



BEDFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Code of Conduct for School Governors

This Code of Conduct sets out the commitment and responsibilities for behaviours and actions, required from school governors. The Code is based on the NGA's (National Governors' Association) Code and governors may wish to amend particular sections to include specific reference to the aims and ethos of their school. Whilst recognising that every governing body works and operates in ways pertinent to their school, there is a general expectation of standards and principles of behaviour which are acceptable.

In adopting this Code of Conduct it is vital that governing bodies read through, discuss and that all members agree to sign up to the principles of the Code. New members of the governing body should be made aware of the Code and it is good practice for the Code to be reviewed from time to time.

## **Governing Body, General**

In order for the governing body to achieve the best possible outcomes for all the children and to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, the governing body will operate according to the following principles:

- Set the strategic direction of the school by determining the character, aims, objectives, ethos and values of the school
- Alongside the head teacher, develop the policy framework to achieve the aims and objectives
- Set statutory targets and help the school to provide the best education for each of its pupils and to enable them to achieve the highest standards of achievement
- Through relevant policies and procedures ensure that the school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff
- Agree strategies for school improvement, including approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure
- Acknowledge that the day to day running of the school and the implementation of plans and policies of the governing body, is the responsibility of the head teacher and senior leadership team
- Act as a critical friend to the head teacher and school. This means supporting and challenging, it means monitoring, reviewing and evaluating and offering support, constructive advice and a sounding board
- Ensure accountability to all stakeholders – pupils, parents, community, local authority, diocese and so on. This accountability relates to safeguarding, standards, school improvement, the budget and making appropriate information available to the stakeholders
- Regularly monitor and review the performance and activities of the governing body

## **The Role of the Governor**

The office of governor involves a commitment of time and energy to the role. The individual governor acknowledges that:

- The governing body is a corporate body, therefore no governor can act on his/her own without proper authority from the full governing body
- As part of that corporate body, the responsibility for all decision making is carried equally amongst all governors
- Governors accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body and therefore do not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting
- He/she has an awareness of and accepts the Nolan principles of public life ( See Appendix 1 )
- Governors may be appointed by different bodies ( parents, staff, local authority community, foundation ) but the ultimate aim and concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole
- All governors must declare openly and immediately, any conflict of interest arising from a matter before the governing body or from any aspect of governorship

## **All Governors – Commitment**

Acknowledging the significant time and energy commitment involved all governors will:

- Make every effort to attend meetings and where this is not possible explain in full and in advance
- Accept a fair share of the responsibility of the workings of the governing body and its committees
- Take or seek opportunities to enhance his/her effectiveness as a governor through participation in training, development programmes and increasing his/her knowledge of the school
- As a result of self review and areas for development identified, organise training for the governing body as a whole
- Ensure that any visit to school will be arranged in advance with staff and conducted according to the Governor School Visits Policy

## **Relationships**

Governing bodies can succeed or fail on the strength of relationships. The principle working relationships are with each other and the head teacher, but accountability to stakeholders ensures that there are other relationships which need to be cared for. Essentially the governing body:

- Must strive to work as a team, promoting constructive working relationships
- Will encourage the expression of views openly and an environment where every governor feels confident to participate in discussions and feels listened to

- Ensure that the chair of governors facilitates good discussions and challenges any governor who becomes aggressive or tries to dominate
- Discuss and review succession planning within the governing body to promote and preserve good relationships within the framework of the governing body
- Will support and challenge in equal proportions, the head teacher and senior leadership team in a courteous manner
- Will respect and acknowledge time, effort and skills from all members of the governing body and staff at the school
- Will accept that differences of opinion may arise in discussions, but when a majority decision is made this should then be accepted by all governors
- Follow good practice and procedures in communications, to actively develop effective relationships with the staff, the parents, the community, the local authority and other relevant agencies

### **Confidentiality**

There are times during governing body meetings where discussions or information given, is confidential. These instances may or may not happen frequently and usually the chair of governors or head teacher will remind governors of the need for confidentiality. This is an important area of governance where governors need to:

- Observe confidentiality when matters are deemed so, or when matters concern specific members of staff or pupils
- Exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting
- Regard all discussions made when reaching decisions, as confidential
- Never reveal the details of any governing body vote

### **Implementation of the Code of Conduct**

- It is essential that all governors within this governing body are aware of and understand each section of the Code of Conduct.
- It is essential that the governing body accept and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct. This agreement must be recorded, signed by the chair of governors and dated.
- If any governor breaches the Code then the governing body will discuss the breach and take action if necessary. ( Action might be a warning, or possibly a suspension )

School: .....

Chair of Governors Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **Appendix 1 – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties

### **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.

### **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 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.

( Taken from the Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, the Nolan Committee 1996 )