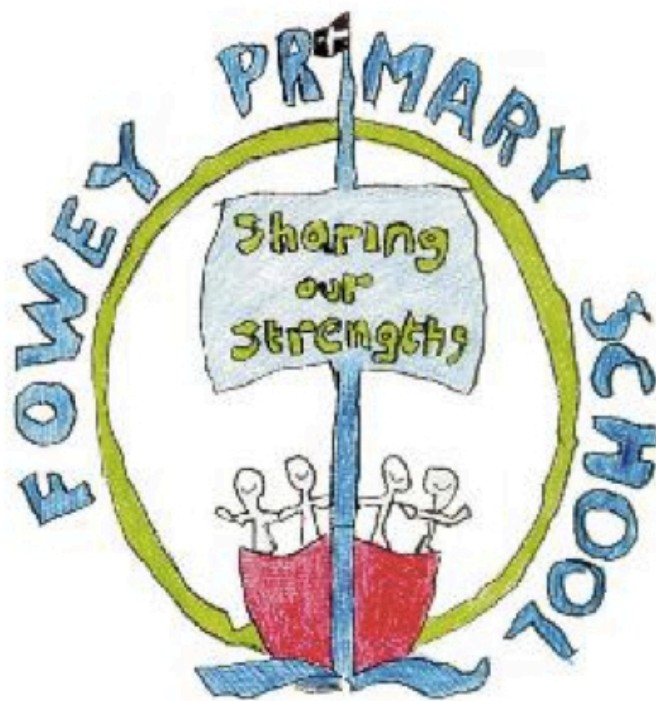


# Code of Conduct for the Governing Body of Fowey Primary School



## **Introduction**

This Code of Conduct is to be used as a basis for clarifying the behaviour and conduct of all school governors.

Various pieces of legislation define the duties, powers and responsibilities of governing bodies and the procedures to be followed. The Education School Government: Terms of Reference (England) Regulations 2007 define the general duties of governing bodies and require governors to act with 'integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school.'

In adopting this Code of Conduct the governing body sets its own standard of behaviour and conduct, and it is hoped that all governors will be mindful of this in their actions. If a governor behaves in a manner that brings, or is likely to bring, the governing body or the school into disrepute, or in other defined circumstances, the governing body may legally consider suspension or removal as a consequence of those actions (Statutory Guidance on the School governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003).

All new members of the governing body will be given the Code of Conduct at induction, and it will be reviewed at the first full governing body meeting in the Autumn Term to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs of the governing body of Fowey Primary School.

This Code of Conduct is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which governors will operate.

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Name of School: Fowey Primary School**

**Name of Chair: Jaine Colwill**

**Name of Headteacher: Chris Wathern**

**Date agreed: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

The governing body of this school accepts the following Code of Conduct.

## **Principles**

- The governing body only has statutory authority as a corporate body, and school governors have no authority as individuals.
- The essential role of the governing body is strategic and not operational.
- The most effective approach of the governing body is to be a 'critical friend' to the school. An effective critical friend is where there is an open and trusting relationship between governors and the Headteacher, based on mutual respect and a willingness to be constructive at all times.
- The governing body has a number of statutory responsibilities some of which must be exercised by the full governing body, and the remainder delegated to a committee, a working group, an individual governor or the Headteacher (The Decision Planner. DCFS).
- All governors have equal status unless the full governing body confers particular responsibilities on them. Although each brings an individual perspective to the governing body, whether as parent, member of staff or from outside the school itself, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.

## **The role of the governing body is to:**

- set strategic aims and objectives for the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement
- set policies and targets to support and meet the strategic aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate progress towards these aims and objectives.

## **The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- the internal organisation, and the day to day operational management and control of the school
- presenting the aims and objectives, policies and targets to the governing body for consideration, and reporting back on their progress.

## **General**

- Governors have a general duty to act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school at all times.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the head teacher, senior management team, teachers, support staff, parents, Local Authority, and other relevant agencies.
- In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfill all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- Governors should consider carefully how their decisions might affect other schools.
- Governors will hold a current Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service with Lists (DBS) Check Certificate (previously known as CRB). In addition any governor giving cause for concern may be asked by the Clerk to obtain an Enhanced DBS with Lists check. Refusal by a governor to allow an application to the DBS for a certificate is a disqualification factor as detailed in Section 3.2.3 Statutory Guidance on the School governance (Constitution) England) Regulations 2012.

### **Commitment**

- School governance requires significant amounts of time and energy from every governor.
- All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the governing body and accept a fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees and working groups.
- Governors should know the school well and take all possible opportunities for involvement in school activities.
- Regular attendance at meetings of the full governing body, committees and working groups is essential. Employers must give employees who are school governors in maintained schools 'reasonable time off' to carry out their duties as outlined in Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996.
- Failure to attend governing body meetings - without the consent of the governing body - for a continuous period of six months without permission will result in the governor being disqualified from the governing body Statutory Guidance on the School governance (Constitution) England) Regulations 2012.
- Governors should be "critical friends" to the school inside its walls and loyally committed to it outside.
- Governors should undertake personal development and engage in appropriate training to keep knowledge and understanding at a level which best serves the interests of the school.
- It is recommended that governors attend the National Training Programme for New Governors as soon as possible after joining the governing body.

## **Confidentiality**

- Governors should observe complete confidentiality when either required or asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff or pupils.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when the discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside of the governing body.
- Governors should be loyal in word and deed to majority decisions of the governing body, even if they have not themselves agreed with them.
- Governors should never speak out against decisions, in public or in private, outside the governing body.
- Governors will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
- Governors, upon ceasing to be a governor, will continue to work to the principles in this Code of Conduct, particularly those relating to confidentiality.

## **Conflicts of interest**

- Individual governors must 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.
- Governors should resist the temptation of outside pressure to use the position of governor to benefit him or herself or other outside parties.

## **Conduct**

- Governors will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- Governors should ensure diversity and equal opportunity across the school community and treat all members of the school and governing body with respect and sensitivity, listening and responding to alternative views.
- Visits by governors to the school should be undertaken within a framework that has been established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher, e.g. by appointment or invitation.
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should follow procedures established by the governing body (Complaints Policy).

- Apart from very specific instances where the Chair has to act or take decisions on behalf of the governing body, governors should recognise that they have no individual powers and should only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when specifically authorised.
- Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school, and their actions within the school community should reflect this.
- Governors who access social networking sites will use them responsibly and ensure that neither their own personal/professional reputation, or that of the school's is compromised by inappropriate postings.

### **Breach of this Code of Conduct**

- If a governor believes this code has been breached, they should raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body will 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 it is believed has breached this code, another governor, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.
- Any allegation of a material breach of this Code of Conduct by any governor will be raised at a meeting of the governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, will be minuted and could lead to consideration of suspension of that governor from the governing body.
- Governors need to be aware of the provisions of Statutory Guidance on the School governance (Constitution) England) Regulations 2012, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor.

Policy re-adopted on: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Signature of Headteacher:.....

Signature of Chair of Governors.....

Review Date: September 2014