

LANGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governor Visit Policy

*Reviewed Autumn **2017***

*Agreed by the Governing Body **4 October 2017***

*Due for review Autumn **2019***

GOVERNOR VISIT POLICY

The governing body has a duty to oversee the direction and policies of the school, to monitor its standards and be held to account for its conduct and performance. Although visiting the school is not a statutory obligation for members of the Governing Body, it can be the best way to learn how the school functions. It is also a way to keep under review how the school operates in order to increase the governing body's first hand knowledge which will in turn inform strategic decision making.

The governing body should plan visits to cover a wide range of school work and each visit should relate to the priorities determined by the School Improvement Plan. Governors should arrange their visits with the Headteacher.

There are many potential benefits from governing body visits to school. Namely,
to governors:

- Recognition and celebration of successes
- Developing relationships with the staff
- Getting to know the children
- Recognition of different teaching styles
- Understanding the environment in which teachers teach
- Monitoring policies in action
- Understanding how well the school is doing in relation to previous performance, other schools and national expectations
- Informing decision making
- Finding out what resources are needed
- Determining how well purchased resources are used and whether they offer value for money

to teachers:

- Ensuring governors understand the reality of the classroom
- Getting to know governors
- Understanding better the governors' roles and responsibilities
- Having an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
- Highlighting the need for particular resources

Governor Visits are not about:

- A form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of the teacher
- Checking on progress of own children
- Pursuing personal agenda
- Monopolising school/staff time

Protocols or ground rules for visits

Members of the Governing Body should arrange visits in advance with the Head Teacher. Observations in classrooms can be carried out by Governors on their own but at times they might undertake joint observations with class teachers or the Head Teacher.

As soon as possible following a visit to school, and within one working week, Governors are required to complete a record of visit feedback sheet. Comments should be positive but any areas that require improvement or further follow up should be noted. The Governor should then discuss with the Head Teacher any areas for improvement. Feedback must be robust and honest in order that the Head Teacher is able to make informed decisions about school improvement. Governors must ensure that issues for improvement or child well being are shared with the Head Teacher promptly, even if there is some personal discomfort in so doing.

A copy of the feedback sheet will be given to the Head Teacher with a further copy placed in the Governor Visits file or attached to Governing Body minutes accordingly. Original copies of feedback sheets will be kept by the Head Teacher and will be made available if needed.

Verbal feedback on Governor visits will be presented to the Full Governing Body at the next scheduled meeting.

Further information about the protocol for Governing Body visits are outlined in the Local Authority training course 'Governor Monitoring Visits to School' details of which can be obtained from the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Annual programme of visits

Governors are welcome to visit the school informally for a number of reasons, such as:

- Lending a helping hand with a school event
- Getting information from the office relating to a committee meeting
- Helping in a class
- Speaking to a teacher in relation to their own child
- Attending a school function or educational visit
- Visiting in relation to their position, such as, the local priest or councillor

More formally, there is an expectation that they will undertake observations and discuss aspects of school life with teachers, parents and students at least three times per year.

In addition, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body will visit the Head Teacher during the year in order to discuss aspects of school improvement and day to day running.

Visit Focus

Formal visits to school will focus on aspects of the School Improvement Plan which influence pupil progress. Although not an exhaustive list visits may focus on:

- Individual subjects, year groups or key stages
- Use of the building and site
- Condition and maintenance of the premises
- Additional educational needs
- Literacy and numeracy
- Religious Education
- Lunchtimes and breaktimes
- Use and condition of resources

- Health and safety of the school site
- Deployment of staff
- Impact on the school of any significant changes
- Vulnerable groups

Monitoring and review of the Governor Visit Policy

This policy should be monitored and reviewed every two years.