

26<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Parent

### **Notice of Vacancy – Parent Elected Governor**

Mrs Kirsty Bourne, your current Bedford School Parent Elected Governor, will reach the end of her 3 year term at the end of the Summer Term 2019 and has decided not to seek re-election.

I am therefore circulating this letter to all those entitled to participate in the nomination of a Parent Elected Governor in order to invite nominations to fill the vacancy. The nominee may be a parent but need not be so, they are elected by the parents to be a voice for the parents. Members of staff, their partners and other close relations, are not eligible to serve as school governors, as they are already represented by the Staff Elected Governor as part of the Bedford School Committee.

The successful candidate becomes a Governor of the School, responsible to the Harpur Trust for its conduct and maintenance in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the School Committee. The term of office is three years. The Parent Elected Governor will, like all Governors, be expected to ensure good governance of the School with support for and from the senior management team. They will also be responsible for representing the views of parents to the School Committee and assisting in communication from the School Committee to parents. They will, however, be acting as a representative, not a delegate, of the parents and must always take decisions in what they regard as the overall best interests of the School.


In considering the qualities of the sort of person who can most usefully serve the School as your nominee, clearly an affinity and loyalty to the School must be very high on the list of attributes but please also consider the Role Description and Code of Conduct, which are attached, when deciding whether to nominate someone.

If you decide that you wish to nominate someone for this position, please complete the attached nomination form and return it to me at the address below or by email to [bursar@bedfordschool.org.uk](mailto:bursar@bedfordschool.org.uk)

I must receive nominations by **12:00 midday on Friday 10 May 2019**. Nominations received after this date, or incorrectly completed, will not be valid. If I receive more than one nomination, I will arrange for an election to be held and if that is necessary, I will write to you again.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on the nature of this position and the commitment it entails.

Yours sincerely



Stuart Holliday  
Bursar & Clerk to the Governors

# Role Description for a Parent Elected Governor

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## Role Purpose

**To further Bedford School within the Harpur Trust**

## Main Tasks

1. To participate in formulating and regularly reviewing the strategic aims of the School having regard to the overarching Strategic Plan of the Harpur Trust
2. With other Governors to ensure that the policies and practices of the School are in keeping with its strategic aims.
3. With other Governors to ensure that the School operates within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable organisation and strives to seek best practice.
4. To act as a link between the parents of pupils at the School and the School Committee and as a representative, but not a delegate, of parents.

## Main Duties

1. **Formulating Strategic Aims** by:
  - Considering the School as a whole and its pupils, whether as a member of the School Committee or any of its supporting committees.
  - Reflecting the School's vision and principles, strategy and policies at all times.
  - Contributing specific skills, interests and contacts
2. **Ensuring policies and practices are in keeping with the School's Aims** by:
  - Following the Code of Conduct for Governors at all times, particularly when acting as a member of the School Committee or any of its supporting committees.
  - Attending School Committee meetings and meetings of other committees to which you are appointed
  - Reflecting the School's policies on all its committees and sub-committees

**3. Ensuring best practice by:**

- Being an active member of the School Committee in exercising its responsibilities and functions
- Maintaining good relations with the Head, Bursar and other senior management staff
- Taking part in training provided for the benefit of Governors
- Fulfilling such other duties and assignments as may be required from time to time by the School Committee
- Attending AGBIS or other sector body meetings and seminars as appropriate

**4. Acting as a link with parents by:**

- Actively seeking out the views of parents through appropriate channels of communication
- Representing views of parents to other members of the school committee and, where appropriate, the Head and Bursar.
- In consultation with the Head and Bursar, ensuring parents are kept properly informed of matters of interest to them, as required by the School Committee.
- Paying particular attention to the boundary between governance and management and ensuring that matters that should be dealt with through the management chain are brought to the attention of the Head and Bursar.

**Chairman of the Bedford School Committee**

24<sup>th</sup> February 2014



## Code of Conduct for a Governor of Bedford School

### Introduction

This code applies to all Governors of the School. All Governors have legal duties and responsibilities. The most important of these are summarised in the AGBIS's publication "*Guidelines for Governors*", which all Governors should read.

Governors who are also Trustees of the Harpur Trust have additional duties and responsibilities that are dealt with by the Code of Conduct for a Trustee of the Harpur Trust and Job Description for Trustee of the Harpur Trust, which take precedence over this Code of Conduct where any conflict arises.

This Code of Conduct is not a list of Governors' legal duties, although many of the elements of the code are based on legal principles. The conduct and practices in this Code go beyond what the law requires in some respects, but they are nevertheless fully consistent with the law.

The School is an integral part of the Harpur Trust (The Harpur Trust) and all Governors must understand and have due regard to the limits of authority delegated to the School under the Articles of Government and Terms of Reference of School Committees.

There is a mandatory induction for all members of School Committees, which is held by the Harpur Trust; Governors should ensure that they attend such an induction session as soon as practicable after they take up their duties.

### Purpose of a code

To set out the relevant standards expected from Governors of the School in order to maintain the highest standards of integrity and stewardship; to ensure that the School is effective, open and accountable; and to ensure a good working relationship with the Head and Bursar at the School and Chief Executive of the Harpur Trust and his senior team.

### The Code

#### General

1. Governors must act with probity, due prudence and should take and consider professional advice on anything in which they do not have expertise themselves.
2. A Governor must administer the School and all its assets in the interest of current, potential and future pupils.
3. Governors should hold themselves accountable to the School's stakeholders, including the public at large, for the School Committee's decisions, the performance of the School Committee as the Governing Body of the School and for the performance of the School.

4. A Governor must not place himself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence the performance of his duties. In addition, Governors must abide by the Conflict of Interest Policy of the Harpur Trust.
5. Governors must be mindful that their personal and professional conduct outside the School must be beyond reproach. They should conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the School, or its staff individually or collectively and should not take part in any activity which is in conflict with the objects or which might damage the reputation of the School or the Harpur Trust.
6. Governors must make decisions together and take joint responsibility for them. The extent to which any one Governor or a small group of Governors is empowered to speak for or take action on behalf of the School must be a matter for all Governors to decide together. Such decisions must be recorded.
7. Governors, who sit on the School Committee as the nominee or representative of a group or organisation including staff and parents, must accept that their primary responsibility is to the School, not to their nominating or electing group or body. They are representatives not delegates of such bodies.

## **Responsibilities**

8. Governors must, with the help of the Head and Bursar, formulate and review regularly the School's vision, mission, values and long-term strategy as well as policies for its fulfilment, having regard to the overarching Strategic Plan of the Harpur Trust.
9. With the assistance of the Head, Bursar and appropriate professional advisers, Governors must ensure that the School complies with regulatory and statutory requirements and must exercise overall control over the School's financial affairs. In addition to compliance with statutory requirements, Governors should have a commitment to the development and implementation of good practice, particularly as it applies to the safeguarding and education of the pupils at the School.
10. If a Governor has concerns over financial irregularities within the School they should address them to the School Committee Chairman who will initiate appropriate action.
11. Governors must be familiar with and keep under regular review the rules and structures of the School and keep up to date with changes in regulatory or other standards with which the School has to comply. Any changes to School rules or structures must be made in accordance with constitutional and legal requirements.
12. In order to develop a working knowledge of the School and to give themselves credibility, Governors should endeavour to maintain links and keep in touch by regular visits to the School. Unless there is a good reason to believe that the Head's actions are threatening the probity of the School or safety of its staff or pupils, all such visits should be made by arrangement with the Head.
13. Should a Governor feel that he or she requires further guidance or training in their role, they have a duty to inform the Chairman of the School Committee, who will seek the assistance of the Bursar/Clerk to the Governors in obtaining the necessary training or guidance.

## **Meetings of the Governing Body and its Committees**

14. Governors must strive to attend all meetings, ensuring they prepare for and contribute

appropriately and effectively by reading papers and seeking clarification, where necessary, before the meetings.

15. Governors should bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions of the School Committee and should ensure that all decisions are made in the School's best interests. They should actively engage in respectful discussion, debate and voting in meetings; contributing effectively, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding quarrels.
16. Governors must aim to foresee and avoid any conflict of interest. Where one arises, a Governor must at once declare the interest and absent him/herself from any discussion or vote taken on the matter by the other Governors, in accordance with the Conflict of Interest policy of the Harpur Trust.
17. Confidential information or material (relating to pupils, staff, commercial business, etc) provided to, or discussed at a School Committee or sub-committee meeting must remain confidential and within the confines of the School and must not be discussed outside the School Committee without specific authorisation.

## **Staff**

18. Governors must ensure there is a clear understanding of the scope of authority delegated to the Head or Bursar on any particular matter.
19. Policies and strategies agreed by Governors should be expressed in unambiguous and practical terms, so that the Head and staff responsible for implementing those policies are clear what they need to do. Directions given to the Head and the staff can only come from the School Committee as a whole, or from a sub-committee or Governor acting within powers specifically and properly delegated by the School Committee.
20. Governors should act fairly and in accordance with good employment and equal opportunities principles in making decisions affecting the appointment, recruitment, professional development, appraisal, remuneration and discipline of the Head and other staff.
21. Governors' participation in school leadership is strategic. Governance and management are largely separate functions. Governors should scrupulously avoid involvement in management detail which would carry a serious risk of confusing lines of responsibility and compromising the position of those with management responsibility, particularly the Head.
22. Governors must understand, accept and respect the difference in roles between the School Committee, Head, Bursar and senior staff, ensuring that the School Committee, the Head, the Bursar and their senior teams work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the School, and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship, which respects diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
23. Having given the Head or Bursar delegated authority, Governors should be careful – individually and collectively – not to undermine it by word or action.

## **Breach of the Code**

24. Governors are expected to honour the content and spirit of this Code. Governors understand that substantial breach of any part of the Code may cause procedures to be put in place that may result in the Governor concerned being asked to resign.

25. If a Governor wishes to cease being a Governor of the School at any time, he or she should inform the Chairman at least one month in advance in writing stating their reasons for leaving.

**Chairman of Bedford School Committee**

January 2017