



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

Code of Conduct for School Governing Bodies **(October 2019)**

The governing body has the following core functions, as defined in Regulations:

- (a) establishing that the vision, ethos and direction of the school are clearly defined
- (b) ensuring that the Head teacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school; and
- (c) ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

In exercising their functions, the governing body shall:

- (a) act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- (b) be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take, and in particular shall be prepared to explain decisions and actions to interested parties.

Specifically, as individuals on the governing body we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the Head teacher and senior leadership team.
- 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 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 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, we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We will actively support and challenge the Head teacher and senior leadership team.
- 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.

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

- We will respect the role of the Head teacher and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, 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 governance 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 school.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication, which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing body.

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, why we are unable to do so.
- 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 Head teacher 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.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- 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 Department for Education's national database of governors ("Get information about schools").

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 ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

- We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities, any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (detailed below) or which may place pupils at risk.
- 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, 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 of a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- 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.

Ceasing to be a governor

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

Breach of this code of conduct

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.

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing body member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

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.
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty** - Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership** - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

(Adapted from the NGA Code of Practice for school and academy governing bodies, September 2019)

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

Appendix A

The use of social media sites by governors in a personal capacity

The Code of Conduct for School Governors states that individual governors have a responsibility to:

- Accept that they have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given delegated authority to do so, and therefore will only speak on behalf of the governing body when specifically asked to do so
- Consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools
- Always be mindful of the responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this
- Follow the procedures established by the governing body when making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school
- Observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- Exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting

Governors may have their own social network accounts. It is important that they protect themselves, and the reputation of the school, by ensuring that they use their personal sites, and any public sites, in an appropriate manner.

They should not post pictures of pupils, or of school events (without the Headteacher's consent), or negative comments about school events or policy. They should also not post photographs or comments about pupils, other governors, parents/carers.

Governors should not engage with any aspects of school life on social media with staff or parents: this can too easily lead to unnecessary or unfair criticism. If a parent regarding a post on social media engages a governor, they must recommend that the person involved contacts the Head teacher via the school office and not through social media or the head's email account directly. Social media must not be used as a forum to raise complaints/grievances: any issues should be raised via the appropriate channels and agreed procedures.

Governors must ensure they do not portray themselves, or allow friends to portray them, in a way that may:

- Bring the school into disrepute
- Lead to valid parental complaints
- Be deemed as derogatory towards the school and/or its employees
- Be deemed as derogatory towards pupils, parents/carers or governors
- Bring into question their appropriateness to work with children

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity



Bolton By Bowland C.E. Primary School

Appendix B

Governor Declaration Form (to be retained)

I

Governor at Bolton by Bowland Church of England Primary School, declare that I have received, read and understand the terms and conditions of the Governor Code of Conduct including the section on the use of social media.

I understand my obligation under these guidelines and agree to comply fully with them whilst I am a Governor at Bolton by Bowland Church of England Primary School.

The school will not tolerate any of the following:

- The sending of abusive messages to other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- The sending of abusive messages about other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the school, its values or methods
- Making comments about or posting images of parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff without prior permission.

Signed:

Date:

.....

Governor Declaration Form (to be returned to school)

I

Governor at Bolton by Bowland Church of England Primary School, declare that I have received, read and understand the terms and conditions of the Governor Code of Conduct including the section on the use of social media.

I understand my obligation under these guidelines and agree to comply fully with them whilst I am a Governor at Bolton by Bowland Church of England Primary School.

The school will not tolerate any of the following:

- The sending of abusive messages to other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- The sending of abusive messages about other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- Posting defamatory 'statuses' about other parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff
- Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the school, its values or methods
- Making comments about or posting images of parents, carers, governors, children and members of staff without prior permission.

Signed:

Date:

Belong, Believe, Blossom

Friendship Forgiveness Trust Respect Honesty Generosity