



Governors' Visits Policy

Thakeham Primary School

Date approved by Full Governing Body: 07.01.19

Review Date: July 2019

Signed

Headteacher: *S. Norton*

Chair of Governors: *Alf Rami*

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' visiting programme is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar.

Regular Governor visits involve focussing on an aspect of the School Strategic Development Plan or one of the Governing Body's duties. Each Governor is encouraged to make at least two such visits a year during school time in accordance with the agreed timetable (see appendix 1).

Governors have a strategic role which should not involve the nominated Governors attending meetings with individual parents or taking part in discussions concerning individual pupils. The Governing body or nominated Governors should not become involved in the school's day to day activities. However the Governance Handbook (November 2015) states:

"Meaningful and effective engagement with parents, staff and the wider community is vital, and not achieved by the presence of various categories of Governor on the board."

In practical terms the nominated Governors should try to:

- Undertake school visits and attend meetings as outlined in this policy
- Know the school's relevant policy and procedures (contributing to these where appropriate)
- Understand how funding is allocated to schools for the relevant area
- Attend relevant training for Governors

Whilst Governors are linked to key areas of the SSDP or Governing Body duties, the whole Governing body "are legally responsible for the conduct of the school. Individual Governors are generally protected from personal liability. Providing they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the board even if it exceeds its powers, rather than on individual members" (DfE Governance Handbook November 2015).

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Governors' Code of Conduct, which sets out the ethos of professionalism within which they should act: ensuring integrity, objectivity and honesty at all times and operating in the best interests of the school.

Visits enable Governors to:

- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements.
- Ensure that resources are being used to support the school's vision and priorities as set out in the School Strategic Development Plan, evaluate their impact and discuss further requirements with staff.
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school.
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school.
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning.
- Gain first-hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking.
- Work in partnership with the staff.

Before making a visit Governors will:

- Agree a date, time and focus for the visit with the Headteacher and support the formulation of the Governors' Visit Schedule.
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit.
- Plan which classes will be visited.
- Draw up a timetable for the visit with the Headteacher and/or subject-coordinator.
- Headteacher and/or the subject coordinator ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

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

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the Headteacher/subject coordinator.
- 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.
- Be calm and enjoy the visit.

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time and judgements should not be made arbitrarily. The visit is not about:-

- Inspection.
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher.
- Checking on your own children.
- Pursuing a personal agenda.
- Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas.

After the visit the Governor will:

- Remember to thank the teachers and children.
- Meet with the Headteacher /Subject Co-ordinator to give a verbal report and to raise any issues that arose.
- Complete the Governor Visit Report, concentrating on the focus. The completed form should be emailed to the Headteacher within 10 days and then, after any agreed alterations, the form will be circulated to the governing body and staff.
- Governors must report without giving opinions and (where practicable) it should not be possible to identify individuals from the report.

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 Headteacher and the staff and acknowledge that they represent the Full Governing Body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then Governor visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved and will result in effective monitoring by the Governing Body, which will contribute to continued school improvement.

APPENDIX 1

ALLOCATION OF GOVERNORS TO SSDP AREAS/SPECIFIC ROLES 2018-19

SSDP PRIORITY AREA		LINKED GOVERNOR
English		Judith James & additional governor
Maths		Ruth Barton-Russell & Cheryl Stockwell
Inclusion		Gilly Hall
Science		Adam Phillips & Paul Skelding
Computing		Lucy Glenn
ROLE	NOMINATED GOVERNOR	KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
Safeguarding (& E-Safety)	Judith James	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure an appropriate policy is in place and implemented effectively in association with other policies Monitor the Safeguarding policy and SCR Work with the Headteacher and other appropriate staff to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities Ensure support and opportunity for training is available
SEN& D/CLA (Part of Inclusion Governor Role)	Gilly Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Headteacher and the InCo in ensuring the provisions of the Code of Practice and relevant policies are implemented Monitor Promote the educational achievements of Children Looked After
Health & Safety	Paul Skelding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the school health and safety representative to ensure the school has a health and safety policy in place and implemented effectively Attend PDP meetings Undertake an annual health and safety review/walk Work with the health and safety representative to ensure action points raised by any audits are implemented
Link Governor	Adam Phillips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain a record of governor training and use this alongside the governor skills audit to help identify group and individual training needs To keep governing bodies up to date on developments within the local authority and encourage governors to attend the governor training on offer
Extra-Curricular (Clubs)	Judith James	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor the quality of provision and standards of behaviour and safeguarding To report key outcomes/findings to the governing body