

Blackburn with Darwen Governors visits to Schools

Purpose

Many schools have policies in place to oversee governor visits to schools. Others have informal arrangements in place that work perfectly well.

Planned visits can enhance the strategic decision making of the governing body and help support the working relationships between staff and governors. This sets out a framework for a clear and consistent approach to support these visits which will provide a greater level of information and in depth knowledge at committee/full governing body meetings.

The type of visits as described in this policy are different to those which governors may undertake for such reasons as attending school specific events, meetings or helping in school. Governors' visits help to develop their knowledge of the school and deepen their understanding of the impact of their decisions on the provision. The key questions for governors to consider in committees will be informed following such visits and through subsequent discussions with school leaders.

Key Issues

Consistency of approach

Clarification of a key focus with a clear purpose is crucial and some basic principles should be considered in the context of the visit.

- What are the key issues for action in this area?
- How well is the action plan going?
- Do governors have the support/resource needed to carry it out?
- What may be seen in relation to impact at this point?
- What needs to be done next?

The Governing Body is committed to adopting a consistent approach to support these visits by:

- Determining that the visit is part of an agreed programme to support strategic decision making.

- Clearly identifying what the outcomes for the visit are.
- Adopting an agreed proforma for completion by governors (Appendix 1).
- Agreeing, understanding and engagement of staff in the purpose of the visit.
- Safeguarding – Governors have undergone appropriate checks

Effective Management

The Governing Body is committed to the effective management of visits through:

- Clear guidelines of what expectations there are for both staff and governors as to who will have responsibility for what before/during/after the visit :-
 - Identification of designated member of staff to meet with the governor (Head teacher/Deputy/Head of Department/Subject leader).
 - Opportunity for Q & A session - either during/after the scheduled visit has taken place.
 - Information sharing – governors completed proforma to be shared with staff member.
 - Responsible person for dissemination of information.
 - Identification of nominated person for the retention of completed proformas – available as part of published minutes.

Equality and Fairness

Governors should take care to note that their visit is always only a 'snapshot' of the school at a particular point in time.

The Governing Body is committed to an equitable and fair approach to these visits through:

- Reinforcement of clarity of purpose.
- Governors are not inspectors (even though they may be qualified to act as one in other contexts) and therefore they should not make written observations/comments about the quality of the teaching and learning as it is beyond their remit.
- Any concerns following the visit are raised with the Head teacher verbally.
- Identification of individual staff or pupils by name is not permitted on any visit proforma as these reports will be available for public inspection.

GOVERNOR FEEDBACK FORM

Name :

Date of visit:

Class/es visited:

Focus of visit (agreed in advance)

Is the visit linked to a School Improvement/Development Plan Priority?

What were the key points from your visit today?

What have you learnt that you believe will make a valuable contribution to the School Improvement Plan/School Development Plan?

How do you feel this visit has helped you to develop your role as a Governor?

Are there any further points you wish to bring to Governors' attention?

Thank you for making the visit – please copy this form to the Head teacher.

Signed

Date