

# ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## **Governor Code of Conduct Policy** **(School Policy)**

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Pupils in St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School are happy, confident and very proud of their school. They clearly understand their mission statement, 'Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him.' They can quote scripture to give examples of how they do their best to follow Jesus every day. Pupils explain that if they ever feel worried about something they are confident that adults will help them in a discreet and caring way. They are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the more vulnerable members of society and can reference Catholic social teaching when discussing their work with the local foodbank.

### **Catholic Schools Inspectorate October 2024**

Pupils enjoy school. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils strive to do their best and achieve well. Pupils are extremely kind and caring. They frequently give up their free time to help each other. Lessons are free from disruption and lunchtimes are a buzz of happy and harmonious play.

**Ofsted May 2024**

*Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our Church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him*

At St Margaret Clitherow School we are committed to Safeguarding Children

The following code aims to ensure that Governors are able to support the work of the school through effective engagement with school members at different levels. The aim is to ensure that Governors, staff and all associated with the school are aware of the remit of Governors, their level of accountability and their essential place in determining the strategic direction of the school.

### **General**

The headteacher is responsible for the day to day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation of the curriculum. Governors have a responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates and monitoring the financing of such.

- The main aims of the school are to raise and sustain high levels of educational achievement and progress for all its pupils through active participation in a Catholic education.
- The governing body will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its three roles:
  - To provide a strategic view of where the school is heading (in relation to standards and in relation to the Catholic Church)
  - To act as a critical friend by providing support, advice and appropriate challenge to the school.
  - To hold the school to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides and for the Catholic life and education that it delivers.
- All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.
- Foundation Governors have a particular duty, acting as the Bishop's representative, to ensure that Catholic Life and Education are at the heart of everything that happens and to ensure that the school acts within parameters laid down in Canon Law.
- Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- In so far as they have, or share responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools.
- Governors should encourage open government and should be seen to do so.
- Governors do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual governors have power only when it is delegated specifically to them by the whole governing body.

### **Commitment**

- Being a governor involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on the governing body of a school.
- All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept a fair share of the responsibilities, including service on committees.
- Regular attendance at meetings of both the full governing body and committees is essential.
- Governors should know the school well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in school activities as opportunities arise.

### **Relationships**

- Governors should strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff, parents, the Local Authority, the Diocese, other relevant agencies and the local community.

## **Confidentiality**

- Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
- Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body. Those seeking clarification from a Governor, should be directed to the Headteacher.

## **Conduct**

- Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- Governors should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically asked to do so.
- All visits to school should be undertaken within a framework which has been established by the governing body and agreed with the headteacher.
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should refer to the school's 'Complaints Procedure' for the correct procedure to be followed and should direct the complainant accordingly.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the Catholic ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community and beyond should reflect this.
- Any pecuniary interest that a governor may have in connection with the governing body's business must be recorded in the register of pecuniary interests.
- Where an interest is declared, the governor must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.

## **Training and Development**

Governor training and development is important. It benefits the school and individual governors, and can help to develop effective teamwork. Governors are encouraged to undertake training to further their individual interests within the governing body and the work of the governing body as a whole.

## **Mentoring**

An experienced governor who acts as a mentor to new governors can provide support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the governing body.

## **Meetings**

Individual governors do not have any authority in school. It is the collective decisions of all the governors together that carry authority. The activities that governors undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for the times when the governing body 'goes live' - in a meeting.

It follows that if a governing body is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial. The Meetings Charter (below) aims to unpick responsibilities in order that our meetings can be really effective.

## **Meetings Charter**

### **As a governor I expect:**

- people to attend regularly and be punctual;
- an agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before the meeting;
- an agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;

- a Chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point;
- my contributions to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;
- the decision making process to be quite clear;
- having prepared, to ask questions that are appropriately challenging
- to have all fair challenges responded to;
- governors to work together;
- governors to take collective responsibility for decisions;
- minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

**Others can expect me to:**

- attend regularly and be punctual;
- read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;
- bring my papers to the meeting;
- make relevant and positive contributions, including appropriate challenge as and when required;
- listen to and consider what other people want to say;
- accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.

**Visiting the School**

Although Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to the school in order to see governors' policies in action and to understand how the school works. Some visits will be by invitation from the school for particular events, including Governors' Open Mornings which enable Governors to work together on key items. Other visits will be at the request of a particular Governor, requiring particular information in order to carry out his / her official duties. The following protocols should be observed:

- All visits must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher. Too many visits can be disruptive to pupils' learning. Timing is key.
- The date and timing of a visit should be arranged in advance with the headteacher and other staff involved.
- Visits should have a clear focus, linked to a school policy, a curriculum area or an aspect of the School Improvement Plan.
- If a governor is going to spend time in a classroom, this should be discussed with the class teacher so that both are clear how long the governor is coming for, what they are going to look at and what they are going to do.
- Governors should understand that their visits do not form part of the professional inspections or the monitoring role of the headteacher. Governors should not make judgements about the effectiveness of the teaching that they see as this is the role of the Headteacher and other qualified individuals.
- If governors are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen during a visit, this should be discussed with the headteacher in private either during or following the visit.
- After the visit, the governor should report back, in writing to the governing body using the agreed template – see appendix 1.

**Appendix 1**



**St. Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School**  
**Governor Visit Report Form**



Name of Governor:

Date of Visit:

Reason for visit:

Safeguarding comment: