

CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body of Carmel College strongly supports and upholds the College Mission statement,:

"to strive to be a centre of educational excellence, opportunity and support within a caring, Christian environment."

This Mission statement is central to the Catholic ethos, which is inherent in every aspect of College life - from the welcoming atmosphere to the support, guidance and care which all students receive and which emphasises the distinctive nature of provision at Carmel College.

As an institution within the public sector, Carmel College is also pleased to accept and support the seven principles of public life (agreed by the Nolan Committee on 'Standards in Public Life') which very much concur with the way Governors, management and staff of the College have always conducted matters. These principles are as follows:

- ^ **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.
- ^ **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.
- ^ **Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- ^ **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefit for themselves, their family, or their friends.

- ^ **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.
- ^ **Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

A) GENERAL

1. Carmel College recognises its obligations to all those with whom it has dealings - students, employees, suppliers, other educational institutions and the wider community - and also to the taxpayer.
2. The reputation of the College and the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals is one of its most vital resources, the protection of which is of fundamental importance.
3. Carmel College demands and maintains the highest ethical standards in carrying out its activities.
4. In its dealings with individuals, the College will adhere to the principles of natural justice.
5. The College will seek to encourage a culture of openness aimed at ensuring that matters connected with the operation of the College can be discussed frankly with staff and students. It has, in addition, adopted procedures on whistle blowing which will enable concerns to be raised on a confidential basis, where that is appropriate, both inside and, if necessary, outside the organisation.
6. The College is committed to securing equality of opportunity for staff and students alike.

B) STUDENTS

1. The College believes that integrity in dealing with its students or prospective students is a prerequisite for success and an important statement of the values it offers.
2. The College will not give deliberately inadequate or misleading information on its learning programmes or other services.
3. In all advertising and public communications, the College will avoid untruths, concealment and overstatement about its programmes and achievements.

4. The College will avoid recruitment practices which involve the offer of improper financial or other inducements to students.
5. The College will deliver learning programmes and support services to meet the individual needs of students, efficiently and effectively to accepted quality standards, and will take steps to rectify any shortcomings in the service delivered.
6. Learning support, information, advice and guidance offered to students will be impartial and guided by the best interests of the student.
7. The College has adopted a Charter setting out what students and others can expect of the College. It will deal with all students with equal care and respect.
8. The College will ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and efficiently.
9. Within the requirements of the law, the College will maintain the confidentiality of information on individual students.

C) EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

1. The College will compete vigorously, but honestly, with other educational institutions offering similar learning opportunities.
2. The College will not seek to damage the reputation of competitors, either directly or by innuendo.
3. The College will provide information on individual students to the Careers Service and other institutions engaged in providing for the learning needs of the student in accordance with agreed procedures, within Data Protection act guidelines.
4. The College will not seek to acquire information regarding competitors by unfair or disreputable means.
5. The College will not engage in unfair or restrictive practices in regard to the recruitment or retention of students.
6. The College will consult with partners who might be affected on any significant proposals for change in the learning programmes or services it offers.

D) GOVERNING BODY

1. The Governing Body adopted a Code of Conduct for itself consistent with the principles laid down by the Nolan Committee and the requirements of its Instrument and Articles of Government.

2. The Code of Conduct requires the maintenance of a register of Governors Interests, which is open to inspection by the public. Governors are required to register those interests which are of relevance to the work of the college, in sufficient detail to allow the nature of those interests to be understood by enquirers.
3. The Governing Body of the College will seek to ensure that its members are appointed on merit, after an open selection process (which will be carried out by the Search Committee and agreed by the full Governing Body for Community Governors or by recommendation to the Archdiocese for Foundation Governors), and are drawn widely from the community it serves, having regard to the need for continuity and freshness, and for a range of skills and interests.
4. The Governing Body is responsible for determining the educational character and mission of the college and for oversight of its activities; for the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the college and the safeguarding of its assets; for the approving of annual estimates of income and expenditure; and for the appointment, discipline, pay and conditions of service of staff, in accordance with the Articles of Government.
5. The Governing Body will adopt procedures which ensure sound financial decision-making, control and monitoring to meet the requirements of the funding body and public audit.
6. The Governing Body will ensure that information on its decisions is made widely available, having regard to proper confidentiality.

E) MANAGEMENT & STAFF

1. The College has a Code of Conduct for its employees, based on similar principles to that for Governors.
2. The staff Code of Conduct forbids employees from soliciting or accepting inducements in respect of any matter connected with the operation of the college.
3. The staff Code of Conduct will be consistent with the college Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, in respecting the freedom, within the law, of academic staff to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas or controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing their employment in jeopardy. This includes the right of staff to speak freely and without being subject to disciplinary sanctions or victimisation about academic standards or related matters, provided they do so lawfully, without malice and in the public interest.
4. Where the College includes confidentiality clauses in severance contracts, this will not prevent staff who have legitimate concerns about malpractice raising those concerns with the appropriate authority.

5. As Accounting Officer for the College under the Financial Memorandum, the Principal is responsible for the propriety of financial decision making and will advise the Governing Body of any requirements in respect of matters before it.

F) EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. The College recognises that it is responsible to the community it serves and to the Archdiocese of Liverpool and will take steps to ensure that information on its activities is made widely available.
2. The College is responsible to its community and the Archdiocese of Liverpool and, within the framework of its own Mission Statement, will seek to provide programmes and services relevant to the needs of individuals and employers.
3. The College will provide timely and accurate information on individual students to employers or others providing sponsorship.
4. The College will ensure that it contracts with organisations which comply with acceptable ethical standards.

G) COMPLIANCE & VERIFICATION

1. The College requires all its employees to adhere to its Code of Conduct for staff.
2. The College has procedures by which employees and students can express genuinely held concerns about behaviour or decisions they perceive to involve serious impropriety, and have them investigated, with a guarantee of confidentiality where needed.
3. The Clerk to the Governors is responsible for monitoring adherence to the Governors Code by members of the Governing Body, investigating alleged breaches and reporting to the Governing Body. The Governing Body will decide on any action to be taken to ensure compliance with the Code.
4. The Principal is responsible for initiating and supervising investigations into alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct by members of staff and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken.
5. The College auditors may be asked to report on any practice which appears to breach the code.
6. The College will ensure that its Codes are published and made widely available.

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