




Bright Stars

Rudston Primary School and
Bright Stars Nursery

Governor Visits Policy

Date: September 2019

This policy and all school policies are produced in accordance to guidance set out in our school legislation and guidance policy.

Approved By Governors: September 2019

Review Autumn Term 2021

Our Mission Statement:

To develop a love of learning,
enabling all children
to reach their full potential.

- * Respect * Resilience *
- * Responsibility * Enjoyment *
- * Challenge *

Safeguarding Statement:

“Rudston Primary school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

Rudston Primary School

Governor's Visits to School

Introduction

It is often difficult for busy Governors to find time to be in school while it is in session but it is essential that they are able to do this. Visits by governors should be encouraged, provided the governors come to learn, support, be involved and help rather than to inspect.

Aims

To provide governors with an opportunity to:

1. Understand better the work being done by pupils and all staff.
2. Enable pupils and staff to get to know governors.
3. Demonstrate their interest in the school and to encourage the head and the staff in their work.
4. Have a wider understanding when making decisions affecting the school.
5. Be better informed advocates, able to speak up for the school from personal knowledge.
6. Share their skills and expertise as appropriate.
7. More efficiently carry out their responsibility for monitoring the quality of education being provided for the pupils in the school. However, this does not involve the inspection of individual teachers and their work.

Principles

1. The governing body is a corporate body and every governor will visit the school as a member of that body, not as an individual.
2. Governors visit the school as guests not as officials; they will come to learn and help, not to inspect.
3. An effective partnership between governors and staff based on mutual understanding benefits the whole school community.
4. The governing body is responsible for the general oversight of the school; it is not concerned with the day-to-day management of the school, which is the responsibility of the Headteacher.
5. The governing body will plan and publish a programme of governor visits as part of their strategic management of the school avoiding exceptionally busy times of the school year.
6. Visits will link to the School Development Plan (SDP) and support national/local initiatives such as Literacy, Numeracy, Computing and SEN.
7. Governors must recognise the confidentiality of what they see and hear during a visit.

Code of Practice for Visiting

Focus of visit

One or more of the following will provide a focus of a visit, with the agreement of relevant personnel.

1. Links with the school development or action plan.
2. Links with the class, year group or department.
3. Joining assembly or worship.
4. The school's policies and practices in a particular area.
5. Shadowing of a class or teacher or headteacher for the day.
6. Looking at provision for special needs; looking at premises; health and safety and the learning environment.
7. The organisation of classes and teaching groups.
8. Lunch-time arrangements, including sharing a meal with pupils or staff.
9. Pastoral care of pupils and staff.
10. Links with parents and the local community.
11. Sharing skills and expertise with pupils and the staff.
12. Participating in staff training sessions.

Before a visit

In advance of a visit, the governor should discuss with the headteacher or designated person the management of the visit.

1. Focus for the visit including the preparation needed and the background information.
2. Convenient dates, time and duration of visit.
3. The possibility of being shown around by a pupil or member of the school council.
4. Acceptable behaviour when visiting a class where teaching is in progress, and agreeing governor's interaction with pupils during a lesson.
5. Including opportunities for discussion with Head/designated person immediately before and after the visit.
6. Links with the school development or action plan.
7. Appropriate behaviour in the context of pupil and adult relationships.
8. Suggestions of ways of asking questions of pupil and staff.
9. How staff and pupils will be informed of the visit, including the introduction of the governor to the staff directly involved.
10. When and how impressions of the visit will be shared with staff and the Head.

During a visit

Learning

It is necessary for governors to emphasise that they are coming to learn and understand, not to inspect.

Observation

In addition to any special focus to a visit, other areas may be observed, such as:

- Facilities for staff.
- Pupil movement on site.
- Displays in open areas and classrooms.
- Relationships between pupil/pupil, able pupil and less able pupil, pupil/staff, staff/staff.
- Storage and accessibility of resources, books, equipment and pictures.
- Classroom facilities: lighting, layout, storage, furniture and décor.
- Storage and cloakroom facilities for pupils.

Notes

If any notes are made during the visit these should be done so unobtrusively. These notes should inform the final writing of the report.

Different classes

If visits are being made to several different classes, it is good practice if approximately the same amount of time is spent with each class.

Impressions

Before completing a visit a governor will have been encouraged by some of the things seen and experienced – these will be shared with pupils, staff and the Head.

After a visit

Policy

1. Complete the Governor school visit record sheet.
2. Share impressions of visits with the Head and particular staff; if necessary discuss a matter with the chair of governing body.
3. Share impressions with the governing body by reports to the governing body.
4. Copies of written reports should be given to the Head and chair and subsequently made available to governors. Such reports will be kept in a log-book of governor's visits.
5. Give staff the opportunity to comment on the governor visit.

Evaluating the visit

1. Were objectives clear?
2. Were they realised? If not, why not?
3. Was preparation adequate?
4. What, if anything would be done differently next time?
5. When will be the next visit to the school?

Visiting Tips

- **Please do :**

Always sign in and out of school, check in with the Head or senior member of staff and wear a badge.

Remember governors have a strategic overview and are not responsible for managing the school.

Begin and end your visit in a positive way finding some things to genuinely praise.

Be punctual, polite and sensitive.

Invite pupils and staff to ask you questions.

Avoid times when staff are particularly busy, for example, the first and last weeks of term, SATs, OFSTED.

Try to reply to special invitations to attend and make an effort to be there – this does much to encourage pupils and staff.

Earn the respect and confidence of staff by not talking about your visit except to the head and when reporting to governors (this is very important).

Leave pupils and staff hoping you will come again soon!

- **Please try not to:**

Drop in unannounced.

Destroy confidence, it is a fragile commodity.

Remain silent, this can send negative messages.

Get involved in discussion of personal staffing matters.

Sit at the back of the class making notes.

Always expect immediate answers.

Behave like an inspector!

Agreed by Staff: September 2019

Approved by Governors September 2019

Review Date September 2021

Governor School Visits Record Sheet

| | |
|--|--|
| Name | |
| Date of visit | |
| Focus of visit | |
| Classes/ staff visited | |
| Summary of activities | |
| Positive comments about the visit | |
| Questions that I have | |
| Ideas for future visits | |
| Any other comments | |