

**WINTERBOURNE NURSERY
AND
INFANT SCHOOL**

**CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR
THE GOVERNING
BODY**

JANUARY 2014

WINTERBOURNE NURSERY AND INFANTS' SCHOOL

A MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WINTERBOURNE NURSERY AND INFANTS' SCHOOL

The following code is a statement of the broad principles by which the governors of our school operate.

At Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School the headteacher is responsible for the day to day management of the school, the implementation of policy and the operation of the curriculum. The Governors have a responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the policies, plans and procedures within which our school operates.

One of the main aims of our school is to raise the educational achievement of all pupils. The Governors contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its three roles:

- Providing a strategic view of where the school is heading.
- Acting as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the school.
- Sharing responsibility for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of the education it provides and offering support/advice for further development.

In order to carry out its role, the following general principles apply to our Governing Body.

- All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.
- Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors should consider carefully how their own decision might affect other schools.
- Governors should encourage open government and should be seen to do so.
- Governors do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual governors have power only when it is designated specifically to them by the whole governing body.

COMMITMENT

Being a governor involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on the governing body.

All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept a fair share of the responsibilities, including service on committees. In order to fulfil this, regular attendance at meetings of both the full governing body and committees is essential.

Governors should know the school well and take opportunities, where possible, to visit it and become involved in school activities. Those Governors who find it difficult to visit school, due to work commitments, must make every effort to keep up to date with relevant matters by walking around school during governing body meetings, communicating to their link class and co-ordinator.

RELATIONSHIPS

At Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School we understand the importance of Governors operating as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted. Governors should develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents, the LEA and their local community.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.

Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.

In addition to this, Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.

CONDUCT

In order for Governors to operate in an efficient and consistent manner we ask that following principles of conduct must be adhered to.

- Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions. They should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically asked to do so.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community should reflect this.
- All visits to school should be undertaken within a framework which has been established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should refer to the school's 'Complaints Procedure' for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.
- Any pecuniary interest that a governor may have in connection with the governing body's business must be recorded in the register of pecuniary interests. Where an interest is declared, the governor must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Governor training and development is important. It benefits the school and individual governors, and can help to develop effective teamwork. Governors at Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School are encouraged to undertake training to further their individual interests within the governing body and the work of the governing body as a whole.

MENTORING

An experienced governor who acts as a mentor to new governors can provide support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the governing body. Governors should be prepared to act as mentors, as required.

MEETINGS

Individual governors do not have any authority in school. It is the collective decisions of all the governors together that carry authority. The activities that governors undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for the times when the governing body 'goes live' - in a meeting.

It follows that if our governing body is to carry out its functions well, its meetings are crucial. During our meetings we aim to follow the Meetings Charter (set out below) in order to give ourselves the best chance of coming to informed, collective decisions.

MEETINGS CHARTER

As a governor I expect:

people to attend regularly and be punctual;

an agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before the meeting;

an agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item;

a Chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point;

my contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion;

the decision making process to be quite clear;

- ***governors to work together and not to be stubbornly partisan;***
- ***governors to take collective responsibility for decisions;***
- ***minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.***

Others can expect me to:

- *attend regularly and be punctual;*
- *read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about;*
- *bring my papers to the meeting;*
- *make relevant and positive contributions;*
- *listen to and consider what other people want to say;*
- *accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.*
- *Accept a fair share of responsibility on working parties.*

VISITING THE SCHOOL

We encourage all Governors to visit our school. Although Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to school in order to see governors' policies in action and to understand how the school works.

In order to avoid any misunderstandings, and for the most to be drawn from these visits, the key principles that must be observed during school visits are set out below.

1. Due to the size of our school and the need for a member of the SMT to be available to show the Governor around we limit the number of visits to 20 per year.
2. The date and timing of a visit should be arranged in advance with the headteacher and other staff involved.
3. Visits should have a clear focus, linked to a school policy, a curriculum area or an aspect of the school improvement plan.
4. Governors should understand that their visits do not replace professional inspections or the monitoring role of the headteacher. Governors should not make judgements about the effectiveness of the teaching that they see. If governors are concerned about any aspects of what they have seen this should be passed to the headteacher.
5. If a governor is going to spend time in a classroom, this should be discussed with the class teacher so that both are clear how long the governor is coming for, what they are going to look at and what they are going to do.
6. After the visit, the governor should report back, either orally or in writing to the governing body at the next governing body meeting. Any report, whether written or oral, should first be discussed with the subject leader before reporting to the governing body.