

Coppermill Primary School



# Code of Practice for School Governors

Adopted from the NGA's Code of Practice

Ratified by the Governing Body on: 29 September 2016

To be reviewed: Annually

Next review: Autumn 2017

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the aims and ethos of the particular school.

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

The governing body is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

This document is to be reviewed annually by the governing body, at the first meeting of the autumn term. An in year review of this document may take place at any time to ensure the governing body continues to offer the highest standard of professional conduct.

### **The three core functions of the governing body are:**

- set the vision and strategic direction of school;
- hold the Headteacher to account for its educational performance; and
- ensure financial resources are well spent.

### **The governing body:**

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
- Setting statutory targets
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes 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 improvement strategy
- The budget and the staffing structure

Ensures accountability by:

- signing off the school's own self-evaluation report
  - 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 body.

**For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:**

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

**The role of a governor**

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

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper 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.

**The Governing Body will:**

- Understand its purpose and the role of the headteacher as set out above;
- Operate at a strategic level, leaving the head teacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to it for the operational day-to-day running of the school;
- 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;
- 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;
- Fulfil its 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;
- Encourage open government and will act appropriately;
- Consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools;
- 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;
- and in making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school, we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix

**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 headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We each will attend a governor induction training programme
- 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 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 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 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.

- The governing body will abide by the council's model process for maintaining the register of interests.

### **Delegation**

The Governing Body agrees to delegate some of its functions to committees and individual link governors; terms of reference for each established committee will be reviewed annually and approved by the governing body. Each committees and/or individuals must report back to the governing body on any activities they have carried out on its behalf. The governing body understand that it always acts as a 'corporate body' and remains accountable in law and to Ofsted for the performance of all its duties and functions.

In reviewing delegation, the governing body notes that the chair of governors must not exercise as an individual any of the functions of the governing body except where this has been sanctioned by the governing body, or in the specific circumstances permitted within regulations. The chair of governors is permitted to act in cases of urgency where a delay in exercising the function would be likely to be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a pupil, parent or member of staff.

### **Governors' allowances**

Payments can only be paid for expenditure necessarily incurred to enable the person to perform any duty as a governor. This does not include payments to cover loss of earnings for attending meetings. Travel expenses must be at a rate not exceeding the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) approved mileage rates which are changed annually and are on HMRC website. Other expenses should be paid on provision of a receipt and be limited to the amount shown on the receipt.

### **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 regulation 17 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2013, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor.

Date:.....

Governors will sign the Code at the **first** governing body meeting of each school year.

**Undertaking:**

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Body, the Headteacher or staff.

**James Percival**

Chair

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Tom Webster**

Vice - Chair

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Figen Bektaşoğlu**

Headteacher

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Nicolianna Petridou**

Staff Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Enrique Bao-Nion**

Co-opted Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Paul McDonough**

Co-opted Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Ben Rigby**

Co-opted Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Katie Pomeroy**

Co-opted Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Jen Burr**

Co-opted Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Will Power**

Associate Governor

Signed .....

Printed name .....

**Appendix: The Seven Principles of Public Life**

*(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).*

**Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act 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 their friends.

**Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public 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.

**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 the public interest.

**Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.