



C38: STAFF – GOVERNOR RELATIONS

Last reviewed: May 2009

Next Review: May 2011

Approved by Governors Personnel

Date: 11.5.09

Guidance for Governors on Visits to the School

Visits to the school by governors during the time that the school is in operation gives them important insights that they can gain in no other way. If governors are to carry out their role they need to have an understanding of the way our school works and a feel for the dynamics of this school. There is no better way of gaining this information than by visiting the school at work. However, although school visits are important for many reasons they form only one part of the governors' wider role.

The main reasons for governors to make visits are:

- to learn about the school
- to enable the governing body to fulfil its accountability role
- to show those employed in the school that they are interested
- to support the school as a critical friend.

Governors are a part of the school community, but they nevertheless need to agree any visits to the school with the Headteacher.

Link Governors

We have agreed to link a Governor to each area of the curriculum (see appendix 1). It is the responsibility of the Governor to arrange an initial meeting with the Head of Faculty (or area) to arrange a visit. A clear focus should be decided well in advance of the visit. The school has a clear protocol in place for Governor visits (see appendix 2).

Consultation with the Head of Faculty/area

- The focus of the visit will be discussed with the Headteacher as to its appropriateness.
- A mutually convenient time for the visit will be established with the link Governor and the appropriate member(s) of staff and this will be noted on a termly diary kept by the Clerk to the Governors (see appendix 3).

1. The visit

- Governors should make observations during their visit but it is acknowledged that *no professional teaching judgements* should be made.
- The focus of the visit should be central to the observation or the dialogue.
- Notes should be made and these should be recorded by the Governor as data for future development and school improvement.
- Questions to the staff concerned should not interfere with teaching but be noted until an appropriate time for discussion.

2. Feedback

- A meeting should be arranged between the Governor and the appropriate staff to discuss the results of the visit.
- Clarification of issues can be addressed but feedback must be restricted to the identified area.

3. Prepare a report

- A short report on the visit and any outcomes or follow-ups to be arranged for future visits should be written up by the Governor, with copies to the Headteacher, the Head of Faculty and the classroom teacher (see appendix 4).



- Governors will report back to the full Governing Body on their visits to the school and the aims of any future follow-up work they wish to do.

The Headteacher and staff will actively support extending Governors' knowledge and understanding of education in line with their increased responsibilities through:

- Welcoming them into the school.
- Reporting on school development work.
- Encouraging Governors' involvement in professional development and school development through training, visits to other schools, INSET and their involvement in appropriate staff meetings.

The outcome of Governors' Monitoring and Evaluation

With the help and support of the Governors the school will be able to:

- Identify strengths and plan strategies to not just maintain but build on these.
- Identify area for school improvement, prioritise these and build them into a Development Plan within timescales and budgetary constraints.

Policy to be monitored by:

Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher with regular reports to Governors.

Governors report individual monitoring activities to Governing Body meetings.



APPENDIX 1

All Governors take an active interest in all subject areas, but the following Governors have a particular responsibility for

MFL	Mrs J Ferguson	English/Looked After Children	Ms M Davis
ICT/Tech	Mr J Down	PE/Work Related Learning	Mr B Harbour
Music	Mrs H Heenan	Science/School Council	Mr A Pennycook
VI Form/Psychology/Sociology	Dr C Selai	Dance/Drama/Art/New Govs	Mrs C Shun
SEN	Mr P Stillwell	Maths	Mr C Wales
History	Mr R Kinley	Geography	not allocated at present



APPENDIX 2

Protocol for Classroom Visits and Other Activities

The following gives guidance on the protocols surrounding visits to the school by governors.

For Governing Body

- Ensure that the policy on governors' visits and a system for reporting back have been agreed with staff.
- Recognise that classroom visits and sitting in on meetings are primarily for governors to gain first hand knowledge of the school at work.
- Ensure that each visit has an explicit purpose and focus, which have been agreed by all concerned.
- Ensure that there are agreed timescales for governors' visits, usually giving at least seven days clear notice.
- Recognise the right for teachers to invite governors into school for specific purposes if they so wish.
- The Head of Faculty should provide members of the governing body with the relevant background information, i.e. staff names, responsibilities and timetables.
- Recognise that any visit to the classroom can be stressful and disrupts normal classroom working, and that therefore the number of visits should be limited.
- Respect the normal conventions of governor confidentiality, in particular issues surrounding named staff or pupils.

For Individual Governors

- Negotiate a mutually convenient time with the headteacher and class teacher for the visit and discussion afterwards, recognising that teachers' and governors' time is valuable.
- Ensure that any visit has an explicit purpose and focus, which have been agreed with all concerned.
- Avoid stressful periods such as during or just before an Ofsted inspection or examinations.
- The teacher should be addressed Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms + surname, when speaking to them in front of the children or parents.
- Always wear a name badge.
- Avoid attempting to take on a teaching role, or discussing irrelevant issues with the pupils during the lesson.
- Avoid notetaking or acting in any way like an inspector.
- Avoid making promises to staff on behalf of the governing body.
- Respect the normal conventions of governor confidentiality, in particular issues surrounding named staff or pupils.
- Recognise that sometimes it might be appropriate for you to leave the classroom should a situation arise which might become more problematic, e.g. a behaviour outburst.

For Teachers

- Always feel able to suggest an alternative time if the visit is not convenient.
- Ensure that each visit has an explicit purpose and focus, which have been agreed by all concerned.
- Prepare your class for the visit of a governor.
- Welcome the governor when they arrive in your class.
- Have a seat ready for the governor and tell them where it is.
- Be aware that a visit can be stressful for staff and governors alike.
- Inform the governor if you wish them to be involved in the lesson, and what it would be helpful for them to do.
- Don't leave your governor alone with the class, even if they are willing to do so.
- Raise any concerns over the visit with your line manager or Headteacher.
- Avoid discussing unrelated issues during the lesson.



APPENDIX 4

Report on Governor visit to The Hemel Hempstead School

Date of visit:	Name of Link Governor:
Member of staff:	Activity:
Brief description of focus of visit	
Outcome/Follow-up visit(s)	