



Sheen Mount Primary School

Governing Board Code of Conduct

(2025–2026)

1. Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct sets out the principles and expectations for members of the Sheen Mount Governing Board. It reflects the Department for Education (DfE) Governance Handbook and best practice guidance from the National Governance Association (NGA). It is designed to ensure that all governors:

- Act with honesty, integrity, and in the best interests of pupils.
- Uphold the highest standards of conduct and contribute to effective governance.
- Support the strategic leadership of the school, while respecting the professional responsibilities of the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

This Code applies to all members of the Governing Board, including associate members, and should be read alongside:

- The school's constitutional documents.
- The Governor Visits Policy.
- The Whistleblowing Policy.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The school's Complaints Procedure.
- The school's Social Media Policy.

2. Core Functions of Governance

As a Governing Board, our collective purpose is to:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Hold school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and for the performance management of staff.
3. Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring resources are used efficiently and effectively.

4. Represent stakeholder voices and engage meaningfully with pupils, parents, carers, staff, and the wider community.

3. The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

We commit to upholding the principles of Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership (see Appendix 1).

4. Governor Responsibilities

As individual governors we agree to:

- Recognise that our role is strategic, avoiding involvement in day-to-day management.
- Promote and uphold the school's ethos, vision, and values.
- Follow all statutory and school policies, including equality, safeguarding, and IT acceptable use policies.
- Co-operate with requests necessary for compliance (e.g., DBS checks, training).
- Act fairly, without prejudice, and as a good employer.
- Speak up if we believe actions conflict with the Nolan Principles or put pupils at risk, using the school's Whistleblowing Policy or notifying the Local Authority/Ofsted where appropriate.
- Accept and support collective decisions made by the Board.

5. Commitment to Governance

We acknowledge that being a governor requires significant time and energy. Therefore, we will:

- Attend all meetings (Board and committee) wherever possible. If unable to attend, we will notify the Clerk/Chair in advance and provide reasons.
- Governors who miss more than three consecutive meetings without good reason may be considered for removal in line with the School Governance Regulations 2013.
- Participate actively, read papers in advance, and contribute constructively.
- Undertake induction and ongoing training, including safeguarding (Level 1 minimum), finance, and governance skills development.
- Conduct at least one documented school visit per year, agreed with the Head Teacher.
- Support governance succession planning by mentoring future leaders and taking part in annual Board self-evaluation.
- Respect governor wellbeing and support each other to manage workloads fairly.

6. Working Relationships

We will:

- Develop positive, professional relationships across our board and with leaders, staff,

parents, and the local authority.

- Engage constructively with stakeholders and act as ambassadors for the school.
- Respect and support the Chair in ensuring appropriate conduct and effective meetings.
- Acknowledge that governors are appointed for their skills and experience, not as representatives of particular groups.

7. Openness, Transparency and Conflicts of Interest

We will:

- Declare any business or personal interests in the Register of Interests and at the start of meetings.
- Withdraw from discussions and votes where a conflict exists, as directed by the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Chair is conflicted).
- Ensure publication of Board structure, roles, attendance records, and register of interests on the school website and on Get Information About Schools (GIAS), in line with statutory requirements.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

We will:

- Respect the confidentiality of information relating to staff, pupils, families, or Board business.
- Comply with GDPR and the school's data protection policies.
- Continue to respect confidentiality even after leaving office.

9. Social Media and Communications

We will:

- Uphold the school's reputation in all online and offline communications.
- Follow the school's Social Media Policy and avoid posting comments that could damage trust in the Governing Board, staff, or school community.
- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid inappropriate contact with pupils on social media.

10. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Concerns about potential breaches should first be raised informally with the governor concerned.

If unresolved, the matter will be escalated to the Clerk and Chair under Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.

If the Chair is implicated, the Vice-Chair (or another nominated governor) will mediate.

Where breaches persist or are serious, the Governing Board may:

- Provide additional training, mentoring, or support.
- Request withdrawal from certain votes or discussions.

- Consider suspension or removal, in line with the School Governance Regulations 2013 and NGA guidance. Suspension/removal will be a last resort.

11. Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually or when statutory guidance changes, and re-signed by all governors.

Governor Declaration and Signature

I confirm that I have read and understood the Sheen Mount Primary School Governing Board Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its principles and expectations.

Governor Name

Signature

Date

Approved by FGB October 2025

APPENDIX 1

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life was 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, and to make recommendations. We will follow these principles:

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.

APPENDIX 2

Sheen Mount Virtual Meetings Protocol (contingency arrangements)

Under normal circumstances our Governing Board expects governors to be present at all applicable meetings. However, should exceptional circumstances require it, the Board agrees to conduct our duties virtually. Virtual participation includes, but is not limited to, telephone, email, and video conferencing.

As a corporate body we acknowledge that some governors may not have access to the appropriate technology. Under such circumstances, provided a virtual meeting is quorate, it can proceed.

Key aspects of this protocol include:

- All governors including the Head Teacher, Associate Members and Clerk may attend virtually for any single meeting.
- Confirmation of virtual participation must be notified to the Clerk by email (at least 48 hours prior to the meeting), and where virtual attendance will not be possible, the governor should notify the Clerk of their non-attendance by email.
- It is the responsibility of each individual governor to ensure they are able to do so through a secure method in an environment conducive to confidential and private communication. Anyone participating in a meeting using technology must declare that they are in an environment which is secure, and which protects confidentiality.
- Virtual participation must be for the entire meeting and not just for specific agenda items or solely for voting purposes.
- It is the responsibility of those participating virtually to ensure they have a reliable connection.
- If the communication connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are unsuccessful virtual participation will no longer be possible and the agenda will not be delayed. The Clerk will note the time that the connection was lost.
- Ensuring quorate meetings is the responsibility of the Clerk who will monitor this throughout the virtual meeting and advise the Board if a meeting becomes unviable due to connection failure.
- If there is to be a vote, governors must have relevant documents seven days prior to the meeting. Governors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to, not just the vote itself.
- If there is to be a vote, secret ballot will not be an option. All virtual attendees will need to cast their vote by stating they are either in favour or against.

- Where there is no visual connection, all meeting participants will always start their comments by stating their name, to ensure the Clerk can minute the meeting accurately (although in line with best practice verbatim minutes are not advised).
- If multiple governors speak at the same time, the Chair of the meeting shall determine who will speak first.
- In exceptional circumstances (e.g. extraordinary meetings) meetings can take place virtually as long as:
 - o Quorum of governors is adhered to.
 - o Every effort has been made to enable all governors to participate.
 - o Papers have been circulated at least 24 hours in advance.
 - o The meeting is minuted in the same way as other meetings.
 - o The meeting is not recorded without the consent of the Board for a specific reason.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This virtual protocol does not apply to any formal hearings e.g. pupil exclusion, parental complaint, staff disciplinarys, admission appeals etc., where all panel members normally must be physically present.