



Governor Visits to School Policy

Context

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits which focus on an aspect of the SDP or one of the Governors' statutory duties demonstrates the Governors' role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress. Each governor is encouraged to make at least one visit a year during school time and governors will often monitor an area of the School Development Plan in pairs in accordance with the agreed timetable.

Visits enable Governors to:

- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning
- Evaluate resources and discuss with staff further requirements
- Gain first hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking
- Work in partnership with the staff

Before making a visit Governors will:

- Contact the headteacher and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
- Plan which classes will be visited
- Draw up a timetable for the visit with the deputy headteacher or subject-coordinator
- Deputy headteacher and/or the subject coordinator ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

On the day of the visit the Governor will remember to:

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the deputy headteacher/subject coordinator
- Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
- Be calm and enjoy the visit

After the visit the Governor will:

- Remember to thank the teachers and children
- Meet with the headteacher to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose
- Complete the Governor Visit Proforma, reporting on the focus. The completed form will be given to the headteacher and then, after any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the governing body and staff
- Governors must report without giving opinions and where possible individuals should not be able to be identified.

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily. **The visit is not about:**

- Inspection
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- Checking on your own children
- Pursuing a personal agenda
- Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. It is important that governors remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the headteacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full governing body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then governor visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the governing body, which will contribute to school improvement.

School Visits – an Aide Memoire

What is the purpose of the visit?

What has prompted my decision to visit?
Who has prompted my decision to visit?
Is the reason specific or general?
What are my/other people's expectations?
How can my visit benefit the teacher?

How shall I carry it out?

What particular areas of the school am I interested in?
What particular activities am I interested in?
What particular age-group(s) am I interested in?
Are there any questions that can be answered by observation?
What questions should I ask?
Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

To what extent did I address the reason for my visit?
Which of my questions did I answer?
To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?
What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

Have I recorded my experiences?
Did I 'report back' to the head and staff?
Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting?
How can I build on this for the next visit?
Are there any training requirements for governors?

SignedDate (Chair of Governors)

SignedDate (Headteacher)

Buckton Vale Governor Visit Report

Name	
Date of Visit	
Focus of Visit	
Classes / Staff Visited	
Summary of activities, e.g. observing classes, talking to staff and pupils, looking at resources, had lunch, etc.	
What I learned as a result of my visit	
Positive comments about the focus	
Aspects I would like clarified / questions I have	
Ideas for future visits	
Further training requirements	

Signed _____
(Governor)

Signed _____
(Headteacher / Coordinator)