

***English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary  
Academy  
2015/16***

‘Walking with Jesus – God’s love in action’

**A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE ACADEMY  
COUNCIL**

Statutory Policy

This Policy Will Be Reviewed Every 3 Years

**Date Ratified by Governors:** Autumn 2015

**Date of next intended review:** Summer 2018

Equality & Diversity

We have considered the impact on equality and diversity on this policy and judge the impact to be neutral.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School offers distinctive Catholic education within a caring Christian community where everyone feels loved and valued, confident and secure.

We believe that each person is precious and gifted, unique and loved by God.

With Christ as our inspiration we work in partnership to create a challenging, effective and exciting learning environment where everyone is encouraged to embrace opportunity

### **Learning and Teaching**

We provide an exciting, creative and effective learning environment, recognising and responding to individual learning styles. We aim to help each child experience success and to embrace every opportunity by providing the highest -standard of education and care. Children take responsibility for and participate fully in their own learning.

Our curriculum will be both balanced and spiritually based and will fulfil all statutory requirements.

### **Catholic Life of the School**

We recognise God in all aspects of our mission. Specifically we will help children to develop their personal relationship with God. We will deliver high quality learning and teaching in religious education rooted in Catholic values and beliefs. We encourage respect for and understanding of other faiths and beliefs. The school environment will speak of Jesus Christ at the heart of our community. Children will be given opportunities to participate in creative and varied worship appropriate to their age and understanding.

We are an integral part of the parish and will play an active part in its life.

### **Relationships**

We will help each member of the school community to recognise that we are all precious in God's eyes. We will show love and respect for each other. We will give to each other the affirmation we all need and will try to respond to each other's needs.

### **Parents**

We will work to achieve a creative partnership between parents and school which recognises our different responsibilities in the education of the children.

We will communicate effectively with all parents. We will establish a bond of trust, building a partnership which nurtures the children's learning, spiritual development and pastoral care.

### **Community Cohesion**

We will be an integral part of the local community. We will increase the children's awareness of wider world issues. We will develop their sense of responsibility for and involvement in both of these.

We will ensure that our community life witnesses our Christian values and beliefs in all that we do and say.

Walking with Jesus – God's love in action

## **Introduction**

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Academy Council and individual academy councillors will operate.

The Academy Council accepts the following principles and procedures:

### **General**

1. We have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates.
2. We recognise that the Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy and internal organisation and management of the school, and the implementation and operation of the curriculum.
3. We accept that all academy councillors have equal status, and although appointed by different groups (i.e., parents, staff, Local Authority, Diocese) our overriding concern will be the welfare of the school as a whole.
4. We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the Academy Council has given us delegated authority to do so.
5. We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all the legal expectations as, or on behalf of, the employer.
6. We will encourage open government and shall be seen to be doing so.
7. We will consider carefully, how our decisions may affect other schools.

### **Commitment**

8. We acknowledge that accepting office as a academy councillor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
9. We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Academy Council, attend meetings regularly, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including membership of committees or working groups.
10. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
11. We will ensure that our individual and collective needs for training and development are consistently monitored, and opportunities to undertake relevant training and development are sought.

## Relationships

12. We will strive to work as a team. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Academy Council will strive to develop effective working relationships with:

- The headteacher
- Staff
- Children
- Parents
- The Diocese (i.e. The Vicariate for Evangelisation/Office for Education and Schools)
- Our parish and local communities
- The Local Authority
- Multi-agency representatives
- Other local schools, including Catholic and other VA, and community schools
- Local educational organisations / businesses / etc.

13. In forming, building and sustaining good working relationships academy councillors will strive to:

- Remember that we are typically representative of the *category* of academy councillor to which we are appointed or elected. We are not representatives of those *groups*, e.g. a representative parent, not a representative of the parents.
- Work as members of a team in which all academy councillors contribute and constructive working relationships are actively promoted, forming the Academy Council which functions with corporate responsibility and accountability.
- Develop an open and honest relationship with the headteacher and all school staff, acting as 'critical friend' to the school, ensuring a balance is struck between offering challenge and support.
- Ensure that effective relationships are built on trust and opportunities to network effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure that relationships between academy councillors and with other stakeholders are anchored in the principles which flow from the Gospel. The Academy Council will draw on the guidance offered in 'Christ at the Centre'<sup>1</sup> that whilst not definitive, the core values of the Gospel are based on the Beatitudes and may be summarised as follows:
  - Faithfulness and integrity
  - Dignity and compassion
  - Humility and gentleness
  - Truth and justice
  - Forgiveness and mercy
  - Purity and holiness
  - Tolerance and peace
  - Service and sacrifice<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christ at the Centre: a summary of why the Church provides Catholic Schools, Rev. Marcus Stock, The Diocesan Schools Commission of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 9

## **Confidentiality**

14. We will observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the Academy Council in meetings and from our visits to school as academy councillors.
15. We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the Academy Council, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students.
16. We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the school arises outside the Academy Council.

## **Conduct**

Academy councillors have a general duty to act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school at all times. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Academy Council will strive to behave professionally at all times.

- Academy councillors will aim to discharge their duties in a manner that maintains and develops the Catholic ethos of the school and its reputation in the parish, local community and wider educational community. Academy councillors' actions at all times should reflect our responsibility to secure the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Academy councillors should consider at all times, how we exercise stewardship, both as individuals and as a corporate body, which should manifest and be faithful to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.
- Academy councillors should reflect on how we are perceived by stakeholders in all we say and do, both as individual academy councillors and as a corporate body.
- Academy councillors should consider carefully how our decisions and actions might affect others, whether they are individuals employed by the school; children or adults who are part of the school community; the parish; other schools in the locality; or the wider community.
- Academy councillors should express views openly at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Academy Council or any individual academy councillor delegated to do so.
- Academy councillors will not speak out against majority decisions in public or in private outside the Academy Council. The intention is to protect the reputation and authority of the Academy Council and the school in the public domain.
- Academy councillors will only speak or act on behalf of the Academy Council when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- Academy councillors will respond to criticism or complaints about the school and / or its staff by referring to the school's Complaints Procedure adopted by the Academy Council for the correct procedure to be followed, and will advise the complainant accordingly.
- Academy councillors will record in the register of pecuniary interests any pecuniary interest we might have in connection with the Academy Council's business.

- Academy councillors will be expected to declare an interest in any item of business and withdraw from the meeting while it is under discussion.
- Academy councillors will always undertake visits within the framework established by the Academy Council and agreed with the headteacher.

**Suspension**

17. If the need arises to use the sanction of suspending a academy councillor, we will do so by following legal requirements so as to ensure a fair and objective process.

**Removal**

18. We recognise that removing a academy councillor from office is a last resort, and that it is the appointing bodies which have the power to remove those they appoint.

19. If the need arises to use the sanction of removing a academy councillor or removing the Chair, we will do so by following legal requirements so as to ensure a fair and objective process.

As a member of the Academy Council of *English Martyrs Catholic Primary school*,

- \* I agree to abide by the principles set out in this document.<sup>3</sup>
- \* I agree to details of my office as a academy councillor being published on the school’s website as required by statute.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>For a more detailed treatment of the principles highlighted in the present document including the legal status of school governors, please consult the following documentation: ‘A Guide to the Law for School Governors’, Department for Education and Skills, Crown Copyright, 2006, ‘Diocese of Leeds Governors’ Handbook’, The Office for Education and Schools, January 2010, ‘Schools of Discipleship’, Diocese of Leeds, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> The Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained School Statutory Guidance August 2015 requires for each governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months: • 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), • 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

Signed .....

Date .....