

Smithy Bridge School Governors' Code of Practice

This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from governors in order for our Governing Board to carry out its work properly within the school and the community.

The purpose of the Governing Board

The Governing Board is Smithy Bridge School's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The Governing Board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being. A DBS check is carried out on all governors at Smithy Bridge School.

The Governing Board:

- Sets the strategic direction of the school by:
 - setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
 - agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
 - agreeing statutory targets
 - agreeing the school development plan, approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure
- Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
 - progress towards targets
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the school development plan
 - the budget and the staffing structure
- Ensures accountability by:
 - responding to the school's own self-evaluation report (SEF)
 - responding to Ofsted reports when necessary
 - holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school
 - ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
 - making available information to the community
- Appoints and performance manages the headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the Governing Board.

For our Governing Board to carry out its role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable Board by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task;
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The role of a governor

In law the Governing Board is a corporate Board, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full Governing Board
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and

- although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority co-opted, partnership), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

General

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Board and the role of the headteacher as set out above
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life (*see appendix*)
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Governing Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Governing Board 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 Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Governing Board 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 Board.

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 Board and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including attendance at meetings and linking with staff.
- 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 eg performances, fairs, assemblies, parents' evenings.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff as established by our Link Governor process and feed-back provided for governor meetings.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will each undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

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 her role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, 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 Board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Governing Board vote.
- We will take care to ensure responsible use of email and social media **at all times** in order to avoid compromising our own reputation and that of the school in any way. (*see RMBC Guidance on the use of Social Networking*)

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the Governing Board’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 Head or Chair and together they will decide whether a full Governing Board meeting is required to investigate the matter.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the Vice Chair will investigate
- Suspension will be implemented only as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
(see www.education.gov.uk re school governance constitution regulations)

- **The Governing Board of Smithy Bridge Primary School adopted this code of practice on 13.5.2013. Up-dated September 2016**

- **Undertaking:**

As members of the Governing Board we will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; we will do all we can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; we will never say or do anything publicly (*including via social media*) that would embarrass the school, the Governing Board, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed	Printed name

Date: 5th October 2016

Governors sign the Code at the first Governing Board meeting of each school year.