



## Governor Visits to School Policy

**At Mersey Vale Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all irrespective of race, gender, ability, religion, socio-economic factors and disability. The achievement of all pupils is monitored and we use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching and learning.**



**We aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential. We seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination. At Mersey Vale we believe that diversity and inclusion are strengths, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.**

There are at least four good reasons why every governor should try and make a formal visit to the school at least once a year.

To develop a greater understanding of the functions of the school

- To learn first hand how the National Curriculum is being implemented (legal responsibility for schools)
- To build up relationships with staff and pupils of the school
- To fulfil their strategic and linked role

Many governors visit the school for a number of other perfectly valid reasons:

- Governing Body meetings and Committee meetings
- School functions
- Helping in school

These are all excellent ways of building relationships with the school community. Some governors, particularly those with a specific role, eg. special educational needs, attendance, literacy/ numeracy may wish to set up regular meetings with the member of staff responsible for leading or managing this area of work.

If a visit is being undertaken to enhance the Governing Body's understanding of an aspect of the school's work, it should be planned carefully. Ideally the Governing Body will have agreed a schedule for governors visits to the school. This should reflect the priorities in the School Improvement Plan and the specific interests and responsibilities of governors.

On the whole, these visits give very little information about the teaching and learning in the school. However since people's main reason for being members of the Governing Body of a school is to ensure that the pupils get the best possible education within the resources available, it is essential that they build up a good knowledge of the content and the effectiveness of the education being provided.

Any governors visiting school must have undergone a CRB or List 99 check without exception.

### **Advice to Ensure Successful Visits**

Schools are very busy places and an unscheduled, unprepared visit can cause unnecessary anxiety. As a Governing Body we have agreed guidelines to follow when governors are visiting the school.

#### **Before a Visit**

- Establish a diary of governors visits to the school
- Make sure that staff are aware of visits
- Plan each visit by deciding beforehand what you want to achieve and whether you wish to see a class being taught, have a particular focus or review the implementation of a particular school policy.
- Ask for any relevant background papers so you can familiarise yourself with what the school is trying to do.
- If making a classroom visit, arrange to see the member of staff at a mutually convenient time.
- Make sure the Headteacher and staffs know the purpose of the visit.

#### **During the visit**

- On the day of visit, start the visit with a meeting with the Head teacher. This will ensure that you are informed about any last minute changes to the arrangements.
- If making a classroom visit, make sure you know what lesson will be in progress.
- Agree with the teacher how you will be introduced.
- Observe discreetly, but do not sit at the back of the room as if you were inspecting the lesson. Get involved without being obstructive. (If the teacher has agreed that this would be appropriate).
- If you have questions about what is going on, do not disturb the teacher whilst they are teaching, make a note and ask at a pre-arranged time.
- Finish your visit with a meeting with the Headteacher if possible and let them know how you got on.

#### **After the Visit**

- It is always good to send a thank you note to the staff and pupils you visited. They will remember you and it will help to build relationships.
- Discuss what you have observed with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issues you are unclear about. For example, did your presence have any impact on the atmosphere in the classroom?
- Share your findings and perceptions with other governors, agree with the Headteacher, how and when this will be done.
- Make notes as soon as possible after your observation, whilst it is still fresh in your mind.
- Circulate the draft of any report to the Headteacher and staff involved. Be prepared to amend it. Aim to achieve a report that is agreed by those involved. (When completed give a copy to the Governing Body support officer, who will in due course circulate it to the Governing Body with the papers for the next meeting).
- Evaluate your visit. Did you achieve what you set out to do?

#### **Points to Remember**

- Your visit was a 'snapshot' of the school/class at a particular time.

- You are not an inspector (even if you are one) and should not make written observations/comments about the quality of the teaching and learning. Raise any concerns with the Head teacher verbally.
- It is considered good practice not to name staff or pupils exceptional circumstances.
- Any reports will be available for public inspection

  
Signed :  
William Goundry  
Chair of Governors      27/11/2023

**GOVERNOR VISIT TO SCHOOL**

GOVERNOR.....

TEACHER .....

CLASS/SUBJECT.....

AGREED AIMS OF VISIT

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WHAT HAVE I GAINED FROM THIS VISIT

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AGREED FUTURE FOCUS OF VISITS

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COMMENTS

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SIGNED.....

PRINT NAME.....