

**SOLIHULL GOVERNOR SERVICES**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**



**Conflict of Interest/Pecuniary Interest**

When Conflict of Interest/Pecuniary Interest is mentioned, governors usually think of financial conflicts where a person stands to benefit personally from decisions taken by the Governing Body (directly or indirectly). Although this is true, a conflict of interest can arise whenever an individual’s family or personal interests conflict with those of the school. Where a conflict of interest occurs, the Governor should declare this at the meeting and leave the room when this item is being discussed.

Examples of this could be:

* A Councillor is a Governor at a local junior school. The Council are voting on whether to merge the junior school with the infant school. As a Councillor, they have a responsibility to follow Council policy, but as a Governor they have a duty to act in the best interests of the school. They should declare this conflict and withdraw from discussions.
* A Governor has a relative employed in the school. Conflicts can arise in two separate ways. Firstly, through the recruitment process; and secondly, where issues surrounding employment, promotion or pay are discussed. It is important that the Governor is not involved in either situation and should immediately withdraw from any discussions relating to this. They should also withdraw from any meeting regarding promotion or changes to staff that could have an advantage down the line

It is not just a question of whether an individual actually benefits from their position. Governing Bodies should strive to be transparent in all their dealing and consider how things may appear to the outside world. It is all about good governance and ethical practice. Governors should not leave themselves open to accusations of making decisions purely on a personal level and not in the best interests of the school.

A Record of Pecuniary Interests should be produced and signed by every governor annually at minimum. At the beginning of every Governing Body Meeting governors should be reminded of this Record and asked to add or remove items. If the Chair or Headteacher feels there could be a conflict of interest, they should remind governors at the beginning of any discussion that they need to declare any conflicts and remove themselves from the meeting. If a governor does not declare a conflict but others are aware of one, the Governing Body can discuss and vote on whether that particular governor should withdraw from the meeting.