



Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust

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Code of Conduct – Local Governing Committees

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Introduction

This code of conduct sets out the expectations of, and commitment required from Local Governing Committees (LGC) for the Board of Trustees to carry out its work within the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust's schools and the wider community.

Function of a Local Governing Committee

The Local Governing Committee has the following functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school;
- agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets and
- meeting statutory duties.

Ensuring accountability, by:

- monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets;
- engaging with stakeholders;
- contributing to school self-evaluation.

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- monitoring spending against the budget;
- ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained;
- ensuring risks to the organisation are managed.

Role & Responsibilities of LGC members

As individuals on the Local Governing Committee, governors agree to the following:

- we have read the Scheme of Delegation and understand the purpose of the Local Governing Committee and the role of the Trust Board;



- we accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Local Governing Committee has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Local Governing Committee when we have been specifically authorised to do so;
- we accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Local Governing Committee. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Local 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 academy and the group of which it is a member. Our actions within the academy and the local community will reflect this;
- in making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Trust;
- we will actively support and challenge the leadership of the school;
- we will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Trustees, Local Governing Committee and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;
- we will respect the role of the school's leaders and their responsibility for the day- to-day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- we will adhere to the school's rules and policies, and the procedures of the Local Governing Committee as set out by the relevant governing 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 organization.



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 Local Governing Committee, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- 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 Principal/Headteacher and undertaken within the framework adhered to by the Local Governing Committee.
- 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 Local Governing Committee, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of local 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 local governors will be collected and logged on the DfE'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 local governors/trustees/school committee



members, the clerk to the Local Governing Committee 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.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other Local Governing Committee members 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 school's leaders, staff and parents, the Trust, 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/trust business arise outside a Local Governing Committee meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any Local Governing Committee 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 Local Governing Committee'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 will also declare any conflict of interest at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.



- We will act in the best interests of the academy as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if an elected member to the Local Governing Committee.

Ceasing to be a local governor

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality continue to apply after a local 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 who will investigate; the Local Governing Committee will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the Chair that we believe has breached this code, another Local Governing Committee member, such as the Vice Chair will investigate.

The seven principles of public life

We have read and will follow the seven principles of public life as set out in the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust Scheme of Delegation