

Introduction

Visits from individual governors are welcomed and encouraged so that they can develop their understanding of how the school works and better fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Being a school governor is a major commitment and the school recognises that not all governors have the time to come into school regularly.

The governing body should plan visits to cover a wide range of school work and each visit should have a clear purpose. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Headteacher (see Monitoring Policy). Governors should arrange their visits in consultation with the Headteacher, who has responsibility for the day to day management of the school, and the appropriate teacher.

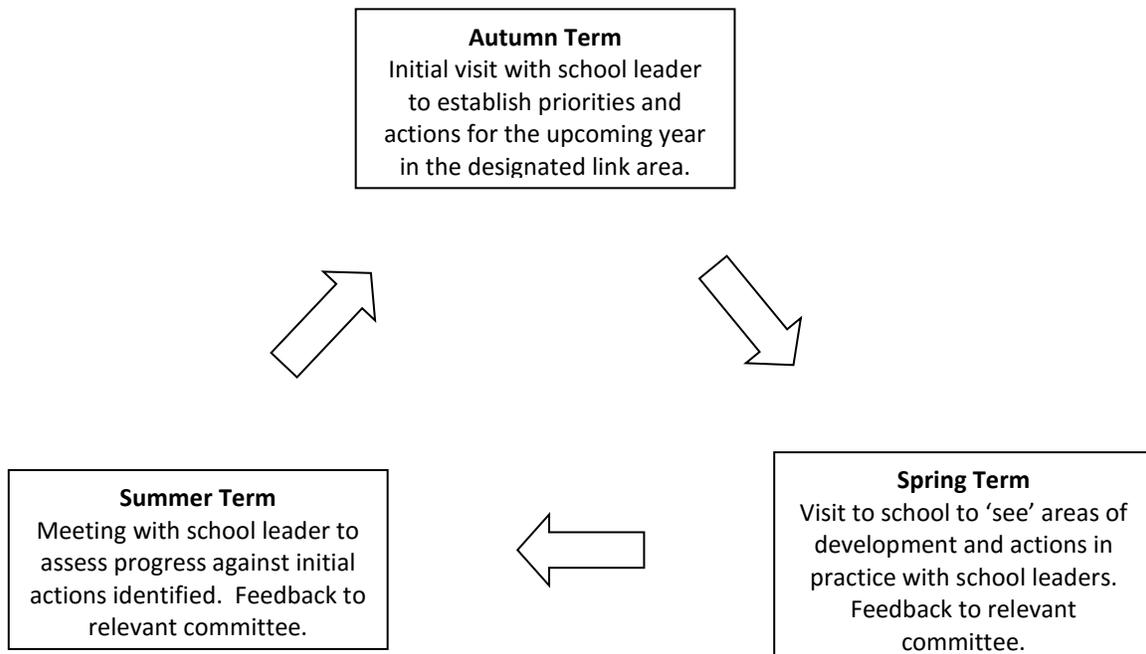
Purpose of the visit

Visits are undertaken to:

- Improve governing body knowledge of the school and people who work in it.
- Assist the governing body in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan (e.g. Link Governor visits).
- Assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as SEN.
- Assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties.
- Assist the governing body in making informed decisions.

Governors take up 'link roles' to enable them to either fulfil their statutory responsibilities (e.g. Safeguarding, Health and Safety, SEND) or increase their awareness and monitor the progress of school developments and which are aligned to school priorities (e.g. Mathematics learning). These 'link roles' are reviewed each year at the first Full Governing Body meeting of the year and assigned in line with the school priorities.

Typically 'Link Governors' will make a minimum of three visits to school each school year which will follow the cycle below:



Setting the date

- The Headteacher is responsible for introducing Governors to the relevant 'Link' member of staff in school.
- Contact the Link member of staff to agree a date when you will be able to make the visit.

Planning the visit

- Visits should be undertaken as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the governing body or one of its committees and with the approval of the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher should be kept informed of, and agree, the subsequent details of the planned visit.
- If the visit is to involve any member of staff, then that member of staff must be fully involved in the planning of the visit.
- The governor(s) making the visit should make themselves fully acquainted with health and safety procedures, including fire safety, prior to making the visit

During the visit

- Governors will at all times report to reception upon arrival and follow the procedure for visitors in order to provide a good example for other visitors.
- If visiting a classroom, the governor must arrive at the time planned to avoid disrupting the learning process, and follow the agreed purpose of the visit.
- Governors must be aware that some teachers may feel nervous or stressful about having a visitor in the classroom.
- At the end of the visit thank everyone concerned including the children.
- Governors should be aware of their behaviour and avoid any implication that they are "inspecting".

After the visit

- Give some time and thought to reflection.
- Write a note of thanks to all staff visited.
- Complete a visit report outlining the purpose and results of the visit (the visit report is shared with appropriate staff involved).
- If you have any questions or concerns arising out of your visit you should discuss them in the first instance with the staff member concerned, then with the Headteacher.
- Consider what went well or what did not go so well with respect to your involvement in the visit.
- Consider what you would do differently in a future visit.
- Following completion of the agreed monitoring programme the governor should report back to the governing body or committee as appropriate.

Related Documentation

Appendix 1 – Governor Report Form

Appendix 2 – Notes for governor report form

Appendix 3 - Protocol for visits

Appendix A - Record Form for Governor Visits

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Name of visiting Governor: | | |
| Date of visit: | | |
| Nature of visit e.g. class visit/curriculum link visit: | | |
| Features of Visit: Observations of learning Discussion with class teacher Discussion with curriculum leader Pupil interviews Scrutiny of children's work Scrutiny of school documentation Detail documents | Tick as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Other activities undertaken (please give details): |
| Outcomes of visit: Observations: (what did I see happening? What did I find out?) Discussions: (key points) Evidence: (children's learning, plans and policies) Conclusions: | | |

Signed _____ (Governor) _____ (Staff)

Signed _____ (Staff) _____ (Headteacher)

APPENDIX B – NOTES FOR GOVERNOR REPORT

Prepare notes covering these points

- Purpose of the visit – the purpose as previously agreed with the governing body and the Headteacher.
- Links with the school development plan – how does the visit relate to a priority in the SDP?
- Comments on the focus of the visit.
- Any key issues arising for the governing body in relation to the focus of the SDP.
- Action following governing body meeting – make a record of any action agreed by the governing body with regard to this visit.

APPENDIX C – PROTOCOL FOR VISITS

Governors visit the school to enhance their understanding of the school's work and to help fulfil their responsibilities of monitoring and evaluating the school.

We have an agreed schedule of governors' visits to the school, reflecting the priorities in the school development plan and the specific interests and responsibilities of governors, and we keep a file of visit reports.

| | ALWAYS | NEVER |
|---------------|---|--|
| BEFORE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree purpose of visit - Agree duration of visit - Agree when you will discuss visit with Headteacher - Consider practicalities (dress, parking, time of arrival, who to report to, how to make notes, breaks and lunch) - Find out how each teacher wants you to contribute (or not) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn up unannounced |
| DURING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce yourself to staff and pupils - Note and praise the positive - Ask questions to increase understanding - Remain focused on the purpose of the visit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk in with a clipboard - Arrive with preconceived ideas - Interrupt the teacher - Make professional judgements about staff expertise (governors are not inspectors) - Pursue your own personal agenda/focus on the progress of your own child - Monopolise the children's or staff's time |
| AFTER | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thank the teacher and pupils - Discuss visit with the teacher - Write a thank you note to teacher and pupils - Compile a report (use framework if appropriate) - Raise any concerns sensitively with the Headteacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leave without a word |

