
Title of Policy/Procedure	Visiting the School and Classroom for Trustees and Governors
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Reviewer(s):	Head of Governance ESS Committee
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To be read in conjunction with the following policies:	Trustee/governor code of conduct
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Consultation Process	Consulted with LGBs and ESS committee
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Policy Date:	March 2021
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Review Date:	March 2023
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This policy has been ratified by (please delete as appropriate):	ESS Committee
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Visiting the School and Classroom Policy **for Trustees and Governors**

Introduction

The trust board and local governing body have three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the CEO/headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of the staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Trustees and governors draw on a range of evidence in order to carry out these functions and one source of information is their own visits to their school. This protocol applies to school visits made for the purpose of governance and not to visits to the school site that individuals may make in other capacities e.g. as parents or members of staff.

Purpose

All school visits will:

- Have a clear focus, linked to strategic priorities, which is agreed by the trust board (for trustee visits) or local governing body (for governor visits). It must be remembered that trustees and governors do not make judgements on the quality of teaching.
- Be arranged with adequate notice through the headteacher and agreed with the relevant members of staff.
- Be of value to the trust board/local governing body which is demonstrable to outside agencies e.g. Ofsted. It is not the role of those governing to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits and individuals will make every effort to avoid this impression.

Conduct

Those governing will comply with the Blue Kite Academy Trust code of conduct and the standards of presentation expected of staff. They will be mindful that they are representing the whole trust board/local governing body through their words and actions.

Follow-up

Those visiting the school will have the opportunity to discuss the visit, including any concerns, with the headteacher immediately or soon after the visit. The ' (Link) Governor Visit Report' will be completed after each visit.

A draft will be shared with the headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next trust board/committee/local governing body meeting.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be adhered to regarding visits. Comments should be limited to the headteacher or senior or middle leader with who the visit was arranged but not with other staff or

with parents. Individual children or staff members (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) should not be identified in school visit reports.

Frequency

Trustees will be encouraged to visit at least one school in the trust during an academic year. Governors will undertake a minimum of one visit to the school per academic year but no more than once a (big) term.

Link governors will visit the school a minimum of twice and a maximum of three times spread throughout the academic year.

	Do	Don't
Before	<p>Discuss the visit at a governing board meeting, including identifying a clear purpose.</p> <p>Arrange a mutually convenient time, avoiding sensitive times such as exam or assessment periods.</p> <p>Discuss the visit with the headteacher and ensure that any member of staff who will be involved in the visit understands the arrangements.</p>	<p>Turn up unannounced.</p> <p>Approach staff directly without the approval of the headteacher</p>
During	<p>Present yourself in a way which matches the professionalism expected of school staff.</p> <p>Report to reception and follow procedures for visitors – even those familiar with the school should do this.</p> <p>Only enter classrooms and other areas of the school – including the staffroom – following invitation by a member of staff.</p> <p>Keep to the role agreed; only talk to pupils if invited to do so by the teacher</p> <p>Be flexible if something urgent crops up which means the arranged tasks cannot take place – always keep in mind that the education of the pupils is of overriding importance.</p> <p>Be courteous and professional throughout the visit, including thanking members of staff before leaving.</p>	<p>Give the impression that you are inspecting, for example by using a clipboard or making notes while visiting a classroom.</p> <p>Assume a different role to that agreed; parents and education professionals, in particular, should be mindful not to stray into these roles.</p> <p>Express personal opinions if pressed on a controversial issue – individuals should keep in mind that they are representing the governing board as a whole.</p> <p>Make assumptions – always ask for explanations of anything not understood at an appropriate time when it will not interrupt pupils' learning (this may be in conversation with the class teacher after the lesson or with the headteacher at the end of the visit).</p> <p>Check on the progress of individual children, including your own.</p>

		Walk around the school unaccompanied or put yourself in situations where you are likely to be unaccompanied with pupils.
After	<p>Share any concerns, however trivial, with the chair and the headteacher.</p> <p>Complete a short visit report, a draft should be shared with any relevant members of staff and the headteacher, then taking their comments into account a final written report should be prepared and given to the governing board before the next meeting.</p> <p>Ensure that school visits are an agenda item at the governing board meeting and that any findings are discussed.</p> <p>Send a thank you email to those that contributed to the success of the visit</p>	<p>Make comments regarding the teacher's conduct of the lesson or individual students, or make judgements on the quality of teaching.</p> <p>Refer to individual teachers or students in your report, even in a positive light.</p> <p>Talk about your visit to parents, pupils or staff that were not involved – what you have seen should be treated with the same level of confidentiality as any other governing board business.</p>

School Name

Example Trustee/Governor Visit Form

Name:	
Date of Visit:	
Focus of Visit SDP priority	
Class/ Staff Visited	
Summary of activities:	
Agreed strengths:	
Agreed areas for development:	
Evaluation:	
Agreed actions:	

Signature of Governor:	Signature of member of staff:
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