



Barningham CEVC Primary School Code of Conduct for Governors

Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets out the purpose of the governing body and describes the appropriate relationship between individual governors, the whole governing body and the leadership team of the school. It seeks to draw on best practice from a range of sources to help the governing body ensure that children are attending a successful, well lead school which provides them with an outstanding education and fully supports all aspects of their well-being.

The code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors and school leaders in order for them to properly carry out their work within the school and the community.

There is no statutory framework for enforcing such a Code of Conduct or for dealing with situations where behaviour is unacceptable. In adopting this Code of Conduct the governing body is setting its own standards of behaviour and it is hoped that governors and school leaders will be mindful of this Code of Conduct in all their actions.

What is the Governing Body for?

The governing body has three main roles:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

How is this different to the role of the Head?

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- The internal organisation, management and control of the school;
- Advising on and implementing the governing body's strategic framework;
- Formulating aims and objectives, policies and targets for the governing body to consider adopting
- Reporting on progress to the governing body.

The role of individual governors

In law the governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- No governor can act on their own without authority from the full governing body;
- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority community, foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

An overview of what we can expect to give and get

The governing body expects the school to:

- Understand and respect its statutory role and purpose;
- Be aware that the governing body's role involves challenging the school as well as supporting it and respond to such challenges constructively;
- Recognise the shared commitment to school improvement and securing the best outcomes for every child;
- Respect governors as volunteers who bring other skills, experiences and perspectives, and value their contribution;
- Work openly with the governing body and provide clear, concise and relevant information on which to base decisions;
- Enable all governors to become involved in the life of the school;
- Contribute to the induction, training and development of governors;
- Ensure that where educational jargon is unavoidable it is at least explained.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Prevent (radicalisation) Lead is Frances Parr, the Alternate DSL is Dawn Pipe and the Governor with Responsibility is Edward Stanley.

The school's e-safety Lead is Amanda Smithson and the Governor with Responsibility is Edward Stanley.

The Prevent (Radicalisation) Lead is Frances Parr and the Governor with Responsibility for Prevent is Edward Stanley.

The school expects the governing body to:

- Respect the professional expertise of the Head Teacher and staff;
- Work openly in partnership with the Head Teacher and staff for the benefit of the school and its pupils;
- Demonstrate its commitment, collectively and individually;
- Present any challenges in a constructive and professional manner;

- Act and take decisions that are in the best interests of the school and not those of self, individuals or groups;
- Support the school with parents and in the community;
- Recognise the need for both governor induction and ongoing training and development.

The expectation of individual governors is that they will:

- Enhance the work of the governing body to enable a strong focus on raising standards, so that every child achieves their potential;
- Demonstrate their commitment by getting to know the school and becoming involved in school life and activities;
- Take personal responsibility for their ongoing training and development;
- Prepare for meetings so they are well informed, having at minimum read all of the papers sent out with the agenda;
- Attend meetings (governing body/committees/working group) and play an active part;
- Support the school with parents and in the community;
- Recognise the corporate status of the governing body and the concept of collective responsibility;
- Respect confidentiality and the need to act with circumspection;
- Be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

How we agree to conduct ourselves

General

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Head Teacher as set out above.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life set out below.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We will not use governing body meetings to discuss issues relating to our own children.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the Head Teacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- As a minimum, we will all complete the following Local Authority Courses:
How do I Start 1, 2 and 3.
Safeguarding Children
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Head Teacher.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.

- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

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

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice Chair will investigate;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the governing body.
- We are aware of the provisions of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2012 which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor.

Appendix 1: The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the "Nolan Committee" or The Committee on Standards in Public Life. 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.

(In the case of school governors this means not seeking to pursue a policy or course of action solely because it benefits family or friends and recognising that the reason for holding office is for the benefit of all the children at the school not one particular group in isolation. In cases where a governor has a pecuniary or direct interest they should declare this and not take part in the decision making process).

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 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 this.

(Governing bodies should be mindful of the reasons for determining information as confidential in cases other than when individuals are named or directly affected by any others in or at the school).

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.

Undertaking: As a member of the Governing Body I undertake to abide by this code of practice at all times:

| Name | Signature | Date |
|------------------|-----------|------|
| Frances Parr | | |
| Gemma Jackson | | |
| Rev Cathy Bladen | | |
| Julie SurrIDGE | | |
| Neel Shearer | | |
| Karl Saggars | | |
| Claire Walker | | |
| Edward Stanley | | |
| Sandy Atwell | | |
| Dawn Pipe | | |
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