



King David Primary School

Governors Visits Policy

Policy on visiting of members of the governing body to the school for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating school effectiveness

Introduction

Governor visits are an important part of the way governors become informed about the work of the school. Visits may be regarding the governors' specific responsibilities, e.g. SEN or AMA, or in their Class Link role. Governors should do at least one visit each year and ideally two.

It is important that all visits are carefully planned to ensure clear channels of communication. Plans for action should be formalised and the Headteacher and staff are always happy to work with and support Governors.

Visiting the school

Planning the visit

- The focus of the visit will be agreed with the Headteacher in advance. It is often expressed in the form of a "research question". Governors need to be clear about the remit and the information to be gathered and have discussions with the Headteacher to be secure in this.
- A mutually convenient time for the visit will be established with the link teacher and the appropriate member(s) of staff and this will be noted in the school diary. This will generally be facilitated by the Headteacher.
- A schedule for the visit will be agreed in advance, which enables the governor to address their research question.
- A timeline will be agreed for feedback to the relevant staff and discussing the final report with the Headteacher.

The visit

- Governors should make *rigorous* 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.
- Governors will often be encouraged to actively join in with lessons. Governors should avoid giving the impression that they are conducting a lesson observation, making judgements on the quality of teaching. Phrases such as "join your lesson" and "take part in your lesson" should be used by governors in preference to "observe your lesson".

Producing a report

- The visit will usually culminate in a debrief with the Headteacher, where the main conclusions from the focus are identified, and giving an opportunity to discuss any further matters of interest that have arisen during the visit.
- A compilation of the notes made should be given in the agreed report form to the Headteacher and the link teacher. This may include expected actions or next steps. The Headteacher will work with the relevant staff to follow up these aspects and add further notes

to the report as appropriate. There may be aspects requiring further discussion by governors, and these will be identified in the report, including which committee of the Governing Body will handle these.

- The report will be circulated to all governors.

The Headteacher and staff will actively support extending Governors' knowledge and understanding of education in line with their increase 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, priorities these and build them into a Development Plan within timescales and budgetary constraints.
- Set targets which are:
 - *achievable*
 - *realistic*
 - *relevant*
 - *small steps*
 - *measurable*
 - *shared and understood*

Governors and staff are committed to working in strong partnership to improve school effectiveness but when visiting the school, Governors should remember:

- They are representing the Governing Body.
- As an individual Governor they are a guest of the school.
- All staff and pupils should be treated with respect.
- Governors should always knock before entering a classroom.
- Teacher should be addressed Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms + surname, when speaking to them in front of the children or parents.
- Ask the teacher's permission before speaking to the children. Do not disturb the flow of the lesson.
- Do not at any time undermine the authority of the staff. If you are unsure about something, ask the member of staff, but remember, they are the professionals.
- To sign in referring to the times at which they arrive and leave.

Policy to be monitored by:

Visit reports circulated to all governors.