Diocesan Board of Education – Code of Conduct

**Code of Conduct for members of the Diocesan Board of Education**

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from members in order for the Board to properly carry out its work which is defined in Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991.

Once agreed, the Code will apply to all members. Every member will be requested to sign the Code of Conduct declaration at first appointment and each subsequent year of appointment.

As individuals on the Board we agree to the following:

**Role & Responsibilities**

* We understand the purpose of the DBE;
* We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the Board when we have been specifically authorised to do so;
* We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the Board 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 Diocese, the community and schools;
* We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the Board. Our actions within the Board and the community will reflect this;
* In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the Diocesan Board of Finance;
* We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders;
* We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the Board and staff

ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation;

* We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
* We agree to adhere to the Board’s rules and policies and procedures as set out by the relevant documents and law;
* When formally speaking or writing in our DBE 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 organisation.

**Commitment**

* We acknowledge that accepting office as a member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy;
* We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees, working groups and school visits;
* We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to;
* We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training when necessary;
* We accept that in the interests of open governance, our names will be published on the Diocesan Website.

**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 Board members, the clerk and DBE staff both in and outside 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 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 executive leaders and other staff.

**Confidentiality**

* We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern named individuals, both inside or outside the Diocese;
* We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding Board business arise outside meetings;
* We will not reveal the details of any Board vote;
* We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately, including the removal of electronic files.

**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 Board’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 accept that the Register of Business Interests will be collated and held by the clerk;
* 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 Diocese as a whole and not as a representative of any group.

**Ceasing to be a member**

* We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a member leaves office.

**Breach of this code of conduct**

* 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 Board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

**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.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty** – Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

**Adopted by the Diocesan Board of Education on 26 September 2019.**

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I agree that my personal contact details may be shared with other members of the Board for DBE business only.

I agree that my photograph may be taken at meetings or events related to DBE business.

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_