



## Governance Code of Conduct

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Published	Ranelagh School (Governors' VLE & Staff shared area) Jennett's Park CE Primary School

## **Code of Conduct**

Herein: 'Governor' means any Member of the Trust, Trustee, non-Trustee member of a Trust committee or panel, local governor or non-governor member of a local governing body committee or panel. 'Governing body' means the local governing body, in relation to local governors and non-governor members of local governing body committees; OR the Board of Trustees, in relation to Members, Trustees or non-Trustee members of a committee of the Board. 'Trust' means the Bonitas Multi-Academy Trust. 'Headteacher' means the headteacher or principal of the school or CEO of the Trust, as appropriate.

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors and Trustees in order for the governing body and the Trust to properly carry out its work within its school and the community.

Once this code has been adopted by the Board of Trustees, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law, articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

### **We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

#### **Selflessness**

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

We will be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law, articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation.

## **As Governors we will focus on our core governance functions:**

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the schools
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher (where delegated)
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the headteacher (where delegated)
- Engaging with stakeholders and ensuring their voices are heard
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

## **As individuals we agree to:**

### **Fulfil our role & responsibilities as set out in our scheme of delegation**

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the executive leaders.
- We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day to day management.
- 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 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 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 have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality and will work to advance equality and opportunity for all.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain, develop and share the ethos and reputation of our school and the Bonitas Multi-Academy Trust. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- When making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust.

- We will actively support and constructively challenge the senior leadership team when holding them to account.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the governing body and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the headteacher and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing body as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.
- Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.

#### **Demonstrate our commitment to the role**

- 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 where required.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- Where attendance at a meeting is virtual we will observe the Bonitas MAT Virtual Meeting Protocol (23.04.2020).
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor and continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will participate in relevant training to develop our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

#### **Build and maintain 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, the clerk to the governing body and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of leading the governing body and ensure appropriate conduct both inside and outside of meetings.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment where each governor's contributions are valued equally.
- We will be prepared to answer queries from other governing body members 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 headteacher, staff, pupils and parents and other relevant stakeholders from local agencies and our local community

### Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
- 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.
- We will use our allocated school email address for all electronic correspondence relating to governance and ensure that confidential correspondence, are not shared or forwarded to addresses outside of the governing body.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

### Conflicts of interest

- We will declare any business, personal or other interest (including those related to people we are personally connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- If any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.

- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors. (Get Information About Schools) some of which will be publically available.

#### **Ceasing to be a governor/trustee/academy committee member**

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office

#### **Breach of this code of conduct**

- We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.
- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension/removal 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 governing body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

***Adopted by the Bonitas Trust Board of Trustees on 17 October 2022.***

*The Bonitas Board of Trustees agrees that this Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by all Governors.*