

## Portsmouth College Code of Conduct for Governors

The Governing Board or Corporation has the following core strategic functions:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the college and its students, and the performance management of staff; and
- overseeing the financial performance of the college and making sure it is money well spent

The Governing Board has adopted the following principles:

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life)

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

**The Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order, 2001 added three additional principles to those identified by the Nolan Committee.**

**Respect for others:** Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.

**Duty to uphold the law:** Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

**Stewardship:** Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

## As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

### Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Principal as set out in the Instrument and Articles of Government.
- 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 government and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community, schools and other colleges.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our college. Our actions within the college 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 Principal.

### Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor can involve 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 college well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in college activities.
- We will visit the college, with all visits arranged in advance.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.

### 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 and the clerk to the governing board.

- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- 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 Principal, staff and parents 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 students, both inside or outside college.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding college business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.

### **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 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 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 college as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

### **Breach of this code of conduct**

If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair or the Vice Chair and the Chair/Vice Chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

**This Code of Conduct was adopted by the Corporation in March 2017**