



Governors Visits Policy

Approved September 21st 2016

To be reviewed 2019

Rationale

At Long Lawford Primary School we believe that visits into the school by Governors are a vital source of information which helps the Governors fulfil their role more effectively. At Long Lawford Primary School we believe that Governor visits increase understanding and assists informed judgments to be made which can improve the quality of decision-making.

Aims

- *To ensure that all visits need a clear purpose*
- *To assist Governors to know more about the work and organisation of the school*
- *To keep up to date with developments*
- *For the Governors to offer visible support to the school*
- *To review the implementation of the school improvement plan, and help review its success*

Implementation of Policy

- At Long Lawford Primary Governor visits are a function of the governing body as a whole. All governors should decide on the structure and pattern of visiting by individual members.



- It is crucially important to make clear in advance the status of a visit to school, when undertaken on behalf of the governing body.
- Governors must understand and accept that they are not inspectors or advisers; it is not their job to assess the professional competence of individual teachers.

Guidelines for Governor Visits at Long Lawford Primary School

The following sets out the method for setting up and carrying out a visit:

- 1. Decide, with the Headteacher*
- 2. Agree an appropriate time and date with the Headteacher*
- 3. At least seven days prior to visiting, agree the focus with the Headteacher*
- 4. At least seven days prior to visiting, ensure that the relevant staff member(s) are provided with any documents or information needed for the visit*
- 5. Read and be aware of any policy or other documents and curriculum guidance if appropriate*
- 6. Agree with the relevant staff member(s) how the governor will be introduced to the class and whether the governor can engage with the children (this may be done on the day by asking permission of the class teacher to speak with a child or group)*
- 7. Safeguarding is to be maintained at all times. Governors must not be given unsupervised access to children and the Headteacher risk assessment is to be followed at all times*
- 8. Sign the visitors book at the start of the visit*



9. *During the visit the governor should be aware that (s)he is not in school to critique teaching or to act as an inspector but rather to gather information, to monitor targets etc. agreed by the G.B. or as part of an OFSTED action plan or the School Development Plan*

10. *When engaging with the children a governor should ask questions to determine whether they enjoy and value their learning and school experience, whether they feel safe and secure, whether they are leading healthy lives, what effects their learning may have had and whether they feel that the school ethos colours their life*

11. *If an issue is noticed that the governor thinks is significant then it should be raised with the Headteacher immediately without waiting for the report. This is especially true if a safety or welfare issue is suspected (it is better to speak and be wrong than to ignore an issue)*

12. *Governors must make every effort to reduce disruption to the class; and should be aware that their purpose is to gain information rather than to judge what they see. Governors should also thank the staff and children before leaving*

Each year, Governors will:

- plan a timetable of visits so that every governor has the opportunity to visit during the year
- agree an explicit purpose and plan for each visit which has been communicated to all parties
- consider different styles of visit, for example paired visits where an experienced governor partners a less experienced one



Etiquette for Governors at Long Lawford Primary School

Governors of Long Lawford Primary School, when undertaking a visit to the school, will:

- ✓ follow the agreed policy and system for reporting back (see below)
- ✓ negotiate a mutually convenient time and focus with the Headteacher, teacher etc. to ensure that the visit is expected
- ✓ give praise where it is due
- ✓ make a point of listening rather than talking
- ✓ include a 'debriefing' session with the Headteacher and/or SLT, as appropriate
- ✓ discuss any concerns the visit may raise with the Headteacher
- ✓ be polite, tactful and sensitive
- ✓ avoid stressful periods such as during or just before an OFSTED inspection, SATs, the first and last weeks of term, unless specifically requested to attend
- ✓ visit at different times of the day, term, year
- ✓ try to attend any special occasions, especially if regular daytime visits are difficult
- ✓ try to attend when you have been specifically invited
- ✓ go in as a helper where appropriate and possible

Governors at Long Lawford Primary School, when undertaking a visit to the school, will not:

- × agree the focus of the visit with the Headteacher beforehand
- × go in like an inspector
- × stray from the agreed focus
- × sit at the back, writing notes
- × go in unannounced
- × interfere with the organisation of the class



- × try to talk to the teacher while they are teaching - wait until the end of the session
- × criticise the performance of a teacher, even in a constructive manner, during your visit
- × make promises to staff on behalf of the governing body

Recording and Reporting Governor Visits

- At **Long Lawford Primary School** all formal monitoring visits will be reported to the full governing body or the relevant committee using the agreed proforma. This should be completed and passed to the clerk (electronically where possible) for inclusion with papers for the next appropriate meeting
- At **Long Lawford Primary** governors must complete a report form as quickly as possible after the visit (to capture the best quality information). Typed or manuscript forms are both acceptable provided that handwriting is legible.
- When formulating the report, it is vital to remember that standards of teaching and learning and management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher, the report must confine itself to Governing Body issues.
- The report should be submitted to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity to allow any issues identified to be addressed. The Headteacher should keep reports on file.
- A verbal report, using the written report as a template, should be made to the Governing Body following the meeting. Governor reports are to be a standard agenda item.



Disability Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Disability Equality Scheme. Assessment will include consideration of issues identified by the involvement of disabled children, staff and parents and any information the school holds on disabled children, staff and parents.