



1 Introduction

- 1.1 The governing body has a crucial role to play in the life of our school. Many statutory responsibilities in relation to the school lie with the governing body, and the effectiveness of governors in carrying out their responsibilities is a central part of the overall effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school.
- 1.2 Their key roles are to oversee the strategic development of the school, through the school improvement plan. This involves monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness, and offering support and challenge to the school. However, governors do not involve themselves in the day to day management of the school.
- 1.3 Governors are volunteers; many will have full time jobs of their own and may be unavailable during the school day. Nevertheless, in order for governors to properly fulfil their role, it is essential that they understand and experience the life of the school.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 We aim for governors to be able to fully carry out their responsibilities outlined in the introduction above. To this end, the school welcomes the governing body's active involvement in its life. Governors are encouraged to visit the school during the working day, with the aim of:
- being able to advise the whole governing body on aspects of the fulfilment of its statutory role;
 - meeting with the headteacher, senior staff, external advisers or local authority officers;
 - improving governor understanding of the ethos of the school and the curriculum;
 - observing school policies in action;
 - carrying out specific responsibilities on behalf of the governing body, e.g. health and safety checks;
 - observing, in order to become familiar with classroom practice;
 - developing governor links with staff, new staff, pupils and parents/carers;
 - attending school functions;
 - carrying out specified monitoring responsibilities in relation to the school improvement plan;
 - monitoring whether the budget decisions of the governing body are enabling the school to provide value for money;
 - gaining an enhanced level of understanding of aspects of the school's work so that the governing body is sufficiently well informed for its decision-making and policy development;
 - assisting the headteacher in staffing organisation, job descriptions, person specifications and selection interviews;
 - ascertaining the need for particular resources.
- 2.2 The role of a governor on a school visit does not include making qualitative judgements on professional or educational matters; for example, the quality of teaching in individual lessons.

3 Timetable of visits

- 3.1 We hope that all governors will be able to visit the school during the working day as often as they can, to observe the school in session, in addition to any other incidental visits.
- 3.2 We offer all new governors an introductory visit as soon as possible after their appointment.
- 3.3 We recognise that pre-planning is essential if the governor's visit is to be worthwhile, and that professional courtesies are to be observed. Visits will and should always be discussed and arranged through the headteacher. Staff will always be notified of the purpose of the visit in advance, if it is intended that governors will visit classrooms or observe learning activities.

4 Visits to classrooms

- 4.1 The school welcomes governors' presence in lessons. The school will prepare for such visits by providing visiting governors with information about the purpose of the lesson and suggestions for the role a governor might play, for example: a sample list of questions that pupils might be asked during their independent work.
- 4.2 The governing body agrees that any report, written or oral, made to the governing body following classroom visits, will have been discussed with the headteacher and member(s) of staff beforehand. The governing body recognises that no teacher or other member of staff should be identifiable through the report, and that no qualitative judgement about a professional matter, for example: the quality of teaching in individual lessons, will be made.
- 4.3 The governing body recognises that any information about any individually named pupil's attainment or progress should not form part of the visit or be communicated in any subsequent report. Confidentiality must be upheld at all times.
- 4.4 Governors recognise that no comment about the lesson, its content or the pupils should be made within the hearing of any pupil.
- 4.5 Governors agree that visits to classes, of which their own children are members should be avoided where possible.

5 Activities away from classrooms

- 5.1 Individual governors are encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of the work of the school through links to specific subjects/key stages/classes. Subject governors are given time within their work plans to discuss subject policies, strengths and areas for development within the subjects: including overall standards, and action plans for school improvement. Governors, for their part, are encouraged to report the main points to the performance and standards committee.
- 5.2 Governors are encouraged to attend all events at which parents/carers are present. They should wear an identification badge and be available to parents. Any feedback received from parents should be discussed with the headteacher and, if appropriate, reported to the governing body in such a way that no parent or carer can be identified.
- 5.3 Governors are encouraged to attend and play a full part in staff professional development days. Details of the following term's training activities will be passed to the clerk at the end of the previous term. Governors planning to attend should inform the headteacher beforehand.

6 Monitoring and review

- 6.1 This policy will be discussed with staff and reviewed by the governing body every three years, or sooner if necessary.