

# CODE OF PRACTICE FOR GOVERNORS

Agreed and signed by Governors on 16/10/17

Signed by Chair of Governors:

*Sally Birkebeck*

Statutory policy: No

Frequency of review period; Annually

Document History

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16/10/18	To be agreed by Governors

*Safe Happy Learning*

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## Code of Practice for Governors

This code sets out the expectations placed upon and commitment required from governors of Delius Special School in order for the Governing Body to carry out its work effectively within the school and the community.

### 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 Delius is a successful school which provides a safe, happy environment in which to learn and work and which supports the well-being of children and staff.

The Governing Body:

- Establishes the strategic direction of the school by:
  - setting the vision, values and objectives for the school;
  - agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets;
  - agreeing the policy framework for achieving those priorities and targets; and
  - meeting statutory duties.
- Ensures accountability by:
  - appointing and performance managing the head teacher who, with the rest of the senior leadership team, 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;
  - monitoring progress towards targets;
  - engaging with stakeholders, including pupils, families, staff and other professionals, other schools and the wider community;
  - contributing to school self-evaluation; and
  - responding in a timely manner to reports by Ofsted and other external parties.
- Ensures financial probity by:
  - agreeing the budget;
  - monitoring spending against the budget;
  - ensuring value for money is obtained; and
  - ensuring risks to the school are managed.

### Open Governance

- We accept that in the interests of open governance, for each governor, including associate governors, who has served at any point over the past 12 months the following information will be published on the school's website:

- their full names, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them (in accordance with the governing body's instrument of government), and
- relevant business and pecuniary interests (as recorded in the register of interests) including:
  - governance roles in other educational institutions;
  - any material interests arising from relationships between governors or relationships between governors and school staff (including spouses, partners and close relatives); and
  - their attendance record at governing body and committee meetings over the last academic year.
- We accept that for each governor the full name, including title, appointing body, date of appointment, date term of office ends (or ended, if in the last year) and whether they are the chair of governors or a member of the governing body must be recorded in, and will be published on, Edubase. In addition, the postcode, date of birth, previous names and nationality for each governor and the direct email address for the Chair will be recorded in, but not published on, Edubase.
- Any governor failing to provide the information set out above and agreeing to its publication, where appropriate, may be in breach of this Code and as a result be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases we will consider suspending the governor.

## **Safeguarding**

- We accept that governors are subject to the same safeguarding requirements as school staff including, but not limited to:
  - a current enhanced DBS check. Please note as Governance is not a regulated activity governors do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.
  - Childcare (Disqualification) regulations 2009 Disqualification Declaration Form being in place;
  - strict adherence to the school's policy on ICT usage; and
  - strict adherence to the school's policy on the wearing, where it is clearly visible, and use of their Delius identity card.

## **As individuals on the Governing Body we agree to the following:**

### **Role and Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the Governing Body and the role of the Head Teacher.
- 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 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 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 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 when representing it will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the Governing Body.
- We will actively support and challenge the Head Teacher and the rest of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **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 and/or as named and/or link governors.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and when we cannot attend we will 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 staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Body and agreed with the Head Teacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development and will undertake relevant training, wherever possible completing at least one training course each year.

### **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, school staff and other stakeholders.
- 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 Head Teacher, staff and families, 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, pupils or members of the Governing Body, both inside and outside school and whether in person or through any other form of communication, including social media.
- 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 (including those related to people with whom we are connected) that we have in connection with the Governing Body's business in the Register of Business Interests. 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.

## **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; should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the Vice 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.

Governors will normally sign the Code at the first Governing Body meeting of each school year.

## **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.

**The Governing Body of Delius Special School adopted this code of practice on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017.**

**Review date: July 2018**

Signed: ..... Position:.....

**Code of Practice for Governors**

**Undertaking (retained by Governor):**

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and staff and the reputation of Delius Special School at heart. I will abide by the Code of Conduct and 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 Head Teacher or Staff.

Signed ..... Printed name ..... Date:

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**Undertaking (to be retained in School):**

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and staff and the reputation of Delius Special School at heart. I will abide by the Code of Conduct and 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 Head Teacher or Staff.

Signed ..... Printed name ..... Date:

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