

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

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St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

PECUNIARY INTEREST POLICY

Policy Adopted: Summer 2014

Reviewed: Autumn 2023

Review Date: Autumn 2024



It is the school's policy that all relevant persons (as defined below) should be reminded from time to time (and no less than annually) of their obligation to make a declaration of any pecuniary or other interest in any proposed transaction to be carried out by the school.

Whenever a relevant person is called upon to make or participate in making or is in a position to influence the making of a decision on expenditure on behalf of the school or any of its pupils, that person should consider whether to make a declaration and subsequently withdraw from further discussion regarding the issue.

The declaration should be made if the person concerned is aware that the recipient of the expenditure is or might be:

1. him/herself
2. his/her employer or employee
3. a business in which he/she has an interest (however remote)
4. a member of his/her extended family
5. a friend or
6. someone to whom an obligation (either legal or moral) is owed.

The declaration should preferably be made in writing or recorded in the Minutes of a meeting. It should identify the decision on expenditure to be made and the nature of the connection.

If the person making the declaration is only one of a number participating in the decision, the declaration should be made to the other participants. They should consider, taking into account the amount of the expenditure, the nature of the connection and other relevant circumstances, whether to invite the person to exclude him/herself from the decision-making process.

If the person making the declaration is the only person making the decision on expenditure, the declaration should be made to the Headteacher. The Headteacher should consider, taking into account the amount of expenditure, the nature of the connection and other relevant circumstances, whether it is appropriate for the person concerned to make the decision or whether the decision should be made by someone else.

If the person making the declaration is the Headteacher, the declaration should be made to the Governor with responsibility for finance, who should thereupon make the decision, excluding the Headteacher from the discussions.

"Relevant persons" means Governors, the Headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff and employees and any other person having power to spend or participate in decisions to spend monies on behalf of the school or any of its pupils.

REGISTER OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

INTRODUCTION

The Suffolk LMS Scheme requires governors of, or persons employed at a school, to disclose any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any contract entered into or proposed. Clearly, the purpose is to ensure that decisions made in terms of spending the school's money, are in no way influenced by personal interests, and also to help disprove any unfounded claims that this might have happened. By registering an interest, individuals are ensuring that other people involved in decision making know from the outset that there could be a conflict of interests, and for example, could request that the individual concerned takes no part in the process.

The guidance published jointly by OFSTED and the Audit Commission (Keeping Your Balance) states "The governing body should establish a register of pecuniary interests for the governors and staff, which should be open to inspection. For example, governors and staff should declare any links they have with local firms from which the school may wish to buy goods or services. It is important for anyone involved in spending public money to demonstrate that they do not benefit personally from decisions that they make". Without such a framework of accountability, the actions of staff and governors could be open to question.

SCHOOL POLICY

The governing body has adopted the LEA recommended model, the key elements of which are set out below:

- a wide definition of who should be considered as an interested party (our recommendation is that it goes beyond just staff and governors);
- the maintenance of a standing register of interests, e.g. directorship of a company;
- the maintenance of a specific register of decisions where either an entry in the standing file was relevant, or where an ad-hoc interest was declared in the context of that specific decision; (e.g. Mrs A, recorded in the standing register as a director of Stowbytes IT Ltd, withdrew from the meeting when the contractor purchasing computers was discussed);
- the registers should be used to apply to decisions not just of the governing body, but also to those situations where staff have delegated powers to make decisions; (e.g. a bursar, whose wife runs a stationery business should not make a decision on the purchase of stationery without making an entry in the register);
- the governing body should make a point of examining both registers from time to time;
- any member of staff or governor with a pecuniary interest in a particular decision, should not normally take part in the process leading to that decision. If participation is unavoidable (e.g. some Headteacher decisions) discussion with the chairman or governors is advisable, together with making an entry, in the event register;
- anyone with a pecuniary interest in a potential contract should not take part in drawing up the specification and/or tender document.

Definition of Persons who should be recorded:

- * Any governor or employee of the school
- * The spouse of the above
- * The immediate family of both the above (parents, children, brothers, sisters and their spouses)

This is a potentially very extensive list of persons. However, entries in the register are

only necessary where there is the possibility of an interest arising (e.g. a directorship of the McLaren Formula 1 Motor Racing Team is unlikely to ever have any relevance to a school decision).

What represents a pecuniary interest:

- * A directorship of a company or business
- * Direct ownership or partnership of a company
- * A share holding in a company
- * A position of authority in a charity or voluntary organisation

Direct employment by the school also counts. Thus whenever a school recruits an employee, applicants should declare on their applications any relationship with staff or governors of the school. If a person is appointed who is related as defined above, that appointment decision should be recorded in the "event" register.

THE GENERAL INTERESTS REGISTER

This should contain individual entries sequentially numbered:

- i) the name of the governor or member of staff, followed by (if applicable) the name of the relative;
- ii) the name, address and type of business of the company;
- iii) the relationship with the company (director etc);
- iv) the date of entry on the register.

THE SPECIFIC EVENT REGISTER

This should contain entries as follows:

- i) the date of the event (e.g. date of governor meeting or submission of an order);
- ii) a description of what was disclosed and in what circumstances e.g. at Governing Body meeting on.....
- iii) a cross reference to an entry in the general register if applicable;
- iv) each entry should be signed and dated.

Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests

Schools manage a significant proportion of public funds and must demonstrate that no governor, employee or related party benefits personally from the use of funds.

School Name	
Name	
Position	<i>Governor / Headteacher / Other Employee</i>
Address <small>non-staff governors only</small>	
<small>OMIT ADDRESS FROM PUBLISHED COPY</small>	

Financial decisions must be seen to be made in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life:

- Selflessness:** No financial gain or other material benefits for self/family
Integrity: Independent of outside influence
Objectivity: Decisions made on merit
Accountability: Accountable for decisions/actions to the public
Openness: Open about decisions and actions taken wherever possible
Honesty: Declare private interests, resolve conflicts to protect public interest
Leadership: Promote and support principles by leadership and example.

These principles apply to decisions with regard to procurement and staffing (including recruitment, contractual changes, casual/additional hours, reimbursements and expenses). Declarations should be made where individuals could have a significant influence on any decisions made both at school and with the related party.

If you have no such interests please write 'NIL' in the table below:

Name of Potential Interest or Business <small>INCLUDE IN PUBLISHED COPY</small>	Nature of Interest <small>INCLUDE IN PUBLISHED COPY</small>	Address of Business <small>INCLUDE IN PUBLISHED COPY</small>	Nature of Business <small>INCLUDE IN PUBLISHED COPY</small>	Date interest started <small>OMIT FROM PUBLISHED COPY</small>	Date interest ends/ongoing <small>OMIT FROM PUBLISHED COPY</small>
<small>Business / company / employee school or academy</small>	<small>e.g. director / shareholder family member school or academy governor</small>			<small>e.g. start date of employment</small>	

I certify that I have declared all beneficial interests which I or any person connected with me have with businesses or other organisations which may have dealings with the school. I also undertake to inform the school of any change in these business interests promptly.

I accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website

Signed:		Date:		Omit from published copy:	
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Business interests/nil returns of school staff may be omitted from the published copy unless they are also governors or the Headteacher, in which case they must be included in the published copy

COUNTERSIGNING:

I have noted the interests declared above:

Signed:		Date:		Position:	
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*Chair of Governors to countersign the form for Governors, Associate Members, Headteacher & Clerk to the Governing Body
Headteacher to countersign the form for the Chair of Governors and members of staff*

Notes to assist individuals in completing the Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests

Section 2.9 of Suffolk's [Scheme for the Financing of Schools](#) states:

The governing body of each school is required to establish a register which lists for each member of the governing body, the Headteacher and school staff:

- Any business interests they or any member of their immediate family* have
- Details of any other educational establishments that they govern
- Any relationships between school staff and members of the governing body
- The register must be kept up to date with notification of changes, through annual review of entries and reviewed annually by the Governing Body
- The register must be available for inspection by governors, staff, parents and the LA
- The register must be published, for example on a publicly accessible school website
- *N.B business interests/nil returns of school staff may be omitted from the published copy unless they are also governors or the Headteacher, in which case they must be included in the published copy*

*immediate family to include other relatives and individuals who may exert influence

Staff and governors must be given an opportunity to declare an interest in any item on the agenda of a meeting and must withdraw from the meeting for relevant agenda items.

What you need to register:

You should register all interests and connections which could influence the school's reputation with the public, including:

- o details of any other educational establishment where you are a governor, associate member or trustee
- o personal relationships with other members of staff or governors of the school, including spouses, partners and relatives
- o details of charities where you are a trustee
- o details of membership of professional bodies, membership organisations, public bodies or special interest groups where you are a member and have a position of general control or management

You should register relevant business interests where you, or an immediate family member (to include other relatives and individuals who may exert influence) have a financial, or other, interest in a business or organisation which could feasibly be in a position to supply goods/services to the school, including:

- o building, catering and other premises/grounds contractors
- o suppliers of stationery and equipment
- o transport contractors
- o service providers (including audits for school funds)

You should include relevant business interests where you are a director, partner or shareholder. You only need to include relevant interests so you do not need to include details of small shareholdings in large national companies for example.

The local authority recommends that interests are declared if you are unsure. Specific issues can be discussed with the Schools' Accountancy Team (01473 265626, sat@suffolk.gov.uk)

When you need to update your entries:

You will be required to complete and sign a Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests form on an annual basis. You must also update your form as soon as possible if your pecuniary/business interests change before the next annual review is due.

Information to be made public:

All declared business and pecuniary interests for all governors and the headteacher will be published by the school online, to include:

- o relevant business interests
- o relationships with school staff/governors
- o details of any other educational establishment where they are a governor, associate member or trustee

The form includes details of the level of information that will be made available to the public online.

Failure to reveal appropriate information:

The general principle is that you should register and declare anything which a member of the public might reasonably think puts you at risk of being biased by putting private considerations above the interests of the school, or seeking preferential treatment for yourself or people, organisations and businesses with whom you are connected.

Any governor failing to reveal information to enable the governing body to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of the Code of Conduct and as a result be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases the governing body should consider suspending the governor.

Any member of staff found to be withholding information may be subject to disciplinary action

