



THE VALLEY SCHOOL

POLICY – GOVERNOR VISITS

JULY 2019 (FULL GOVERNING BOARD)

KEY PRINCIPLES

“Learn to Believe – Learn to Achieve”

“Different for Different”

The Board of Governors believes that, in order to be effective in carrying out their statutory duties, all governors should be familiar with the school and know how it is performing. This includes knowing the school well enough to be aware of:

- How the school is implementing the policies they have agreed
- How Middle and Senior Leaders are fulfilling their roles and supporting continuous development and improvement.

Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors can see whether the school is implementing the policies and SDP they have signed off and how they are working in practice.

It is recognised that the way in which governors carry out their role will vary depending on their responsibilities as a governor and their other commitments. Visiting during the school day is always useful, as it provides an opportunity to see the school in action and to talk to pupils and staff. However, arranging to talk to key staff outside the school day or supporting the school on special occasions, also provides opportunities to gain an insight into how well the school is working.

Key Statutory Regulations and Significant Links

Governors have a statutory duty to monitor the school's performance. So, every member of the Governing Board has a role to play in keeping in contact with the school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/constitution-of-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook#history>

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools are very busy places and The Valley School receives many visitors, so it is important for governors not to interfere in the day-to-day running of the school, but to make sure that visits are planned well in advance, in addition to attending meetings and reading the committee papers.

Arranging Visits

In order not to overload the school, proposed visits will be discussed at Governing Board and committee meetings, and with the Headteacher. This will enable visits to be

scheduled in advance and planned on both a yearly and termly basis. The Link Governor visits will be based on the questions on the Link Governor report forms (see appendix 1/2). The Headteacher should ensure that staff are aware of the Governing Board's statutory duty to monitor the school's performance.

Formal Visits

Governors will need to arrange to meet with the members of staff they are linked to (see appendix 3), either during or outside school hours, in order to carry out their roles linked to individual responsibilities and aspects of the School Development Plan (SDP). If a governor feels it would be helpful to spend time in a classroom, the purpose of the visit needs to be agreed with the Headteacher and the teacher involved beforehand, so that everyone is clear about the reason for the visit. When this happens, governors need to remember that they are not inspectors and they are not there to judge the quality of teaching.

Depending on the purpose of the visit, it may be appropriate for governors to join pupils at lunchtime or to look round the premises during or outside the school day.

Other formal visits may relate to:

- Being on an Interviewing Panel for new members of staff, including helping to shortlist beforehand
- Being involved in the head teacher's Appraisal
- Meeting with Ofsted Inspectors (although, as these usually happen at short notice, they cannot be planned much in advance)
- Being involved in Working Groups to take forward particular aspects of the school's development, including the School Development Plan (SDP).

Informal Visits

At least once a year, governors and staff meet together to encourage a good working relationship. These events are organised by the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team.

Governors are also encouraged to accept invitations, whenever possible, to attend other events, such as plays, concerts, sports days, open days and other special occasions. These provide further opportunities to become familiar with the school and to meet parents, staff and pupils.

KEY PRACTICES (including training)

Each time a formal visit is made, the governor should complete, at the time, the Link Governor report form (see appendix 1/2), which should be shown to the staff member, who should sign to say that it is an accurate account. To ensure that the Headteacher is aware of any outcomes of these visits, her signature is also required. The forms in the attached Appendix are for this purpose. The forms become part of the business of the next committee meeting or governing board meeting as appropriate, so that all governors are kept informed and any actions needed can be followed through.

In addition to their responsibility to make regular visits to the school, to attend meetings and to be ready to contribute to discussions, all governors are expected to take relevant training that will enable them to carry out their role and keep up to date. From

time to time, a Skills Audit is carried out, so that when vacancies arise, the appropriate skill sets can be sought.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Link Governor visit framework for initial visits
Appendix 2	Link Governor visit framework for subsequent visits
Appendix 3	Link Governors
Appendix 4	Good Practice Guide
Appendix 5	Governor Competencies Framework
Appendix 6	Clerking Competencies Framework
Appendix 7	NGA guidance on school visits
Appendix 8	Governor Skills Audit