

GOVERNOR'S VISITS TO SCHOOL POLICY

Policy Version Control	
Policy type	Academy Trust
Policy prepared by (name and designation)	Heather Ferguson Director of Operations
Last review date	
Description of changes	New document
Date of Board of Trustees approval	5 th December 2019
Date released	6 th December 2019
Next review date	Autumn 2020

It is the aim of Lingfield Education Trust to ensure that all Governor visits to its schools comply with this policy.

The policy takes the following into account:

- (a) Governors do not have any rights of access to the school
- (b) Visits should be undertaken as part of a strategic programme to:
 - improve Governor knowledge of the school;
 - observe and inform themselves and not make professional judgements which they are not qualified or experienced to make nor to pursue issues that relate to the day to day management of the school other than as agreed with the Executive Head Teacher, Head Teacher and Head of School (hereinafter the “Head Teachers”);
 - assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties;
 - where appropriate the visit should be linked to the School Development Plan.

1. SOME IMPORTANT POINTS FOR GOVERNORS TO REMEMBER WHEN VISITING THE SCHOOL

1.1 Governors are not there to inspect the school or to make judgements about the quality of teaching.

1.2 The visit must not be unplanned and unannounced and it must not be unfocused. The focus should be agreed between the Governor and the teacher beforehand. In addition, the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors should be informed of the focus.

2. CLARIFY THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

2.1 Is the visit:

- Linked to the School Development Plan?
- Linked to a Partner Governor’s role or responsibility?

2.2 These issues should be addressed jointly by the teacher and the Governor before the visit takes place.

2.3 Subject leaders wishing to invite their Partner Governor to school must discuss this with any of the teachers or Head Teachers involved.

2.4 Partner Governors attached to a subject area should arrange an appointment through the appropriate staff member to discuss the working partnership.

2.5 All meetings must be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

3. PLANNING THE AGENDA FOR THE VISIT

3.1 The teacher and the Governor should plan an agenda for the visit.

- Will there be a tour of the school?
- Will the Governor be joining an assembly?
- Will the Governor be going into lessons?
- Will the Governor have the opportunity to meet teachers in advance?
- Will the Governor be meeting the subject leader?
- What will the governor be observing?

3.2 The Governor will report on their visit via the 'Governor Visit' pro-forma. Appendix 1

3.3 Members of staff are always free to say that it is not convenient for a Governor to come in at any particular time.

4. ON THE DAY OF THE VISIT

4.1 On the day of the visit the Governor must arrive at the school at the appointed time and report to the office.

4.2 If they are unable to visit the school on the day arranged for the visit the Governor must inform the teacher they are visiting as soon as possible.

4.3 The Governor must ensure that they are familiar with health and safety procedures of the school including what to do in the event of a fire.

4.4 The Governor must only go into classes when invited to do so by the teacher.

4.5 The Governor must intrude as little as possible on the teachers' time or distract them in the classroom.

4.6 The Governor must remember that they are there to learn about the school not to inspect it.

4.7 The Governor should ask questions in order to improve their knowledge of the working of the school.

4.8 The Governor can talk to pupils in class but not at an inappropriate time.

4.9 The Governor must only attend staff meetings when invited to do so.

4.10 The Head Teacher may invite the Governor into the staff room if they wish.

4.11 The Governor will not go into the staff room unless they are invited.

4.12 If the Governor sees something that worries them, they must discuss this with the Head Teacher, if their concerns relate to the Head Teacher this must be raised with the CEO immediately.

5. AT THE END OF THE VISIT

5.1 Thank the member of staff and the children.

5.2 Thank the Head Teacher.

6. AFTER THE VISIT

6.1 After visiting the school the Governor should:

- complete a visit report outlining the focus and outcome of the visit and return this to the Head Teacher as soon as possible.
- report back to the committee or Local Governing Body as appropriate at the next meeting.

7. PROTOCOL FOR WORK SCRUTINY

7.1 Governors may attend work scrutiny but only after invitation from the Head Teachers.

8. REVIEWING THE POLICY

The policy should be reviewed by the Board of Trustees each year.

Autumn 2020

Governor Visit Pro Forma

School:
Name of Governor:
Date:
Focus of visit:
<p>Evidence Base (What did you see? Whom did you speak to?)</p> <p>Discussion with member/s of staff, pupils, parents:</p> <p>Review of policies/paper work:</p> <p>Observation of practice:</p>
<p>Notes</p> <p>Comments on:</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>
Shared at Governors' Meeting on

Guidance Notes

- Governors should strive to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school, get to know the school well and take all possible opportunities for involvement in school activities including contact with pupils.
- Governors should develop effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, teaching and support staff, parent groups and other relevant agencies, where appropriate.
- Individual Governors **must** observe complete confidentiality in relation to matters concerning staff or pupils and any other matters agreed by the Governing Body.
- Governors have responsibility for the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates. This means they determine, monitor and keep under review such issues. Governors should recognise that the Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the school and operation of the curriculum.
- Governors have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times. The overall good of the school will always override Governors' personal feelings and individual concerns.

School visits

Governors are not inspectors and it is not their role to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning.

They are also not school managers and should make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. If governors wish to spend time within a classroom, they need to be very clear why they are doing so. Governors need to know their school if accountability is going to be robust and their vision for the school is to be achieved. Many Governors find that visiting, particularly during the day, is a helpful way to find out more about the school.

Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, the Governing Body can see for themselves whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice. Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views.