

# Governor Services

Empowering Governors

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## **CODE OF CONDUCT for School Governors and Trustees in North Somerset**

*This code of conduct sets out the expectations on, and the commitment required from school governors and trustees, by which the governing body and individual governors will operate*

*The governing body agrees to accept the following principles of good practice and procedure:-*

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Our principal concern as a governing body and as individual governors is the strategic leadership of the school and the welfare of the school community
- Our main focus is on school improvement, raising standards of educational provision for the pupils and raising standards of pupil performance in the school
- We recognise that the headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy and the day-to-day management of the school
- We recognise our responsibility for determining, monitoring and reviewing the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates, including monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, offering support, constructive advice and help where needed
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher
- We accept that all governors are equal members of the governing body



Governor Services

- We accept that we have no authority to act individually unless the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so and it is legally permissible, and will only speak on behalf of the governing body when specifically authorised to do so
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body and will not speak against decisions made outside a governing body meeting
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice in all matters, including our responsibilities as a good employer
- We will encourage open governance and should be seen to be doing so
- We will give careful consideration to the impact of our decisions on people, organisations and the school
- We will ensure that there is diversity and equal opportunity across the school community and that all members of the school and governing body are treated with respect and sensitivity, with alternative views listened and responded to

## Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor will require the commitment of significant time and energy to be an effective governor
- We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body by attending meetings regularly, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including membership of committees or working groups
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to
- We will get to know the school well, and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development and will undertake relevant training
- We will undertake personal development as a governor to keep knowledge and understanding at a level which best serves the interests of the school
- We accept that in the interest of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing body, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website

## Relationships

- We will work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted
- We will develop effective working relationships with the headteacher and staff, all stakeholders, the diocese (as appropriate), the Local Authority and the community
- We will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that are committed to the work of the governing body by governors

## Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where that concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside the school
- We will exercise the greatest prudence and tact at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside the governing body meeting
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote

## Conduct

- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for decisions made by the governing body
- We will not speak out against decisions, in public or private, outside the governing body
- We will speak or act on behalf of the governing body only when authorised to do so
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school, we will follow procedures established by the governing body
- Our visits to the school as governors will be within the protocol agreed by the governing body and the staff
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos of the school
- We will declare any personal interest or potential personal gain from service as a governor, will withdraw from any discussion or decision making which may directly or indirectly benefit self, family or business associates

## Conflict of Interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest ( including those related to people we are connected with ) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.

## Suspension and removal

- If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a governor, we will do so by following the procedures regulations to ensure a fair and objective process
- We recognise that removing a governor from office is a last resort, and that it is the appointing bodies who have the power to remove those they appoint
- If the need arises to use the sanction of removing a governor, we will do so by following the procedures regulations so as to ensure a fair and objective process

## **Principles of Public Life (from the Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life or "Nolan Committee")**

Governors hold a public office and are expected to abide at all times by the principles governing those in public life. These principles apply at all times and should also guide the work and operation of the governing body. These principles are:

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should take all decisions 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 friends.

**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.

**Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making 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 the public office should be as open as possible about 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 this.

**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 public interest.

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

*This Code of Conduct is to be used as a basis for clarifying the behaviour and conduct expected of all school governors. Whilst recognising that every governing body works and operates differently according to the type of school, there is nevertheless a general expectation of the standard of behaviour that is acceptable. This Code of Conduct seeks to articulate that expectation in a framework that can be easily understood by all governors and is recommended for adoption by your governing body.*

*Adopted by the governing body of Bournville Primary School on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015*