

## **Code of conduct for the governing body of St. Berteline's C of E 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 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 via Dropbox and is available as a paper copy in the school office.

### **The purpose of the governing body**

The governing body is the schools accountable body and is responsible for promoting high standards. 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 and emotional wellbeing. 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, which 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 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 only 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 and will not speak out against majority decisions in public or private outside of governing body meetings.
- 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.

## **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 categories of governor, because of their agreement to serve on the board of a church school, will follow and support these.

As a foundation governor 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

As a foundation governor 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.
- 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.
- 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 in order to develop skills and knowledge and consider seriously any individual needs for training and development.
- we 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 governors will be logged on the DfE's national database (Edubase).

### **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 staff) in order to protect the children 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 confidentiality regarding matters concerning individual staff or pupils both inside and outside of school.
- exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the school arises outside 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 his 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 a meeting and must offer to leave the meeting for the duration of that discussion.

## **Suspension**

If we believe this code has been breached, the *Chair of Governors* will investigate. 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 will be followed to ensure a fair and objective process.

Removal of a *Governor* will be as a last resort only and will be actioned by the appointing body (except in the case of cessation).

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 without fear of prejudice or reprisal.