



Christchurch Junior School

A member of Twynham Learning

Governor visits to school policy

Last amended 30.03.18 (reformat) by Sue Morris, Clerk

Reviewed and approved by Environment Committee 09.07.18

Ratified by the Christchurch Junior School LGB 18.07.18

Next review date April 2021

This policy has been reviewed in line with the 8 principles set out in the Single Equality Policy and an initial screening Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

GOVERNORS' VISITS TO SCHOOL POLICY

This policy was written in consultation with the Dorset Teachers Council.

Context

Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. However, they need to be able to visit from time to time to develop their understanding of the school. These visits enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school. Governors should arrange their visits with the headteacher, who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school.

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.

A Guide to the Law for School Governors (September 2008)

Purpose of the visit

Visits are undertaken to:

- improve governing body knowledge of the school and the people that work in it
- assist the governing body in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan
- assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as inclusion
- assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties
- assist the governing body in making informed decisions

Governors should not pursue any personal agendas or arrive with inflexible preconceived ideas.

Governors are not to make any judgements about pupil's work, behaviour, any teacher's classroom practice or issues relating to the day to day running of the school. Those are the responsibility of the headteacher.

Planning the visit

Visits should be undertaken only as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the governing body or one of its committees and with 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 through the appropriate member of the leadership group.

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, such as by using a clipboard.

Following the visit

After visiting the school the governor(s) should:

- 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 will be shared with all appropriate staff involved)
- raise any concerns sensitively with the headteacher
- consider what went well and 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 – Notes for governor report form.

Appendix 2 – Protocol for visits.

Appendix 3 – Visit report form

Appendix 1 Notes for governor report

Before the visit, 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 (see record sheet)

Appendix 2 Protocol for visits

Governors visit their 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 |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| B E F O R E | <p>Agree purpose of visit. Agree how much time (a timetable is a good idea). Agree when you will discuss the visit with the 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).</p> | <p>Turn up unannounced.</p> |
| D U R I N G | <p>Introduce yourself to staff and pupils. Note and praise the positive. Ask questions to increase understanding. Remain focused on the purpose of the visit.</p> | <p>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 the staff's time.</p> |
| A F T E R | <p>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.</p> | <p>Leave without a word</p> |

Appendix 3 Visit report form

CHRISTCHURCH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Record of Governor Visit to Classroom

Please complete his form and return to the Headteacher after your visit

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Name of Governor | |
| Date of visit | |
| Time and duration of visit | |
| Staff involved in discussion | |

Please complete the following:-

| | |
|--|--|
| Details of observation / discussion / documentation | |
| Questions I would like to ask | |

Signed **Date**

| |
|-------------------|
| Feedback:- |
|-------------------|

Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Record

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. What policy is being reviewed? | Governor visits to school policy |
| 2. Upon whom will this impact? | The Christchurch Junior School Community |

3. How would the work impact upon groups; are they included and considered?

| The Equality Strands | Negative impact | Positive impact | No impact |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Minority ethnic groups | | | √ |
| Gender | | | √ |
| Disability | | | √ |
| Religion, faith or belief | | | √ |
| Sexual orientation | | | √ |
| Transgender | | | √ |
| Age (N/A to pre-school and school children) | | | √ |
| Rurality | | | √ |

4. Does data inform this work, research and/or consultation, and has it been broken down by the equality strands?

| | NO | YES | Uncertain |
|---------------------------|----|-----|-----------|
| Minority ethnic groups | √ | | |
| Gender | √ | | |
| Disability | √ | | |
| Religion, Faith or belief | √ | | |
| Sexual Orientation | √ | | |
| Transgender | √ | | |
| Age | √ | | |
| Rurality | √ | | |

Does the initial screening highlight potential issues that may be illegal? NO

Further comments:-

Do you consider that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required? NO

Initial screening carried out by Environment Committee 09.07.18

Comment by Headteacher: