

## School Visits by Governors

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**Date Written:** November 2010

**Review Date:** September 2016

**Next Review Date:** September 2017

### **Amended/Reviewed by: Curriculum Committee**

Governors are required to monitor and evaluate the progress that the school is making towards the priorities and targets set out in the school development plan. Much of this monitoring will be done through the Headteacher and other members of staff reporting to the governing body and its committees. Governors will visit informally for specific school events. It is also good practice for governors to visit more formally during the school day to see at first hand the impact of policies and plans on the school's performance. It is hoped that these visits will strengthen governor contact with the school, leading to a fuller understanding of the experience of working with deaf pupils and to staff liaising with an identified governor who can take up points where needed. It is essential that governors and staff are clear about the reasons for such visits and have agreed the way in which they will be conducted.

Visits are *not* about making judgments on the quality of teaching; that is the Headteacher's responsibility. Nor are they about checking on the progress of individual children or pursuing personal agendas. (See appendices for further guidance on visit protocol).

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body will, with the help of the Head Teacher and staff, organise a schedule of visits to the primary and secondary departments. The aim will be a minimum of one visit, usually lasting half a day, per governor per year to both the Primary and Secondary departments, although governors are encouraged to visit the school more often than that. The Head teacher (after consultation with the chair of the curriculum committee) will guide the governing body at the beginning of each academic year, on the main focus for the school visits for the year.

Visits will enable governors to develop a deeper understanding of a subject, a policy or policies, or a year group. They may focus on areas where they have an interest or expertise. The aim will be to get to know an aspect of the school really well, increasing governor confidence and knowledge. It will help to maximize the effectiveness of the governing body, as well as developing and embedding the link governor roles.

Working to the annual schedule (which will include 'a governors into school week focus) agreed with the Head teacher and staff, governors will confirm with the Headteacher the date, timing and focus of each visit at least one week in advance. This will include agreeing what will be observed and to whom it would be useful to talk. If time permits they will discuss the proposed visit with any staff involved. They will prepare by reading relevant documentation/guidance.

At the end of each visit, the governor(s) will discuss what they have observed with the teacher and clarify any points they are uncertain about. They will (if required) discuss their observations with the Headteacher and agree how and when they will report to the governing body.

**Teachers and support staff** will be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by the governing body to the school. They will make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits so as to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the information/evidence that could be shared with governors. Whenever practical they will invite their link/curriculum governors to relevant staff meetings and training sessions.

Questions will be invited from governors, while being sensitive to issues of confidentiality. .

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at the termly meeting of the governing body. At the final meeting of each academic year the Chair of Curriculum Committee will report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus. By reviewing the reports of visits, the governing body will judge the extent to which the information gathered informed the whole governing body's understanding of the progress made towards meeting priorities and targets. Teacher governors will feed back from colleagues. They will be asked to identify what worked well and what if anything needs to be reconsidered. They will also be asked to describe the extent to which their understanding of the governing body's role has been enhanced.



## The Focus of the Visit

### GUIDANCE NOTES

A visit can be either to see the school generally in operation or a specific classroom visit. Visits can focus on the following:

#### ***The School***

How Blanche Nevile School meets the needs of its deaf learners, and enables all pupils to achieve their full potential.

This may include:

- The use made of buildings and premises
- The monitoring of Health and Safety
- The use and condition of resources
- The impact of class sizes
- The deployment of support staff
- To see a class or teacher led assembly

#### ***The Classroom***

- Observation of particular curriculum areas i.e. English/Literacy, Mathematics/Numeracy, Science, Information and Computing Design Technology (DT), History, Geography, Religious Education, Art and Design, Physical Education
- The implementation of the curriculum
- Gain an understanding of the process of assessment and tracking pupil cohorts and their attainment
- Assessing a group of pupils working together on a task
- The impact of learning on educational visits

The list is by no means exclusive or exhaustive.

#### **AFTER THE VISIT**

Oral/or signed feedback should be given to the member(s) of staff at the end of the visit. Governors should agree with the Headteacher the level of detail that should be fed back to the member of staff. Feedback can be a sensitive area but it is essential that warm thanks are given and a comment on the focus agreed.

Staff should also realise that Governors are not able to address everyday matters that would normally be sorted out as a matter of good line management. Any expression of concern should be shared with the Headteacher as soon as possible. Comments should be limited to the focus of

the visit unless Health and Safety is being compromised. This should always be reported immediately.

Oral/signed and written feedback should be given to:

- The member(s) of staff involved
- The Headteacher
- The Curriculum Committee or Governing Body

Written feedback using the Governor's Visit Form (see Appendix 1) should be completed with the member of staff and copies given to the Headteacher and member(s) of staff.

The reports will be made available to the appropriate Committee or Governing Body.



GOVERNOR'S VISIT FORM

Name:	Governor responsibility:	Date:
Duration:		
Area of School/Staff/Class visited:		
Purpose of visit: (Objectives)		
Governor's comments:		
Staff comments:		
Headteacher's comments:		
<p>Signed</p> <p>Governor: _____</p> <p>Staff Member(s): _____</p> <p>Headteacher: _____</p> <p>Date: _____ 20 _____</p>		