

**West Earlham Infant and Nursery School**  
**Governor Visits Policy**

**1. Statement of intent**

- a. "Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, the board can see for themselves whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice." – DfE (2017) 'Governance handbook' pg25
- b. Through this policy, West Earlham Infant and Nursery School aims to embed effective procedures concerning governor monitoring visits. Each governor is expected to make at least one visit during the academic year, demonstrating the governing board's role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice.
- c. Governor visits inform understanding, allow opportunities to speak to children, families and staff, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the School Development Plan in action.
- d. For teaching staff, governor visits allow teaching staff the chance to find out more about governors; provide an opportunity to draw attention to issues or questions they wish to raise; and provide opportunity to reflect upon and discuss current practice.
- e. Governors must:
  - Remember to respect school staff and children.
  - Support school leaders.
  - Acknowledge that they represent the full governing board.
- f. By following the agreed principles and procedures, governor visits will be an informative and positive experience for all involved, and will significantly contribute towards school improvement.

**2. Roles and responsibilities**

- a. Governors are responsible for:
  1. Organising and meeting their target of one visit per academic year.
  2. Understanding the needs of staff members through discussions with at least one staff member per academic year.
  3. Reporting their observations as appropriate to the full governing board, committee of the governing board or Chair of Governors.
- b. The headteacher is responsible for:
  1. Facilitating governor visits.
  2. Discussing completed visits with governors, prior to a report being made to the full governing board.

**3. Annual schedule**

- a. A schedule of governor visits will be discussed at Full Governor meetings and committee meetings as necessary. It will align with the School Improvement and Development plan monitoring and statutory duties.
- b. All Governors are encouraged to attend ad hoc events throughout the School Year. Some examples of these events are: School productions, Sports Day, Celebration evening, Fundraising events.

**4. Etiquette**

- a. Governor visits are **not** a form of inspection, and governors should not make judgements concerning teaching in any official capacity.
- b. Governors should avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.
- c. Governors should avoid the pursuance of personal agendas.
- d. Governors must remain flexible and understand that staff must make children' education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.
- e. Governors must not undertake unannounced monitoring visits.
- f. Visits are not an opportunity for governors to check on individual children or monopolise staff' time.

## **5. Visits**

- a. Before a visit, governors will:
  - 1. Arrange the visit within good time.
  - 2. Agree the purpose of the visit.
  - 3. Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed.
  - 4. Agree their role within the lesson.
- b. During a visit, governors will:
  - 1. Adhere to their agreed role.
  - 2. Not ask questions during the lesson.
  - 3. Adhere to confidentially agreements.
  - 4. Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.
  - 5. Be sensitive to the needs of the children.
- c. During a visit, governors will not:
  - 1. Assume a role different to that which has been agreed.
  - 2. Interrupt the teacher.
  - 3. Distract children.
- d. After a visit, governors will:
  - 1. Thank the teacher/staff member and children.
  - 2. Discuss the visit with the teacher/staff member at the teacher's/staff members convenience.
  - 3. Provide feedback regarding the visit as appropriate to the full governing board, committee of the governing board or Chair of Governors.
- e. After a visit, governors will not:
  - 1. Leave without acknowledging the teacher/staff member and children.
  - 2. Break confidentiality agreements.
- f. A time should be agreed between the governor and teacher/staff member, at the teacher's/staff members convenience, to discuss the observed lesson.
- g. During the discussion, governors should adhere to the following framework:
  - 1. Ask the teacher/staff member for their views on the lesson
  - 2. Present your observations
  - 3. Provide positive feedback
  - 4. Raise any issues
  - 5. Ask further questions
  - 6. Thank the teacher/staff member for the opportunity

- h. By the end of the discussion, both the governor and teacher should be clear as to what information will be shared with the headteacher/full governing board/committee of the governing board or Chair of Governors.
- i. The Governor Visit Proforma should be completed as soon as possible after the visit.
- j. The headteacher and governor should discuss the observation prior to the distribution of the proforma.
- k. A copy of the completed proforma should be provided to:
  - 1. The headteacher
  - 2. The subject leader
  - 3. The teacher/staff member concerned
  - 4. The clerk to governors
  - 5. A copy of the report should be circulated at the next appropriate committee/governing board meeting.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

- a. This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board. When reviewing the success of the policy, the governing board will take the following into consideration:
  - 1. Has every governor visited at least once during the academic year?
  - 2. Has every governor made links with their allocated subject?
  - 3. Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
  - 4. What worked well?
  - 5. What did not work well?
  - 6. Have there been any unexpected benefits?
  - 7. How can practice be improved?
  - 8. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all governors.
  - 9. All governors are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

## **Approval**

This policy has been reviewed in line with the 2010 Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Act. Due regard has been given to Equality.

This policy will be adopted in **September 2018**. The date of the next formal review will be **September 2019** and every year thereafter, unless statutory legislation changes.

Policy approved by the **Full Governing Board** of West Earlham Infant and Nursery School.