

Thomas More Catholic School



GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and our environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.
To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities, which take us all confidently through the 21st Century.

These guidelines are to be adopted by the Governing Body of Thomas More Catholic School in June 2014 and are subject to an annual review by the full board of governors.

Date Reviewed	Autumn Term 2018
Review Confirmed by	Chair of Governors
Next Review Due	Autumn Term 2019

GENERAL

The Head teacher 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.

1 Head teacher's responsibilities

- Day-to-day management of the school
- Implementation of policy
- Operation of the curriculum

2 Governors' responsibilities

- Determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.

3 TMCS Main Aim

- The main aim of the school is to raise the educational achievement of all its pupils.

4 Governing Body Role

- 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
 - To act as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the school
 - To hold the school to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides

5 General Principles for Governors

- 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.
- 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 designated specifically to them by the whole governing body.

6 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

7 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 Head teacher, staff, parents, the LEA and their local community.

8 Visiting the School

- Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school. However, 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.
- In order to avoid misunderstandings arising, it is advisable for every governing body to draw up its own policy on governor visits. The details of such policies will vary from school to school, but common principles worth observing are:
 - All governors should visit the school.
 - The total number of visits per term should be agreed in advance with the Head teacher. Too many visits can be disruptive to pupils' learning.

- The date and timing of a visit should be arranged in advance with the Head teacher and other staff involved.
- Visits should have a clear focus, linked to a school policy, a curriculum area or an aspect of the school development 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 replace professional inspections or the monitoring role of the Head teacher. Governors should not make judgements about the effectiveness of the teaching that they see.
- If governors are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen this should be passed to the Head teacher.
- After the visit, the governor should report back, either orally or in writing to the governing body. How this is to be done should be made clear in the policy. If a written report is to be produced, it is sensible to discuss it with the Head teacher before publication.

9 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.
- Whilst governors are entitled to disclose the decisions made by the governing body, unless it was agreed as a confidential item by the governing body, governors are not entitled to identify the views expressed by individual named governors.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.

10 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 Head teacher.

- 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 advise the complainant accordingly.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community 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.

11 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.

12 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.
- Governors should be prepared to act as mentors, as required.

13 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.