Squirrel Hayes First School

Policy Reviewed on	March 2020	Sept 2020	October 2021	Oct 2022	Oct 2023	Dec 2024	Oct 2025	Oct 2026
Policy Owner Signature	EJP	EJP	EJP	EJP	EJP	EJP	Full Govs	Full Govs
Policy adopted by the Governing Body on	March 2020	Sept 2020	07.10.21	Oct 2022	24.10,2023	03.12.2024	21.10.2025	20.10.2026
Chair of Govs/Committee Signature								
Policy Reviewed Date	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Oct 22	Oct 2023	Oct 24	Dec 2025	Oct 2026	Oct 2027
Version	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10

Governors Code of Conduct

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

BIDDULPH SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP TRUST
(a mutual co-operative membership trust)

Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards –2020 Version

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour, expectations and conduct expected of school governors, trustees and academy members. **It is expected that all governors will know, understand and work within the prescribed regulatory framework.**

They must comply with the updated General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

The Board

The **Board** is legally responsible for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. It may delegate responsibilities to Local Governing Boards of Committees through a scheme of delegation.

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

Core Functions of the Board Including Local GBs

1. **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**

   It is the job of the Governing Board (GB) to:

   - Set a clear and explicit vision.
   - Ensure strong and clear values and ethos are defined and modelled by the board.
   - Set the school's strategic framework, defining medium to long-term goals and processes to monitor and review progress.
   - Ensure mechanisms are in place for the board to listen, understand and respond to the voices of parents, pupils, staff and the local community.

2. **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff**

   This will take place through:

   - A rigorous analysis of pupil progress and attainment.
   - Clear processes for overseeing and monitoring school improvement.
   - A transparent system for the performance management of the headteacher / executive leaders.
   - Effective oversight of the performance of all other employees.
   - A regular cycle of meetings.

3. **Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources**

   The GB is responsible for making sure the school's money is well spent with effective controls for managing it. They should do this by ensuring they have at least one Governor with specific skills and experience of financial matters, but everyone on the board should have a basic understanding of the financial cycle and legal requirements.

The GB should play a strategic role and leave the running of the school to the Headteacher they have appointed. The GB must not interfere in the day-to-day (operational) running of the school.

Ways of Working

- The way the board operates and organises itself should be kept under review.
- The board should consider how to use their powers to delegate functions and decisions to committees or individual governors.
- The board must review the scheme of delegation, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of annually.
- The board must meet at least three times a year.
- Headteachers / executive leaders and chairs should work together to ensure that meetings are well planned at appropriate intervals and that agendas are fit for purpose.
- The GB must appoint a Clerk to Governors to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and ensure the GB operates efficiently and effectively.

The Headteacher

- The headteacher's / SEL's responsibilities include the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the educational performance of the school.
- The headteacher / SEL will deliver the aims of the GB through the day-to-day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy and the delivery of the curriculum.
- It is the headteacher's / SEL's legal duty to provide the GB with all the information they need to do their job well. This means they should help the GB access the data published by the DfE and Ofsted. They should also provide regularly a wide range of other management information so that the GB can monitor different aspects of life in the school throughout the year.
- The headteacher / SEL must comply with any reasonable direction of the GB
- The headteacher/SEL is accountable to the GB for the performance of all his or her responsibilities.

The Chair

- The GB must appoint a Chair of Governors (COG) to lead and manage the GB
- The COG plays a crucial role in setting the culture of the GB
- The COG may make only make decisions or act on behalf of the GB if:
    - The GB have delegated that decision to the Chair of Governors
    - The COG is of the opinion that a delay in exercising a function would be detrimental to the school, anyone who works at the school or any pupil at the school or their parent.
- The COG is the principle link between the GB and the Headteacher. The Headteacher and Chair should meet regularly at mutually convenient times to discuss school matters and the Chair should be a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement.
- The COG works with the clerk to set GB agendas and approves draft minutes of GB meetings.

The Vice-Chair

In the absence of a COG, the Vice-Chair (VCOG) will take on that role.

Chairs of Committees

Chairs of committees work with the Clerk to set committee meeting agendas and approve draft minutes for those meetings. They have responsibility for ensuring that if a function of the GB has been delegated to the committee or a function of the GB has otherwise been exercised by the committee, it is reported to the GB.

Governors

In law, the GB is a corporate body, which means **that no** governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the GB. All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions. If a function of the GB has been delegated to an individual, the individual must report to the GB in respect of any action taken or decision made.

The overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole, regardless of the route by which they were appointed and the type of governor they are i.e. Staff, Parent, Community, Local Authority, Foundation, Co-opted.

For GBs to carry out their role effectively, governors must be prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously. They should:

- Be committed to improving education and welfare for all pupils.
- Prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand.
- Ask questions to clarify understanding and gain assurances.
- Make every effort to attend meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time.
- Take responsibility for their own learning, training and development as a Governor.

In addition, they should:

- Work as a member of a team at all times and be loyal to collective decisions made by the GB.
- Recognise that all governors have the same rights.
- Act in the best interests of the school at all times.
- Not do anything that might undermine the GB's statutory requirement to promote community cohesion.
- Promote British Values with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Respect confidentiality.
- Listen to and respect the views of others.
- Express their own views clearly and succinctly.
- Declare any conflicts of interest.
- Take their fair share of work/positions of responsibility.
- Know, understand and work within the prescribed regulatory framework.
- Report any evidence of fraud, corruption or misconduct to an appropriate person or Authority.
- Adhere to the seven principles of public life (below) originally published by the Nolan Committee.

- Ensure that communication undertaken via social networking sites is comparable to one to one interaction, meaning that all aspects of this code of conduct are taken account of when posting information, messages, pictures or video footage on-line.

The Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life and the Framework of Ethical Leadership

As recommended by the Committee on Standards in Public Life 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.

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Leadership -** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

The Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, these aren't just fine words, they are meant to support a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.

1. **Selflessness:** School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
2. **Integrity:** School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
3. **Objectivity:** School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the

best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.

4. **Accountability:** School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness:** School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty:** School and college leaders should be truthful.
7. **Leadership:** School and college leaders 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. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them

The Agreement

In General

a) We understand the purpose of the GB and the role of the headteacher, COG, VCOG Chairs of Committees as set out above.

b) We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life.

c) We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing 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.

d) 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.

e) We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.

f) We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Board meeting.

g) We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.

h) We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school and to promote community cohesion. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.

i) In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the GB.

k) We understand that communication via social networking sites in a variety of formats is deemed comparable to one to one interaction for the purposes of this code of conduct.

Commitment

a) We acknowledge that accepting an office as a governor involves the commitment of time and energy.

b) We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the GB, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups or as nominated governors.

c) We will prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand.

d) We will make every effort to attend all meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time. Where we cannot, we will endeavour to explain in advance in full why we are unable to.

e) We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.

f) Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the GB and agreed with the Headteacher.

g) We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development and will undertake relevant training.

h) We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

Relationships

a) We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.

b) We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully. The governor chairing a meeting is responsible for ensuring appropriate conduct at all times, and the other governors are responsible for supporting the Chair in that role.

c) We are prepared to answer queries from other governors 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.

d) We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the where applicable other schools in the trust, leaders, staff, parents and other relevant agencies and the community.

e) 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 or which may place pupils at risk.

Confidentiality

a) 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.

b) We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a Governing Board meeting.

c) We will not reveal the details of any GB vote.

d) We will not reveal the details of discussions in GB meetings or comments made by individual Governors at those meetings.

Ceasing to Be A Governor and/or Trustee Member

We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor/trustee/academy committee member leaves office

Conflicts of Interest

a) We will record any pecuniary interest that we have in connection with the GB's business in the Register of Business Interests.

b) We will declare any personal or pecuniary interest in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Implementation of this Code of Conduct

a) We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of conduct by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the Governing Board and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted.

b) We understand that any Governor whose conduct is minuted twice in twelve months shall be suspended for a period of six months from the date of the second minute.

c) We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations which pertain to qualification and disqualification for the role of school Governor and grounds for suspension and the 2017 amendment regarding parent and staff governors.

d) We understand that no Governor/Associate member can refuse a DBS check and that all Governors must hold an Enhanced DBS certificate.

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 board 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 board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

Publication on Website

The following information about each governor / associate member will be published on the school's website:

- Name.
- Category of Governor.
- Which body appoints them.
- Term of office.
- The names of any committees the Governor serves on.
- Details of any positions of responsibility such as Chair or Vice-Chair of the Governing Board or a committee.
- Attendance at meetings.

GBs have a duty to publish on their website their register of interests. The register should set out the relevant business interests of governors and details of any other educational establishments they Govern. The register should also set out any relationships between governors and members of the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives.

Get Information About Schools (GIAS)

The following additional Governor information will be held, but not published, on GIAS – a Government National database.

- Post Code.
- Date of Birth.
- Previous names.
- Nationality

Version No.	Date of review	Reviewer	Changes Made
01	Sept 2018	Full Governors	New document using LA's updated Model
02	November 2019	Full Governors	Reviewed
03	March 2020	Full Governors	Adopted Entrust Model for 2020
04	Sept 2020	Full Governors	Reviewed
05	Oct 2021	Full Governors	Reviewed
06	Oct 2022	Full Governors	Reviewed
07	October 2023	Full Governors	Reviewed

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Version No.	Date of review	Reviewer	Changes Made
08	December 2024	Full Governors	Reviewed
09	October 2025	Full Governors	Reviewed
10	October 2026	Full Governors	Reviewed

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The Board of Squirrel Hayes First School adopted this code of conduct on 26.03.2020

Chair of Governors Signature:

Governors will sign the Code at the first Governing Board meeting of each school year. Anyone joining the Governing Board during the year will be asked to sign the agreement at the time of appointment.

Signed	Print Name	Date

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