

Riverhead Infants School

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR GOVERNORS

Date of Review	November 2010
Next review	November 2011

Introduction

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

The Governors of Riverhead Infants School work to the Nolan Committee seven general principles of conduct in public life and accept the following specific principles:

General

1. Governors have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review, the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates; they should recognise that it is the Headteacher who is responsible for the implementation of policy, the day to day management of the school and operation of the curriculum. Governors are not expected to become involved in day to day management issues.
2. All governors have equal status and although governors are appointed by different groups (i.e. parents, community, staff and the L.A.). They do not represent any one group, but act in the best interests of the school at all times.
3. Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
4. In so far as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
5. Governors should consider carefully how their own decisions might affect other schools.
6. Governors accept the recommendations of the Nolan Committee in respect of the principles of conduct in public life.

Commitment

1. Being a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy; careful regard should be given to this when agreeing to serve, or to continue to serve, on the governing body of Riverhead Infants School. Naturally, personal circumstances will determine how this commitment will be delivered.
2. 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.
3. Regular attendance at meetings of the full governing body, committees and of working groups is essential.
4. Governors will be expected to take part in the development of the School Improvement Plan through the annual development process and the review of its implementation through the Monitoring Pairs process.

5. Governors must know the school well and take all possible opportunities for involvement in school activities. This will include undertaking both formal and informal visits to the school during school hours.

Relationships

1. Governors should strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
2. Governors should develop effective working relationships with Headteacher, staff, parent groups, L.A. and other relevant agencies, and note the particular position of Headteachers who elect not to be governors.

Confidentiality

1. Governors must respect complete confidentiality when either required or asked to do so by the governing body.
2. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which the decisions were based should be regarded as confidential.
3. Governors must exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.
4. Decisions, once taken by the Governing Body, should be respected and supported, even if an individual governor voted against the individual decision. Any fundamental disagreements must be stated during the meeting and asked to be minuted as such.

Conduct

1. Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
2. Governors must only speak or act on behalf of the governing body when they have been specifically authorised to do so.
3. All visits to the school should be undertaken by prior appointment and within a framework which has been established by the governing body and agreed with the Headteacher.
4. In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should follow procedures established by the governing body.
5. Governors should follow agreed procedures when wishing to make critical comment on any aspect of the school.
6. Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school; their actions within the school community should reflect this.

Governors' Committees

The Governing Body of Riverhead Infants School has decided that the following committees, which are subject to annual review, shall be formed:

Finance Committee

Learning and Development Committee

Premises Committee

Pay & Staffing Committee

Community Committee

When necessary, working parties may be set up to undertake a specified task. These working parties must report progress to the sub-committee or full governing body as appropriate.

The Head Teacher has the right to attend all meetings. The Chairman of Governors is ex-officio to all above committees.

If necessary, further sub-committees will be set up from members of the Pay & Staffing Committee or the Governing Body for the following personnel issues:

- a) Grievance and Discipline; and
- b) Appeals

Other committees will be formed as and when required by specific circumstances.

Frequency of Meetings

A full Governors' Meeting is held once per term (six times per year). The finance, premises and learning & development committees meet prior to the Governing Body as required. Other committees meet as considered necessary.

The pay & staffing committee meets at least twice per year.

Recording Meetings

Committees produce clear and concise minutes which will be circulated to all governors in advance of the full meeting for final decisions.

The minutes from the various committees will provide part of the basis for the School Profile as they will highlight areas that have been considered in depth over the past year.

Visits

In order to make Governor visits useful, mutually profitable, focused and directed on specific issues they should be by appointment. Governors are always very welcome to visit the school on an informal basis but these visits should not form the basis of reports to committees or the full Governing Body.