

Support & Scrutiny (SAS) Board member code of conduct



Overley Hall
School

Approved by: SAS Board

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Contents

Aims, scope and principles	3
The 7 Nolan principles of public life	3
SAS Board member responsibilities	4
Working with others	5
Commitment to governance.....	5
Openness and transparency.....	6
Publishing information	6
Confidentiality	7
Data protection	7
Social media	8
Monitoring arrangements.....	9
Links with other policies.....	9
Appendix 1: breaches of the code of conduct.....	10

Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all SAS Board members to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that SAS Board members carry out their role with honesty and integrity, and help us to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.







The code of conduct should be read alongside our constitutional documents (e.g. our articles of association, standing orders and any scheme of delegation). Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the appendix.

Please note, this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, SAS Board members will use their judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its learners.

The 7 Nolan principles of public life

As SAS Board members, we will follow these [principles](#) set out by the government at all times.

They apply to anyone who holds a public office:

-  **Selflessness** – we will act in the public interest
-  **Integrity** – we will not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare any conflict of interests
-  **Objectivity** – we will act and take decisions impartially, fairly, and on merit. We will use the best evidence and avoid discrimination or bias
-  **Accountability** – we understand that we are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions. To make sure of this, we will be scrutinised where necessary
-  **Openness** – we will act and take decisions openly and transparently. We will not withhold information from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so
-  **Honesty** – we will be truthful

- ✿ **Leadership** – we will actively promote and support the above principles and will challenge poor behaviour wherever it happens.

SAS Board member responsibilities

The 3 functions of our board are to:

- ✿ Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school
- ✿ Hold executive leaders to account for the educational and financial performance of the school, and the performance management of staff
- ✿ Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure money is well spent

In order to do this effectively, as individuals we will:

- ✿ Understand and respect the distinction between the [role and responsibilities of the board](#) and those of the executive leadership
- ✿ Set and maintain an ethos of high expectations for everyone in the community of every school, including in the conduct and the professionalism of the board itself
- ✿ Promote equity and diversity throughout our school, including the board's operation
- ✿ Preserve and develop the character of the school
- ✿ Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ✿ Operate and make decisions in the best interests of learners, informed by the views and needs of our key stakeholders (learners, parents, staff, local communities and the local authority/authorities)
- ✿ Follow the school's policies and procedures, and the procedures of the board as set out in relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and the school's constitutional documents
- ✿ Take responsibility for our [self-evaluation](#), regularly reviewing our board's performance, constitution and skillset
- ✿ Take part in any [training or development](#) required to fill any gaps in the skills we need for effective governance

- ✿ Understand that where responsibility has been delegated, the board as a whole remains accountable and that important decisions relating to core functions will be made by the full board
- ✿ Comply with relevant guidance and legislation, and our funding agreement, which sets out how we must manage our school's money, and procure goods and services
- ✿ Act with integrity and transparency when making financial decisions, and understand that our financial management and decision-making will be scrutinised and audited
- ✿ Declare all gifts worth more than £50 and record them on the gifts and hospitality register. We will not accept bribes
- ✿ We will work to actively identify and manage risks to the school and Overley Hall Ltd

Working with others

We will:

- ✿ Support and strengthen school leadership by providing constructive challenge to leaders, and holding them to account
- ✿ Respect the role of the executive and school leadership teams, and avoid [routine involvement in operational matters](#)
- ✿ Respect each other's views
- ✿ Work together as a board to develop effective relationships with stakeholders
- ✿ [Engage meaningfully with the communities we serve](#) and understand that we are answerable to these stakeholders
- ✿ Follow the [Equality Act 2010](#), and apply the principles of fairness and equity in everything we do

Commitment to governance

We:

- ✿ Will attend all meetings where possible. Where we cannot attend, we will explain our valid reason and give suitable notice
- ✿ Understand and accept the time and workload commitments of the role

Understand that work should be shared among members and that all board members are expected to take an active role

Will prepare ahead of meetings to ensure we make informed contributions

Will attend any training or development activity needed to ensure the board has a wide range of skills and expertise

Openness and transparency

Conflicts of interest

To make sure our board makes impartial decisions without bias, we will:

- ✿ Publish an up-to-date register of business and pecuniary interests of all board member
- ✿ Declare any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting, and withdraw from the meeting for the relevant item of business and not vote on the matter

Publishing information

To ensure our board is transparent and open to the communities we serve, we will make certain information publicly available.

We accept that the following [information will be published on the school's website](#) to ensure transparency:

- ✿ The structure and remit of the members

For each **member of the Board** (where applicable) who has served at any point over the past 12 months:

- ✿ Their full name
- ✿ Their date of appointment
- ✿ Their term of office
- ✿ The date they stepped down (where applicable)
- ✿ Their relevant business and pecuniary interests
- ✿ Their attendance record over the last academic year (
- ✿ We accept that the board may collect diversity data to publish on the school website, which could include information on any of the 9 protected characteristics in the [Equality Act 2010](#)

- ✿ We understand that providing this information is voluntary and if we have already provided this information we are able to request it be removed from any reporting
- ✿ We accept that the approved board and committee minutes and any agenda and papers considered at a meeting will be [made available to any interested person](#) (minus confidential information).

Confidentiality

In the course of our role, we are sometimes privy to sensitive information. We will [observe confidentiality](#) when discussing this information, and will not publicly disclose:

- ✿ Information about sensitive matters
- ✿ Information about named individuals (such as staff, learners and their parents/carers)
- ✿ Details of individual contributions in meetings or how they may have voted

Confidential information will never be:

- ✿ Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- ✿ Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- ✿ Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

Our commitment to confidentiality does not overrule our duty to report safeguarding concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

We will continue to observe confidentiality after we have left office.

Breaches of confidentiality

In the event of a breach of confidentiality, we will inform the Chair as soon as possible who will investigate the matter further.

Members understand that if they breach confidentiality, they may be suspended or removed.

Data protection

We will follow the school's information security processes and measures and data protection policy when [using, storing, sharing and disposing of personal data](#).

Our commitment to data protection does not overrule our duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where we believe a child is at risk of harm.

Personal data breaches

We will inform the school's data protection officer immediately if we believe there has been a personal data breach.

Social media

We will:

- 🌸 Abide by any requirements set out in our school's Blog and Social Networking Policy

We will:

- 🌸 Uphold the reputation of our school at all times
- 🌸 Maintain a professional presence online and carefully consider how we interact with our school community
- 🌸 Review privacy settings regularly to make sure we are happy with the information about us that is publicly available
- 🌸 Report any incidents of harassment we experience, or see towards other members, to the chair of governors and the headteacher
- 🌸 Carefully consider how appropriate it would be to accept any friend requests from parents/carers, or to join any parent/carer groups associated with our school

We will **not**:






- 🌸 Accept friend requests from learners
- 🌸 Disclose any information that is confidential or would breach data protection principles
- 🌸 Make comments online about any members of the board or our school community
- 🌸 Post [any inappropriate/offensive language, images or comments on social media](#) that may bring us or our school into disrepute

Monitoring arrangements

This code of conduct will be reviewed and agreed annually, upon significant changes to the law, or as needed. It will be ratified by the full SAS Board.

Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

-  Safeguarding and child protection
-  Online Safety
-  Data protection
-  Blog and Social networking
-  Online Safety

Appendix 1: breaches of the code of conduct

If we suspect a SAS Board member has breached the code of conduct, we will follow this procedure:

- ✿ The Chair of Board will investigate (unless the breach has been by the Chair, in this case the Headteacher will investigate)
- ✿ A Chair of Board will hold a meeting with the Board member to discuss the issue. The Board member can bring a friend to the meeting. Another local board member will attend to corroborate any decisions
- ✿ If the situation doesn't improve, or there is another suspected breach, we will take action to improve the issue.

This may involve:

- ✿ Further meetings with the Board member to reset expectations, based on this code of conduct
- ✿ Support, mentoring or training for the Board member
- ✿ Making sure the Board member withdraws from votes connected to any disputes they have been involved in

If there is no improvement in the Board member's behaviour, the board will vote on a motion to ask the members to remove them. This is a last resort and will not be used.

SAS board member's may be suspended if they:

- ✿ Have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the professional ethos of the SAS board (including failing to undertake training appropriate to the role, whether or not directed to do so by the board) and
- ✿ Have brought, or is likely to bring the school or the office of the SAS Board into disrepute, or
- ✿ Acted to undermine fundamental British values or the board's commitment or ability to deliver on its Prevent duty

SAS Board member's may be removed where:

- ✿ There have been repeated grounds for suspension
- ✿ There has been serious misconduct. We will determine what counts as serious misconduct based on the facts of the case, but it will include any actions that compromise the 7 principles of public life, if sufficiently serious
- ✿ They display repeated and serious incompetence
- ✿ Their actions are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the board, or their actions interfere with the operational efficiency of the school

'Bringing the board into disrepute' may include, but is not limited to:

- ✿ Speaking out publicly against the school
- ✿ Being disrespectful to members of the school community
- ✿ Behaving inappropriately in a public forum, such as social media
- ✿ Persistently failing to undertake the training or development they need to contribute effectively to the board's operation