

WOOLENWICK JUNIOR SCHOOL
Policy for Governors' Visits to School V1

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Policy Name | Governors visit to school policy |
| Created by | CS |
| Responsibility of | School improvement |
| Reviewed by | GB |
| This Review Date | May 2013 |
| Next Review Due | 2017 |
| Cycle | 4 years |
| Ratified by Full Governing Body on | 12/6/13 |

Version History

| Version | Amendments | Date | Author |
|---------|------------|----------|--------|
| V1 | reviewed | May 2013 | CS |

OFSTED states: 'If governors are to monitor and evaluate the school's work they need to visit the school. When handled well these visits build up trust and respect between staff and the governing body, and they allow governors to monitor the school's work in a way that is far more supportive than if they just attend meetings. The visits to school by governors works well when the focus of the visit is agreed in advance and understood by all involved.'

Aims

- To support the school and gain a better understanding of how it works.
- To place raising achievement and promoting good learning at the centre of the governors' concerns.
- To help governors exercise their accountability.
- To enable a closer working relationship between staff and governors for school development.

Principles

- All governors to be involved, whilst appreciating some governors have working commitments making daytime visits difficult.
- All governors to be attached to a specific area of the school called designated roles.
- Visits should be spread across the year and reported back to the FGB.
- A governor to be responsible for keeping track of the monitoring calendar and reminding governors when their visit is due.

Ways of Supporting the School

- Monitoring areas of responsibility as set out by the monitoring calendar of works.
- Spending time in the classroom, helping out where necessary and talking to children.
- Try to attend special occasions
- Attend where possible Governors in school days.
- Informal discussions with teaching staff and attend the annual lunch with Governors
- Offering to support the school with one off projects, where staff need extra input or time to achieve a goal.
- Governors with very specific expertise can offer valuable support on occasions.
- Being linked to a class, making contact via mail or attending assemblies of your linked class and getting to know one set of children very well. The children appreciate that special adult who is interested in their achievements.
- Attending fund-raising events.

Code of Practice for Visits

Before the visit:

- Agree a purpose and focus for the visit which is clear to all parties
- The monitoring calendar will advise Governors when visits are due.
- Be as well informed as possible about the focus of the visit by reading any relevant papers/handbooks/policies etc in advance.
- Ideally a visit should be linked to the SDP
- A meeting should be arranged at a mutually convenient time with the school and the Governor – this can be instigated by either party and be outside of school hours if necessary.

When visiting the School

- Be punctual and make sure the staff are aware you appreciate their time.
- Be tactful and sensitive
- Respect the professionalism of the staff.
- Make a point of listening rather than talking
- Don't make promises on behalf of the governing body.
- Thank the staff and children at the end of the visit
- Don't criticize the performance of a teacher or pupil during your monitoring.
- If it's an official monitoring visit, fill in the pro forma for discussion at the next meeting.
- If it's for any other reason, a Governor visit to school form needs to be completed and filed in office.

In addition, whilst in school

- Observe the use of resources and the classroom environment
- Talk to the children, with the teachers agreement, about the work they are doing
- Take open notes as an aide memoir if you wish
- Don't interfere with the organization of the class or try to talk to the teacher while s/he is teaching

Follow-up:

- Feed back the positive. If the teacher is not immediately available you might meet her/him at break; ask about anything you did not understand
- Any concerns should be raised with the Head and Chair of Governors as soon as possible rather than brought to the next full meeting
- A draft report or the pro forma needs to be sent to the Head before being circulated for the next meeting.
- Report back to the governing body verbally in a clear, factual and open way affirming good practice as much as possible using where applicable the pro forma information.

General:

An equality of time served in monitoring and visiting the school is not a goal of this governing body, however where a commitment is made by a governor to visit and report their findings, all other governors share a responsibility to review the report and when appropriate discuss the matter at the next meeting.