



Governor Visits Policy

Reviewed by Governing Body: 17.09.19

Cycle of Review: 3 years

Statutory Policy: No

Introduction

The Governing Body will be able to fulfil the 3 core functions of governance:

1. Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Hold the HT to account for the educational performance of the school, and the PM of staff and
3. Oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure money is well spent.

Visiting the school is the best way to see how it functions and to keep under review how it operates so that you can increase the Governing Body's first-hand knowledge, informing strategic decision making.

Visits should generally relate to the governor's curriculum area of responsibility and priority taken from the School Development Improvement Plan (SDIP). Visits should be planned to cover the full extent of the school day and to cover a wide range of school work within the key stage that each governor has been assigned. Each visit should be arranged and agreed with the Head Teacher and have a clear purpose that is shared with the class teacher responsible where possible.

Purposes of visit

Potential benefits for governors:

- To recognise and celebrate school success;
- To develop relationships with staff;
- To get to know the pupils;
- To identify and support different teaching styles;
- To understand the environment in which teachers teach;
- To monitor policies in action;
- To inform decision making;
- To identify what resources are required within teaching and learning environments and prioritise them.

Potential benefits for staff:

- To ensure governors fully understand and appreciate the reality of different teaching and learning environments;
- To get to know governors;
- To understand, in more detail, the governors' roles and responsibilities;
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion and feedback;
- To highlight the need for certain resources.

What a visit is not about:

- Making judgments about the professional expertise or abilities of staff;
- Checking on the progress of pupils;
- Pursuing a personal agenda;
- Monopolising a member of staff's time;
- Conducting a visit in a judgemental manner.

Preparing for a visit

Governors and the Head Teacher need to clarify the purpose of the visit and ensure it is linked to the governor's curriculum area of responsibility, assigned key stage and priority areas taken from the SDIP. The purpose of the visit should be discussed and outlined to the members of staff or subject co-ordinator it affects ideally prior to the visit. Additionally, it is integral from a governors' perspective to identify and examine relevant school policies (e.g. behaviour management plans) before visiting. Ensure that the date chosen for the visit is suitable and ask staff how they would like governors to be involved whilst in the teaching and learning environment.

During the visit

The governor is making the visit on behalf of the governing body and it is not appropriate to make judgments or promises on behalf of the governing body. It is important to be punctual and to keep to the agreed timetable however, they a flexible approach may also be required. Remember that it is a visit and not an inspection so observe discretely, engage in the learning activities with the pupils and don't distract the class teacher during the lesson from his/her work but be prepared to talk and show interest. Don't lose sight of the purpose of the visit and remain courteous and friendly at all times, not critical.

Things to observe when visiting a classroom:

- Relationship between staff and pupils;
- Relationships between pupils;
- Variety of teaching styles;
- Availability and role of support staff;
- Behaviour and attitude of pupils – are they attentive, motivated, listening, questioning and responding where necessary?
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils;
- How are the pupils grouped?
- How are different abilities catered for?
- Pupil's work;
- Displays;
- Ethos – what is the atmosphere of the teaching and learning environment like? (Are there high expectations, encouragement, praise, equality of opportunity apparent?)
- Use of space and working conditions;
- Quality and quantity of working equipment and resources.

Governors may wish to engage with pupils and discuss a variety of topics. If it is deemed appropriate here are some suggested questions you may wish to ask pupils when in the classroom.

- What are you learning about today?
- Do you like (curriculum area being monitored)?
- Tell me what you most like doing in (curriculum area being monitored)?
- Is there anything you don't like in (curriculum area being monitored)?

After the Visit

This is an opportunity for the governor to discuss what they have observed with the class teacher. This time can be used to clarify any aspect about the visit governors may be unclear about. Whilst providing feedback ensure that the purpose of the visit is referred to and consider together whether it has been achieved. Thank the teacher and support staff for their time and supporting you in your role as a governor. When possible, try to make notes as soon as possible after the observation while it is still fresh in your mind. When reflecting, consider how the visit went, has the visit enhances positive relationships? Consider whether you have learned anything more about the school? Reflect on the extent to which you may have helped the governing body fulfil its duties?

Complete the Governor Visits Report pro-forma (see appendix 1) and submit to the Head Teacher for discussion at the next Full Governing Body meeting.

Appendix 1: Pitcheroak School
Governor Monitoring Visit Report

Name:	Date of visit:
Governor Role:	Teacher /Class(es) visited:
Purpose of Visit :	
<i>(Previously agreed by the governing body with the Head Teacher – delete for info only)</i>	
Links with the SEF/SDIP/ Your curriculum area of responsibility <i>How does the visit relate to a priority in the school development plan?</i> Priority taken from the SDIP –	
Governor observations and comments :	
Governor reflection on own learning:	
Governor Signature:	
Teacher Signature:	
Any key issues arising that need to be shared with the Governing Body	
Action(s) following Governing Body meeting (to be completed by Head)	
Date Report submitted to Head:	
Date Report shared with Governing Body:	

Notes to accompany Governing Body Report Form

Guiding questions that governors may choose to ask during the visit:

What did you see?

What did you learn?

What would you like clarified?

How long did the visit last?

Progress with implementing a key policy?

Pupils are learning and making progress – how is this monitored/recorded

Parent/carers encouraged and involved in child's learning?

Learning needs of different pupils catered for?

Extra resources or training you feel it needed to successfully deliver the Subject/Curriculum?

Changes and improvements recommended?