

Freegrounds Infant School

Governor Focused Visits Policy

Rationale

The main roles of the governing body are to provide a strategic view, to offer challenge and support and to ensure accountability. The most important task is to monitor the school's performance in line with the school improvement plan in order to improve it.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make such focused visits. By doing so governors will be able to build effective working relationships with the staff and understand better the context in which they work.

Focused visits provide a mechanism through which valuable evidence can be gathered and recorded in order to help the governing body recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of pupils and staff as well as gathering evidence to support judgements made on the school Self Evaluation Form (SEF). In turn this will allow the whole governing body and its committees to make better-informed judgements about the progress being made in school.

Aims

For governors:

- To recognise and celebrate success
- To develop governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- To develop relationships with the staff
- To get to know the children
- To see policies in action
- To understand the environment in which teachers teach
- To recognise different teaching styles
- To inform decision making
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them

For teachers:

- To better understand the role of governors
- To develop relationships with governors
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion

For children:

- To get to know the Governor
- To understand the role of the Governor
- To allow the children to share their thoughts and ideas with the Governor

Guidelines

Governors do not have an automatic right of entry to the school, although to fulfil their responsibilities they need to make regular visits. Governors are not inspectors and should not make professional judgements about the teaching and learning, nor should they use the visit to check on their own children or pursue personal agendas.

Crucially, focused visits should be undertaken on the basis of mutual trust between the school staff and the governors. On this basis all governors must be mindful of the school's current Safeguarding policies and have a current valid DBS certificate prior to undertaking any visit.

Governors' focused visits can either be associated with their roles, a focus issue from the School Improvement plan or a line of enquiry from changes brought about by statutory regulations.

Governors should remember that school visits need not be confined to the classroom, but could include the wider school environment, (including the playground), attendance at assemblies and extra-curricular activities.

All Governors are required to contribute to the annual whole governing body visit and at least two other focused visits each school year.

Protocol for Focused Visits

Before the Visit:

- Arrange a mutually convenient time
- Discuss the focus. If the visit is project based, obtain & review a copy of the project plan
- Discuss what the governor will be doing during a class visit e.g. making notes, talking to children, looking at work, and how he/she will react to children misbehaving, asking for help, etc
- Make arrangements for feedback
- Speak to your mentor or a governor colleague if you are unsure of any aspect

During the visit:

- Be punctual
- Be positive and supportive
- Listen; don't talk too much
- Observe discreetly, taking minimal if any notes during the course of lessons
- Do not take up too much of the teacher's time
- Never comment to the teacher concerned on the conduct of the lesson or on individual pupils

After the visit:

- Thank the members of staff involved
- Clarify from the staff involved anything you are unclear about
- Write a report of this visit (see Appendix Item 1). A draft of this report should be sent first to the Headteacher & appropriate members of staff for comment & sign-off, before circulation to the rest of the governing body prior to the next governor's meeting

Governors with specific roles

At Freegrounds Infant School a number of governors have specific roles. For example SEN governor, Health and Safety Governor, Designated Training Officer, Safeguarding Governor. (See appendix Item 2).

It is in the expectation of the governing body that should Ofsted visit the school the individuals within these roles are considered the expert in this area and as such should be prepared to come forward if requested to meet with Inspectors and answer any questions on behalf of the governing body.

As such, in order to be prepared for this role, governors may wish to carry out specific monitoring activities to ensure they have a full and accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas of development. Such additional activities may include for example the governor responsible for Safeguarding monitoring the Single Central Register and relevant documentation to ensure its accuracy, or the Chair of the Finance Committee carrying out audits on different themes.

Monitoring activity Schedule

Where the monitoring activity is associated with CPD and improvements in teaching and learning governors will monitor against the strands identified as aims in the schools Vision and Aims statements. Each governor is assigned to a particular strand and are therefore responsible for monitoring it reporting back to governors. (See Appendix Item 3).

A standing item on the Whole Governing Body meeting agenda will be the monitoring activity schedule. This identifies any monitoring that has been agreed for the period between one governing body meeting and another.

**Agreed by the Governors, May 2014, March 2017, July 2022
Next review July 2025**

**FREEGROUNDS INFANT SCHOOL
GOVERNOR'S VISIT
REPORT FORM**



Governor's Name:

Date of visit:

Responsibility:

Aim of Visit:

Class/section visited:

Teacher Visited:

Summary:

Signed: Governor
Teacher
Headteacher

Date:

Appendix 2

Roles	Governor	Contact
Chair of Governors	Gill Wright	Nikki Riches
Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of Personnel Committee	Lindsey Rayner	Nikki Riches
Special Needs Governor	Mary Sheridan/Amy Edwards	Julie Watkins
Safeguarding Governor	Dawn Francis- Higgins	Nikki Riches Carly Haines
Health and Safety Governor	Ian Rolls	Nikki Riches Ray Southern

School Improvement Plan	Governor	Contact
Year Group Leadership	Lindsey Rayner	Nikki Riches Hattie Henderson Shelby May
ECTs	Amy Edwards	Susannah Jones Jess D'Arcy Burt
Subject Leadership	Garry Killingbeck	Nikki Riches Susannah Jones Subject Leaders
SEND, HQIT, interventions and targeted support	Mary Sheridan Amy Edwards	Julie Watkins
Phonics	Ian Rolls	Hattie Henderson
Outdoor Learning	Ian Rolls	Ellis Webb Susannah Jones
The Arts in RE	Amy Edwards	Ellis Webb Shannon Mores
Well-being - play and lunchtime	James Beech	Ellis Webb Susannah Jones
Protected Characteristics	Dawn Francis-Higgins	Susannah Jones
Well-being staff	Amy Edwards	Nikki Riches

Appendix Item 3

Aim statement	Governor assigned to monitor aim
Creating a culture of inclusion and respect, valuing the ideas and celebrating the achievement, effort, successes and individuality of everyone	
Providing high quality teaching and learning, first hand experiences, high levels of collaboration, challenge and support through a highly personalised and Arts rich curriculum which builds on previous learning, promotes creativity, teaches key skills and creates opportunities for pupils to explore and be curious	
Creating an exciting, stimulating, resource rich environment which supports learning through interactive displays, the use of technology and the outdoor environment	
Enabling and encouraging everyone to become pragmatic citizens of the local and global community, confident to pursue their own interests, brave to take risks, resilient to overcome difficulties, independent and motivated to learn	
Working in close collaboration with each other, parents, outside agencies, schools and the wider community	
Providing the knowledge, skills, enthusiasm and opportunities to enable everyone to embrace a healthy lifestyle in terms of diet and physical activity.	