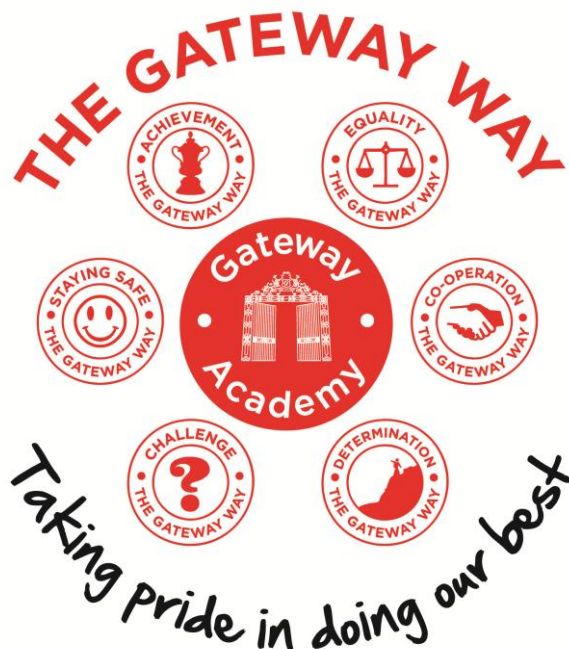


Code of Conduct for Governors

Revised September 2026



Purpose and Status of the Code

- This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour, professionalism and commitment expected of all Governors of Gateway Academy. It applies whenever a Governor is acting in their governance capacity, including at meetings, during school visits, in communications with the school community and when using digital or social media.
- The Code should be read alongside the Academy's Articles of Association, governance arrangements and Scheme of Delegation, and relevant school policies and procedures. It does not replace those documents. Governors are expected to comply with all applicable legal, regulatory and governance requirements.

The Role of the Governing Board

- The Governing Board provides strategic oversight and accountability. It does not undertake the day-to-day management of the Academy.
- Set and maintain clarity of the Academy's vision, ethos, values and strategic objectives.
- Agree and monitor the Academy's priorities, improvement strategy and targets.

- Hold the Headteachers and senior leaders to account for educational performance, safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, attendance and other agreed priorities.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Academy's provision and contribute to self-evaluation and improvement.
- Oversee financial performance, ensuring that resources are used appropriately and value for money is secured.
- Ensure that key statutory duties, risks and compliance requirements receive appropriate oversight.
- Engage appropriately with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community to inform governance.

Core Principles – The Seven Principles of Public Life

- Governors will uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles):
- Selflessness – act solely in the public interest and not for personal or private benefit.
- Integrity – avoid obligations to people or organisations that might seek to influence governance decisions improperly.
- Objectivity – make decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using evidence and appropriate information.
- Accountability – accept responsibility for decisions and actions and submit to appropriate scrutiny.
- Openness – be as open as possible about decisions and actions, while protecting information where confidentiality or the wider public interest requires it.
- Honesty – declare relevant private interests and take appropriate steps to manage conflicts.
- Leadership – promote these principles through personal example and support high standards of conduct.

Role, Authority and Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Board and the distinct role of the Headteachers and executive leadership.
- We accept that an individual Governor has no authority to act on behalf of the Governing Board unless specifically authorised or delegated to do so.
- We will only speak on behalf of the Governing Board when authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for decisions properly made by the Governing Board or through delegated authority.
- We will support the implementation of properly made collective decisions, even where our personal view differed during discussion.
- We will not direct, instruct or challenge individual members of staff about operational matters unless this is specifically within our delegated role.

- We will respect the Headteachers' responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the Academy and will avoid actions that undermine this responsibility.
- We will act fairly, objectively and without prejudice and will consider the interests of the Academy as a whole rather than those of an individual group.
- When acting in our governance role, we will uphold the Academy's ethos, values, policies and agreed decisions.

Standards of Behaviour and Professionalism

- Governors will maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism at all times.
- Treat Governors, the Clerk, the Headteacher, staff, pupils, parents and other members of the school community with courtesy, dignity and respect.
- Listen actively and allow others to express their views without interruption.
- Challenge ideas, evidence and decisions constructively rather than criticising individuals.
- Accept legitimate challenge to our own views and be willing to change our position where evidence or discussion warrants it.
- Avoid personal attacks, intimidation, bullying, harassment, discriminatory behaviour, aggressive or threatening language, or conduct that could reasonably be perceived as disrespectful.
- Avoid factional behaviour, lobbying or attempts to undermine colleagues or properly made decisions outside the appropriate governance process.
- Support the Chair in maintaining appropriate conduct and effective meetings.
- Maintain professional behaviour even where discussions are difficult or views differ strongly.

Constructive Challenge and Decision-Making

- Effective governance requires both support and challenge. Governors will ask appropriate questions, seek evidence and hold leaders to account while maintaining trust and professional relationships.
- Challenge constructively, proportionately and through the appropriate governance forum.
- Base decisions on the best available evidence and information rather than personal preference, anecdote or pressure from individuals.
- Declare relevant interests before participating in a discussion or decision.
- Respect the democratic decision-making process of the Governing Board.
- Once a decision has been properly made, support its implementation and communicate it appropriately.
- Not seek to reopen or undermine decisions through informal approaches to staff, parents or other Governors.

Professional Boundaries and Role Separation

- We will maintain clear boundaries between governance and operational management.
- We will not use our position as a Governor to obtain preferential treatment for ourselves, family members or others.
- We will not become involved in individual staffing, pupil or operational matters unless the matter falls within our agreed governance responsibilities.
- We will not investigate concerns, complaints, safeguarding matters or staff issues ourselves unless specifically authorised as part of a formal governance process.
- We will raise concerns through the appropriate governance route and allow the Headteachers and staff to carry out their operational responsibilities.

Commitment, Attendance and Training

- We recognise that serving as a Governor requires a significant commitment of time, energy and preparation.
- We will attend meetings wherever possible, give reasonable notice of absence and provide an explanation where we cannot attend.
- We will read papers in advance, prepare appropriately and participate actively in meetings and agreed committee or working-group activity.
- We will undertake relevant induction, safeguarding and other governance training and keep our knowledge up to date.
- We will take opportunities to understand the Academy's work, including appropriately arranged school visits and engagement with school activities.
- School visits undertaken in a governance capacity will be arranged in advance with the Headteachers and follow the agreed framework. When visiting as a parent or carer, we will maintain appropriate boundaries and our underlying responsibilities as a Governor.

Relationships and Teamwork

- We will strive to build constructive, professional working relationships with other Governors, the Clerk, the Headteacher, staff, parents, the Trust, the local authority and relevant agencies.
- We will communicate openly, courteously and respectfully in and outside meetings.
- We will recognise and respect the contribution, time, skills and responsibilities of others.
- We will raise disagreements through appropriate channels rather than through personal criticism or informal campaigns.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- We will place the welfare and safety of children at the centre of our governance responsibilities.

- We will understand and comply with the Academy's safeguarding and child protection arrangements and relevant statutory requirements, including Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Prevent duty.
- We will undertake safeguarding and child protection training and keep our knowledge current.
- We will report safeguarding concerns promptly through the Academy's established procedures and will not investigate concerns independently.
- We will maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and will not seek information about individual children unless this is necessary for our governance role and lawfully available.
- We will provide appropriate challenge and oversight to ensure safeguarding is effective across the Academy.

Confidentiality, Data Protection and Information

- We will maintain confidentiality in relation to confidential Academy business, personal information, staffing matters, pupil matters, safeguarding information and other information that is not intended for wider disclosure.
- We will only access, use or disclose personal or confidential information where this is necessary for our governance role or where there is a lawful or statutory basis for doing so.
- We will comply with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Academy's data protection policies and procedures.
- We will store, transmit and dispose of confidential papers and electronic information securely and appropriately.
- We will exercise particular care when discussing Academy business outside formal meetings.
- We will not disclose individual voting records or confidential discussions unless disclosure is authorised or legally required.
- Confidentiality obligations continue after a Governor leaves office.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- We will promote equality, diversity and inclusion and act fairly and without unlawful discrimination.
- We will support the Academy's commitment to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- We will promote respect for individual liberty, the rule of law, democracy and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.
- We will consider the impact of governance decisions on children, families, staff and the wider community.

Conflicts of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality

- We will declare relevant financial, business, personal or other interests, including interests connected with people or organisations with whom we have a close relationship.
- We will keep our Register of Interests accurate and update it whenever circumstances change, as well as completing the required annual declaration.
- We will declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of a relevant meeting or as soon as it becomes apparent.
- We will withdraw from discussion and decision-making where required and leave the meeting where directed by the Chair or required by the Academy's governance arrangements.
- We will not use our position to secure financial or other benefits for ourselves, family members, friends or connected organisations.
- We will not accept gifts, hospitality or other benefits that could influence, or could reasonably be perceived to influence, our governance decisions or actions.
- We will act in the best interests of Gateway Academy as a whole and not as a representative of a particular group, even where elected or appointed to represent a particular category.

Complaints, Concerns and Whistleblowing

- We will follow the Academy's agreed complaints, whistleblowing and governance procedures.
- We will not investigate or seek to resolve individual complaints, concerns or disputes outside those procedures.
- We will not promise a particular outcome or use our position as a Governor to influence the handling or outcome of a complaint.
- Where a concern is brought to us, we will direct it to the appropriate procedure or person rather than attempting to resolve it ourselves.
- Where a Governor has a specific governance responsibility within a formal process, they will act impartially and maintain confidentiality.

Communication and Social Media

- We will communicate professionally and respectfully in all correspondence, including email, messaging platforms and social media.
- We will not disclose confidential information or identify individual pupils, families or staff in connection with confidential Academy matters.
- We will not use social media to discuss individual complaints, safeguarding matters, staffing matters, disputes or other confidential school business.
- We will not make statements purporting to represent the Governing Board unless authorised to do so.
- Where expressing a personal view, we will make clear that it is a personal view and will take care not to imply that it represents the Academy or Governing Board.

- We will be mindful that conduct in a private capacity may affect confidence in the Academy where it is reasonably connected to our role as a Governor.

Remote Meetings

- The same standards of professionalism, confidentiality and conduct apply to remote meetings as to face-to-face meetings.
- We will join on time, having read the agenda and relevant papers and prepared to contribute.
- We will participate from a suitable, private environment where confidential discussions cannot be overheard.
- We will not participate in meetings while driving or undertaking another activity that compromises attention, safety or participation.
- We will keep cameras on where reasonably possible and follow the Chair's arrangements for participation.
- We will mute microphones when not speaking and use the raise-hand or agreed meeting function appropriately.
- We will not record, photograph, screenshot or share meeting content without appropriate authorisation.
- We will use school-approved platforms and accounts where required and follow data protection arrangements for electronic documents.
- If disconnected, we will attempt to rejoin promptly and notify the Chair or Clerk where appropriate.

Leaving Office

Governors understand that the duties of confidentiality and appropriate handling of information continue after they cease to hold office. Former Governors must not use confidential information obtained through their governance role for personal, professional or other purposes.

Breach of the Code and Consequences

- Governors are expected to uphold this Code at all times. Concerns about conduct will be addressed fairly, proportionately and in accordance with the Academy's governance arrangements.
- Where appropriate, the Chair will seek to address a concern informally in the first instance, including through discussion, clarification, guidance, agreed actions or relevant training.
- Serious or repeated breaches may require a formal response under the Academy's governance arrangements, Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation or other applicable procedures.
- A Governor will be given an appropriate opportunity to respond to concerns about their conduct.

- Where a concern relates to the Chair, the Vice-Chair or another appropriately authorised person will manage the matter in accordance with the Academy's governance arrangements.
- Serious breaches may include breach of confidentiality or data protection; inappropriate, bullying, harassing, discriminatory or intimidating conduct; misuse of a Governor's position; failure to declare a relevant conflict of interest; unauthorised disclosure of confidential information; persistent refusal to comply with reasonable governance procedures; or conduct that brings the Governing Board or Academy into serious disrepute.
- Any sanction or removal will be undertaken only by the person or body with the appropriate authority and in accordance with the applicable legal and governance framework.

Transparency and Governance Information

We accept that information about Governors required by law or applicable governance arrangements may be published on the Academy's website or recorded on relevant DfE or Trust systems.

We will provide accurate information for governance records, including relevant declarations of interest, appointment information and attendance information where required.

Annual Governor Declaration

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Gateway Academy Governor Code of Conduct. I understand that this Code applies whenever I am acting in my capacity as a Governor and that failure to comply may result in action under the Academy's agreed governance procedures.

Governor name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date of annual review/declaration: _____

Related Documents

- Gateway Academy Articles of Association / applicable governance arrangements
- Scheme of Delegation
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection / Privacy arrangements
- Equality and Diversity arrangements
- Relevant DfE governance guidance and statutory requirements