasurable and rewarding experience, and look forward to working with you in the very near future.

Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Kind regards

**Mike Cassidy and Pam Heggie**  
**Co-Chairs of the Governing Body**

## Our Vision

‘Embracing Learning – a school for all’

## Our School’s Mission

‘To be a learning community with a culture of ambition and achievement’

## Our Motto

‘Learn, Endeavour, Aspire, Respect, Nurture’

## Our Values



# ROLES OF THE GOVERNING BODY

## **ROLES OF THE GOVERNING BODY:**

### **CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

*The Roles of the Governing Body should be read in conjunction with the Scheme of Delegation and the Terms of Reference, which provide further detail on committee and individual's financial responsibilities.*

### **CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

#### **Parent Governors** – (all state schools)

Any parents, or carer, of a registered pupil at the school at the time of election is eligible to stand for election for parent governor. Parent governors may continue to hold office until the end of their term of office even if their child leaves the school. Governing bodies may only appoint as a parent governor a parent who has, in their opinion, the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school. A parent governor is a representative and not a delegate of parents; neither is their role to promote the interests of their own children but all children.

#### **Staff Governors** – (all state schools)

Teaching and support staff who, at the time of the election, are employed by either the governing body or the local authority to work at the school under a contract of employment, are eligible to be staff governors. Staff governors are elected by school staff. They cease to hold office when they cease to work at the school. Their role will not be to represent staff, nor to stand alongside the Head Teacher in being held to account by the governing body, but to operate as part of the governing body to provide strategic leadership and to hold the head teacher to account.

#### **LA Governor** - (all state schools)

Local Authority governors are nominated by the local authority but appointed by the governing body. The local authority can nominate any eligible person as a local authority governor, but it is for the governing body to decide whether their nominee has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any other eligibility criteria they have set. An individual eligible to be a staff governor at the school may not be appointed as a local authority governor.

#### **Co-opted Governors**

Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body. They are people who in the opinion of the governing body have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

#### **Associate members**

Associate members are appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committee. They may also attend full governing body meetings. They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in governing board decisions, but may be given a vote on decisions made by committees to which they are appointed. Associate members should be appointed because of the specific expertise and experience they can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The governing board may appoint a pupil, school staff member or any other person so they can contribute their specific expertise and help address gaps identified in the skills of governing board members.

### **Training and Development**

All governors are expected to attend a school based induction which gives them more information about the roles and responsibilities and includes the Policy and Protocol for governor visits and Link Governor roles and expectations.

Governors are also provided with the timetable and dates for Local Authority (LA) and Barnsley Governors Association (BGA) Governor Training, and signposted to relevant training, as well as being expected to undertake generic Induction Training offered by one of these organisations

In addition, all governors are given initial introduction to Safeguarding, particularly Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and provided with regular updates and training as appropriate, including online safety and PREVENT.

A Training and Development record is maintained on the school's OneDrive for governors to update as appropriate.

The Governing Body maintains a Skills Audit which can be used to help identify any knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours the governing body still needs to deliver their functions effectively. Whilst no individual governor is expected to have all the skills listed in the audit, they should be covered across the governing body.

## **SCHOOL FUNDING**

### **Revenue Funding (Main Budget Allocation)**

Revenue funding comes from the local authority and is known as the delegated budget. It provides funding for the day-to-day running costs of the school, for example staff salaries, energy costs, learning resources etc.

The Department for Education (DfE) will calculate the amount of funding local authorities are to receive to spend on schools, and will distribute this in the form of a ring-fenced grant known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The DSG is delegated to individual schools on the basis of the local funding formula, which distributes the majority of funding to schools on the basis of pupil numbers.

### **Capital Funding (DFC)**

Capital funding is made available to schools for spending on school buildings and/or furniture and equipment (including ICT equipment). The funding cannot be used to support the day-to-day running costs of the school or any routine building maintenance.

All schools receive a devolved capital allocation, which is calculated on a formulaic basis. In addition to this local authorities receive capital funding for schools, which is utilised on individual schools according to need.

### **Pupil Premium**

The pupil premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to support pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM').

The government believes that Headteacher and school leaders should decide how to use the pupil premium. They are held accountable for the decisions they make through:

- the performance tables which show the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers
- the Ofsted inspection framework, under which inspectors focus on the attainment of pupil groups, and in particular those who attract the pupil premium
- the reports for parents that schools have to publish online.

### **The Governing Body and the School Budget**

The Governing Body has a statutory responsibility for the financial management of the school, which includes deciding how the available funding is spent. In its strategic role, it must set the educational and financial priorities for the school and ensure the budget is managed effectively. It has a legal obligation to agree the annual budget plan, which must be submitted to the local authority.

The budget for the school should follow the priorities and objectives as set out in the School Improvement Plan. The Governing Body may delegate the preparation of the budget to a committee, who should ensure that the Head Teacher and Admin / Finance Officer are also involved in the budget setting process as appropriate. The committee may also wish to have due regard to benchmarking data available for other schools in similar situations. This may be found in school or on the DfE website.

The Governing Body ensures that its financial responsibilities and those of its committees, the Headteacher and other staff are clearly defined and set down in The Financial Procedures Manual, Delegation Planner, and Terms of reference. This allows the Governing Body to ensure that appropriate and robust systems of financial control are in place and that it receives the information it needs to carry out its role.

Once the budget has been approved, the Governing Body should monitor spending regularly throughout the year to ensure that it is in line with the budget. Where significant variances are identified these should be understood and any appropriate action and subsequent amendments to the budget made.

Schools are subject to both local authority auditing of the schools financial procedures and practices and possibly external audit as part of the audit of the local authority. The Governing Body should receive the auditor's report and ensure that any recommendations are acted upon and implemented as necessary.

As part of the inspection process, OFSTED will look at how well the school makes use of its resources and how these are linked to educational priorities.

## TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2019 - 2020

<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>
<b>FGB</b>	10.10.19 @ 6pm 21.11.19 @ 6pm	23.1.20 @ 6pm (Thursday) 27.2.20 @ 6pm	21.5.20 @6pm 25.6.20 @6pm (Thursday)
<b>SAM</b>	26.9.19 @ 6pm 7.11.19 @ 6pm	26.3.20 @ 6pm	11.6.20 @ 6pm
<b>Special</b>	As required	As required	As required
<b>Governor Days</b>	28.11.19 (Thursday)	17.3.20 (Tuesday)	18.6.20 (Thursday)



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

<http://www.barnsleyga.org/bga/index.php/support/governors-handbook>

<http://www.barnsleyga.org/bga/index.php/information/external-links>

<https://www.nga.org.uk/Home.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/education/school-governance>

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/safeguarding-families-in-barnsley/safeguarding-children-in-barnsley/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

### **Rewards of being a governor**

Being a governor is a rewarding and valuable experience. While undertaking your role as governor you are:

- investing in the next generation through provision of a sound and good quality education;
- developing new skills;
- acquiring new knowledge;
- developing a sense of community involvement and partnership;
- using your personal qualities and expertise to help the school, its pupils and its staff;
- making new friends

# Code of Conduct for School Governing Governing bodies

## 2019 Version

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors, trustees and academy committee members in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the ethos of the particular school. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' includes academies, and it applies to all levels of school governance.

This code can also be tailored to reflect your specific governing body and school structure, whether that is as a maintained school or academy, either as a single school or group of schools. Where multiple options are given, i.e. senior executive leader/headteacher and governor/trustee/academy committee member, please amend to leave the option relevant to your governing body.

Once approved by the governing body, the Code will apply to all governors.

**This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, their articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation. It should be adapted as appropriate depending on the governance setting and level of delegation. However, its guiding principles should be retained regardless of the governance setting and level of delegation afforded to it.**

### **The governing body has the following 3 strategic functions:**

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

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

Ensuring accountability, by:

- 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

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

Ensure that other key players with a stake in the organisation get their voices heard by:

- Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results.
- Reaching out to the school's wider community and inviting them to play their part.
- Using the views of stakeholders to shape the school's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures.

### **As individuals on the governing body we agree to the following:**

#### **Role & Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and its strategic role.
- We understand how the role of the governing body differs from and works with others including the Headteacher.
- We 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 we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body 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. 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 body.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the governing body 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 body 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.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing body.

## **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 body, 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 and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body.
- 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 consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, 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 (Get information about schools).

## **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 body 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 will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities' any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see annex) or which may place pupils at risk.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governing body 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 Headteacher, 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 body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body 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 body'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 body.

### **Ceasing to be a governor**

- 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 and the chair will investigate; the governing body 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 body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

Adopted by the governing body of Oxspring Primary School on



**Oxspring Primary School**  
**Code of Conduct for Governors**  
**2019-20**

**Code of Conduct**

To help keep our children safe and to help safeguard governors and the school from any unnecessary difficulties, we have created the following governors' 'code of conduct' which we ask all governors to agree to:

- I will sign in and out of school and will wear the governor lanyard throughout my visit.
- I will ensure that all doors and gates are closed behind me.
- I will not open the door to any unknown adult. I will direct any visitors to the school office. If the school office is closed, I will direct them to a member of staff
- I will keep everything that I see and hear in school confidential.
- I will not discuss another child with anyone outside school. I will observe confidentiality in respect of all information gained through my participation as a governor. (All information held by schools should be handled with care. Some information is especially sensitive. Sensitive and/or personal information requires additional caution in the way it is treated. For example, governors should not discuss nor disclose personal information about pupils, staff, other governors or parents /carers).
- I have been given a copy of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (updated September 2019), the Behaviour Policy and the safeguarding induction sheet. I understand that Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. I understand my role in keeping the children safe at Oxspring Primary School and have been made aware of the safeguarding procedures.
- If I have concerns about a child, I will share them immediately with Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Irwin), the Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr West) or the class teacher.
- If a parent raises a concern with me, I will refer them to the class teacher or the Headteacher.
- When working in school, I will not use my mobile phone (except in the staffroom at break times).
- I will not take any photos of children in school
- I will not post anything confidential about school on social media.
- I have been made aware of the fire drill procedures.
- I have had the opportunity to discuss any induction questions with a senior member of staff.

If you are happy to follow these procedures and understand the importance of our confidentiality arrangements, please sign below. Please be aware that, in the interests of the children's safety, if this 'Code of Conduct' is not followed, we may have to decline any future inclusion in school and/or offsite activities. Thank you for your understanding.

Governor:.....

(Print name)

I have read, understand and agree to follow Oxspring Primary School's Governors' 'Code of Conduct'.

Signed:.....

Date.....