



Governor Visit Policy

Name of school: Bexton Primary School

Date of review: Spring 2019

New review date: Spring 2022

Context

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Governors' role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress. The Governors visits are an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar and allow governors to understand how the school operates. Each Governor is encouraged to make at least one visit a year during school time.

Reasons for Governor Visits

A Governing Body has a duty to oversee the direction and policies of the school, to monitor its standards and to be held accountable for its conduct and performance.

Visits should be undertaken as:

- A. Part of the strategic programme to
 - Improve Governor knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and area for development
 - Monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the development plan
 - Help the Governing Body fulfil its statutory duties.
 - Acquire knowledge to enable the Governing Body to challenge as appropriate
- B. Critical Friend
 - Monitoring, and evaluating plans, budgets, standards of education and achievement
- C. Accountability
 - Annual reports and meetings, publication of minutes, surveys of parental views

A number of Governors have specific responsibilities eg Safeguarding, Special Needs, School Development Priority areas, Health and Safety and subject specific roles. This reinforces the need to visit not just the school but also the classroom on a reasonably regular basis.

It also allows Governors, however, to focus on particular areas, eg:

- the management of the school's resources
- the condition of the building and its use
- the development of teaching and support staff
- a specific subject area
- a particular year group or class

By visiting school and becoming better informed Governors will be:

- more aware of the needs of the school
- more able to approach staff to meet those needs
- well placed to bring to the Local Authority any matters of concern
- in a good position to support the school in its community

The Main Purpose of School Visits

A Governor visits school to:

- learn so that you can increase the Governing Body's first-hand knowledge base, informing strategic decision making
- keep under review the way in which the school is operating
- experience the impact and progress of the implementation of the school improvement plan and school policies
- demonstrate to staff that the Governing Body takes its responsibilities seriously
- establish and develop good professional relationships with staff, especially those that are linked with your individual area of responsibility, e.g. SDP priorities, Special Needs or Health and Safety.
- see in context some of the monitoring systems employed by the school
- demonstrate that the Governing Body is contributing to the school's self-evaluation process
- show support and encouragement to staff and children

Types of Visits

Informal Visits

Governors are welcome to visit the school on a more informal basis to help them to gain a good understanding of how the school operates on a day to day basis. An informal visit may involve

meeting with the staff during a coffee break or going for a walk around the school with a member of staff. If any governors would like to visit the school then they should make the necessary arrangements with the Head Teacher to do so.

Formal Visits

When governors are visiting the school to monitor an area of the School Development Plan then this is classed as a formal visit. When governors undertake a formal visit they should follow the agreed procedures.

Before a Visit

Before a visit, Governors will:

- Contact the link teacher and agree a date, time and the focus for the visit. The focus should be in line with the school's strategic priorities.
- Once this is agreed then the link teacher will inform the Head Teacher of the time, date and focus of the visit.
- Plan which classes will be visited (if necessary)
- The link teacher will ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them

The Day of the Visit

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

- Arrive on time and clarify the focus of the visit with the link teacher
- 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

After the Visit

After the visit the Governor will:

- Aim to meet with the Head Teacher to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose
- Complete the Governor Visit Proforma or report verbally to the appropriate committee, reporting on the focus. A copy of the completed form should be given to the Head Teacher and the link teacher. After any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the Governing Body through the relevant committee.
- The link teacher will report back to staff the main findings of the visit
- Governors must report their findings in a factual manner. Individuals should not be identifiable

- Maintain confidentiality and only discuss visits with relevant governors or staff members where appropriate

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

- Inspection
- Checking on Governors' 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 Head Teacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full Governing Body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed the 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.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if necessary.



Governors Visit Report

Name	Area of Responsibility	Date
Objectives of Visit:		
Brief Notes		
Positive Comments:		
Questions:		
Further Actions:		