



## **Code of conduct for the Governing body of St. Berteline's C of E (aided)Primary School.**

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Governing Body and individual Governors will operate. This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from the Governors in order that the team may properly and effectively carry out its statutory responsibilities and other work within the school and the community. It should be read in conjunction with the Policy for Governor Visits to School which has been distributed to all Governors.

### **The purpose of the Governing Body.**

The Governing Body is the school's accountable body and is responsible for promoting high standards in school. The Governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good, broad and balanced education and supports their physical, social, emotional and mental wellbeing. It also has the responsibility to provide similar support to the adults employed or involved in school.

The Governing Body will:

- set the strategic direction of the school by setting values, aims and objectives of the school, agree policy framework for achieving those aims, set statutory targets and agree school improvement strategies including approving the budget and staffing structure.
- challenge and support the school by setting, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the budget, effectiveness of policies, progress made towards targets and the implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy.
- ensure accountability by holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school, ensuring that parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed, responding to Ofsted and other inspection reports when necessary and by making information about the school available to the community.
- appoint and performance manage the headteacher who will deliver the aims through the day-to-day management of the school, and report to the Governing Body.

### **The role of a Governor.**

In law the Governing Body is a corporate body. This means that no Governor can act independently on any issue connected with school without authority from the full body. All

Governors carry equal responsibility and although appointed through different routes the overriding concern is the welfare of the whole school.

- We accept that we have no legal authority to act or speak individually unless given delegated authority by the whole governing body to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, shall fulfil all legal responsibilities as an employer.
- We will actively support the Headteacher and challenges will be used as part of the governor's role of 'critical friend' to ensure the best outcomes for the children.
- We will encourage responsible, open 'government' and shall be seen to be doing so.
- We encourage open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Governing Body or its delegated agents. We will not speak out against majority decisions in public or private outside of governing body meetings regardless of whether or not we are one of the majority voters.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the Christian ethos and foundation of our school and will act and behave accordingly.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Body and laid down in the relevant policies.

### **Foundation Governor Expectations.**

As a church school, in addition to the above, there are a number of expectations related to personal values and responsibilities which will specifically support the Christian ethos of our school. Although a list originally written for Foundation Governors, it is expected that all governors, because of their agreement to serve on the board of a church school, will follow and support these.

You should be:

- an active member of a Christian worshipping community.
- committed to the work of education within a Christian context
- enthusiastic and active in promoting school and parish links
- willing to uphold the Church of England foundation

You will be expected to:

- ensure the Christian ethos of the school is preserved and developed.
- encourage and support the development of church, school and parish links
- ensure that the school provides an act of worship for all children each day and that it is in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England
- encourage and support the development of the R.E. syllabus in line with Diocesan guidelines
- ensure the School Development Plan includes strategies for the development of areas reflected in the SIAMs inspection schedule.
- report to the Diocesan Board of Education any issues that may arise in school and include them in work such as appointing a headteacher.

### **Commitment.**

We acknowledge that accepting office as a Governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy. While we appreciate that each of us have work and family commitments which may place considerable time restraints, by agreeing to act as a Governor we agree to:

- involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body and of the school.
- act as part of a corporate body by accepting a fair share of responsibilities, by attending meetings and serving on committees or working groups. Where we are not able to attend, explanation in full will be given in advance.
- Carry out duties/responsibilities in-line with statutory requirements. Become involved in setting targets and monitoring and evaluation
- get to know the school well and take up all possible opportunities for involvement in school activities including contact with pupils.
- know the school well in terms of its strengths and weaknesses and be able to articulate this.
- when undertaking visits to school we will behave in line with the 'Policy for Governor Visits to School'.
- attend in-house, Diocesan and Local Authority training sessions, some of which are compulsory, in order to develop skills and knowledge and to recognise and address any individual needs for training and development.

- accept that in the interest of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of Governor and details of appointing body will be published on the school website.
- we will accept that information relating to ourselves as Governors will be logged on the DfE's national database (GIAS).

### **Relationships.**

We will work as a team and treat each other with respect and courtesy in all our communications and allow and encourage each other to express views and opinions openly. It is important that we seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff, parents, the local authority, other relevant agencies and the community and with the children by becoming involved with their 'day-to-day' life at school.

### **Safeguarding.**

All Governors will be required to undergo personal safeguarding checks in the form of D.B.S. to assess their suitability to work at school. Likewise, it is a requirement that all members attend safeguarding training (usually held at school along with all school staff) in order to protect the children, the staff and themselves.

### **Confidentiality.**

In order to maintain confidentiality in our work as governors, we will:

- observe complete confidentiality regarding proceedings of the governing body in meetings and from our visits to school as Governors
- observe complete confidentiality regarding matters concerning individual staff or information regarding pupil's welfare and learning both inside and outside of school.
- not become involved in discussions regarding children's welfare and learning with parents or other agencies without prior discussion with the headteacher.
- exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the staff, the governors or the pupils (and their families) of the school arises outside of the governing body meeting.
- not disclose information given in confidence, or information acquired which is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless required by law to do so.

- not prevent a person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled to by law.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

A Governor must not in their official capacity, or privately, use his position improperly to confer on or secure himself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.

Pecuniary or other business interests in connection with the governing body's business will be recorded annually in The Register of Business Interests which will be published on the schools' website.

Governors will be required to declare any pecuniary interest or personal interest in a matter under discussion at every meeting and must offer to leave the meeting for the duration of that discussion. This must be recorded on meeting minutes

A Governor must not use his/her position in meetings to discuss issues concerning individual children, staff or other persons connected with the school in whom they have a personal interest unless first discussed with the headteacher and/or the Chair of Governors.

### **Suspension**

If we believe this code has been breached, the Chair of Governors will carry out an investigation. If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a Governor, the appropriate regulations and guidance will be followed to ensure a fair and objective process. Suspension will be used as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

Should the Chair of Governors be believed to be in breach of this code, then the Vice-chair or another board member who has no previous knowledge of the allegation and who is not a member of school staff, will be appointed to investigate.

### **Removal**

If, following investigation, the need arises to use the sanction of removing a serving Governor from office, the appropriate regulations and guidance detailed below will be followed to ensure a fair and objective process.

Removal of a Governor will be as a last resort only.

A Governor must, if he/she becomes aware of any conduct by another governor which he/she believes involves a failure to comply with this code of conduct, make a written allegation to the Chair of Governors. Any Governor who makes such an allegation will be free to do so in confidence and without fear of prejudice or reprisal.

Instances where suspension and subsequent removal may be appropriate include:

- repeated or serious misconduct
- repeated and serious incompetence
- undermining the Christian values of the school
- a serious breach of confidentiality
- breaches of safeguarding rules and regulations
- actions of a Governor which are significantly detrimental to the effective operation of the Governing Body.

The removal procedure must include

- Meetings and evidence of meetings with the Governor concerned regarding episode/s of misconduct or incompetence
- An initial meeting with the Governor concerned to discuss possibility of removal
- Confirmation by a resolution passed at a second meeting not less than 14 days after the first meeting
- The removal of the Governor as a specified agenda item for both meetings
- Opportunity for the Governor concerned to respond
- An appeals procedure

April 2013. Sept 2014

Updated: November 2015. Updated November 2016.

In- line with new NGA Model procedures: Legislation, policies and procedures 2016.

Updated: October 2017, September 2018, January 2019, Updated October 2019

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