



## ST MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL THE GOVERNING BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

### **General**

In accordance with the Academy Trust's Articles of Association, we undertake (to the Trustees and to the Diocesan Bishop) to uphold the object of the Academy Trust.

The Academy Trust's object is specifically restricted to the following:

- (a) to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a Catholic schools designated as such ("the Academy") which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum and shall be conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Catholic Church and all Catholic canon law applying thereto including any trust deed governing the use of land used by an Academy both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship and having regard to any advice and following directives issued by the Diocesan Bishop; and
- (b) to promote for the benefit of individuals living in the area served by the Academy and the surrounding area who have need by reason of their age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time activities in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said individuals.

The Governing Board of St Mary's Catholic High School adopts the following principles.

1. We are entrusted by the Bishop of Hallam Diocese with the ministry of school governance and will always act in recognition of the love of Christ for all members of the school community and one another.
2. We are required to comply with the provisions of Canon Law, the teachings of the Catholic Church and such directives made by the Bishop and his Trustees and their agent in respect of the school.
3. We have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.
4. We recognise that our Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, management of the school and the implementation and operation of the curriculum.



5. We accept that all Governors have equal status, and although appointed or elected by different groups, our overriding concern will be the welfare of the school as a whole.
6. We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Board has given us delegated authority to do so.
7. We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for Staff, we will fulfil all legal requirements as the employer.
8. We will encourage open government and shall be seen to be doing so.
9. We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect other schools and the wider community.

### **Commitment**

10. We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
11. We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Board, attend regularly and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working parties.
12. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities. Visits by individual Governors will be by prior agreement with the Headteacher.
13. We will consider seriously, and act on, our individual and collective needs for training and development.

### **Relationships**

14. We will strive to work as a team.
15. We will seek to develop effective working relationships with our Headteacher, Staff, parents, parishes, Diocese, local authority, other relevant agencies and the local community.
16. In forming, building and sustaining good working relationships Governors will strive to:
  - Remember that we are typically representative of the *category* of Governor to which we are appointed or elected. We are not **representatives** of those *groups*, e.g. a representative parent, not a representative of the parents.
  - Work as members of a team in which all Governors contribute and in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted, forming the Governing Board, which functions with corporate responsibility and accountability.
  - Develop an open and honest relationship with the Headteacher and all school Staff acting as 'critical friend' to the school, ensuring a balance is struck between offering challenge and support.



- Ensure that effective relationships are built on trust and opportunities to network effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure that relationships between Governors and with other stakeholders are anchored in the principles, which flow from the Gospel. The Governing Board will draw on the guidance offered in 'Christ at the Centre' that whilst not definitive, the core values of the Gospel are based on the Beatitudes and may be summarised as follows:
  - Faithfulness and integrity
  - Dignity and compassion
  - Humility and gentleness
  - Truth and justice
  - Forgiveness and mercy
  - Purity and holiness

### Confidentiality

17. We will observe **confidentiality** regarding proceedings of the Governing Board in meetings and from our visits to school as Governors.
18. We will observe complete **confidentiality** when required or asked to do so by the Governing Board, especially regarding matters concerning individual Staff or students.
19. We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the school arises **outside** the Governing Board.

### Conduct

20. We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Board or its delegated agents. This means we will not speak out against decisions, in public or private, outside the Governing Board.
21. We will only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
22. In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Board.
23. Any visits to school will be undertaken only by prior appointment and within the framework established by the Governing Board in agreement with the Headteacher and Staff.
24. Governors will respond to criticism or complaints about the school and / or its staff by referring to the school's Complaints Policy adopted by the Governing Board for the correct procedure to be followed, and will advise the complainant accordingly.
25. Governors will be expected to declare any interest in an item of business and withdraw from the meeting while it is under discussion.



26. In discharging our duties, we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the Catholic ethos and the reputation of our school.
27. We understand that information about Governors will appear on the school's website and on the Government's website GIAS (Get Information About Schools).

### **Suspension**

28. If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a Governor, we will do so by following the Constitution Regulations to ensure a fair and objective process.

### **Removal**

29. We recognise that removing a Governor from office is a last resort and that it is the appointing body that has the power to remove those they appoint.
30. If the need arises to use the sanction of removing a Governor, we will do so by following the Constitution Regulations to ensure a fair and objective process.

As a member of the Governing Board of St Mary's Catholic High School, I agree to abide by the principles set out in this document.

**Approved by the Governing Board- September 2021**