

Governor School Visits policy

Purpose

The governors of Leedon Lower School recognise that one of the best and most effective ways they can get to know the school is to visit during the school day and to see it at work.

To this end the governors will undertake regular monitoring visits and learning walks to review and explore a specific aspect of school practice. These visits are not an inspection, but a 'fact finding' and observational opportunity, and a platform to help Governors ask questions and understand more.

Aims

School visits will help governors to:

- > Assist the Governing Body to fulfil their statutory role
- > Monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the School Development Plan
- > Improve governor knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses
- > Help build good working relationships between governors, staff, parents and children
- > Familiarise themselves with day-to-day practices and the ethos of the school
- > Increase their understanding of their subject link area
- > Set targets for future school improvement

Visits to school

All governors will follow these simple guidelines before and after visiting:

- > Ensure staff involved in the visit are aware of and have been consulted on the timing and purpose of the visit
- > Sign in and out at Reception and wear a Governor's lanyard throughout
- > Behave in an appropriate manner at all times, showing courtesy to all adults and children, and following the governors' 'Code of Conduct'
- > Ensure they are familiar with health and safety procedures including what to do in the event of a fire
- > Share observations with the member of staff concerned as soon as practical after the visit
- > Share observations with the governing body (or relevant sub-committee) – via an agenda item
- > Remember to thank the class, teacher, co-ordinator etc
- > Complete a Governor Visit Report - it is extremely important to have a brief record of visits since this is evidence to Ofsted that governors are actively and appropriately involved in the life of the school.
- > Be prepared to feedback to the governing body or appropriate committee (visit record may be sufficient)
- > During classroom 'observations' questions should be noted until an appropriate time for discussion and should not interfere with teaching

- Ensure class teacher is aware and comfortable with the fact that you may take notes – on the area of focus **NOT** teaching practice. (*Governors' visits to classrooms are not a form of inspection in terms of making judgements about the professional expertise of members of staff, especially with regard to the quality of teaching.*)
- If they see anything that concerns them, discuss it first with the teacher at an appropriate time **not** during a lesson.

Staff will:

- Be courteous and considerate at all times, recognising the contribution made by governors to the school
- Make practical suggestions to ensure visits are productive and enjoyable for all concerned
- Invite link governor to appropriate INSET days
- Invite questions, having regard to confidentiality
- Be free to say that it is not convenient for a visit at a particular time

Preparation of Visit Report

- A Governor Visit Report (using the template in Appendix A) to be completed as soon after the visit as possible.
- Copy of Visit Report to be shared with the Headteacher and staff member(s) (possibly within a follow up meeting) to check for accuracy and clarity, **prior** to sharing with governing body
- Final Visit Report to be shared with the clerk and chair at least seven days prior to next Governing Body meeting (or appropriate sub-committee).

(If any concerns are raised from a visit then the record should remain as confidential until it has been discussed and a decision taken as to where it should be filed. Please note that any concerns should be shared with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors in the first instance.)

When reporting back to the governing body (or committee) the governing body will judge the extent to which the visit has informed the understanding of progress towards targets and priorities.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

The Governing Body will review this policy at least once every three years or sooner if necessary. This review will consider:

- Are our visits achieving the potential benefits identified in the policy?
- Are we more able to make informed decisions?
- Do staff feel affirmed and valued?
- How can we make the policy and practice even better?

Appendix A

Governor Visit Report

Name	
Date of visit	
Focus of visit Link to strategy and school development plan. (Also consider Ofsted framework - see below)	
Related policies/documents	
Timetable	
Key personnel	
Summary of activities, e.g. talking to staff and pupils, looking at resources, etc.	
What I learned as a result of my visit (relate back to focus of visit)	
Aspects I would like clarified / questions I have	

Actions for the governing board to consider

Any other comments/ideas for future visits

Signed

Date

Ofsted framework

