



Governors in School Policy

Date	Review Date	Endorsed by	Approved by	Link Governor
Dec 2015	Dec 2016	Resources Committee	Governing Body	Steven Lock

We at The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School are aware that governors do not have an automatic right of access to the school; but we believe it is essential to have in place an excellent working relationship between the school and the Governing Body which can be achieved by governors visiting the school by invitation and meeting with school personnel and pupils in order to have a better understanding of the context in which the school works.

We believe visits should have a clear purpose and can be used to observe policies and plans being implemented, evaluate resources and the school environment, gather information to assist in decision making, support the staff, form relationships with staff and pupils, demonstrate commitment and monitor the work of the school.

We feel that school visits by governors are a key component to being an effective school governor and have potential benefits to both governors and staff.

Governors will be able to:

- Develop relationships with the staff and pupils;
- See policies in action;
- Inform decision making;
- See what the needs of the school are;
- Recognise and celebrate success;
- Make informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the school improvement plan;
- Identify further areas for school development

Governors will not:

- Make judgements on the quality of teaching;
- Check on the progress of individual pupils;
- Pursue personal agendas

The school will benefit by:

- Understanding the role and responsibilities of governors;
- Building relationships with governors;
- Highlighting the needs of the school

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We aim to be judged at least good in all school inspections by ensuring that standards for all pupils are higher than schools of a similar size and that standards continue to improve faster than the national trend.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Governors' Handbook: For Governors in Maintained Schools, Academies and Free Schools (DfE);
- The Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools and Local Authorities in England (DfE)

Aims

- To establish good lines of communication and an excellent working relationship that will contribute greatly to the leadership of the school and its successes;
- To have in place a programme of visits that supports and strengthens the already close working relationship between governors and the school;
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

The Governing Body has:

- Nominated a governor to take responsibility for organising, with the Headteacher, a programme of planned governor visits to the school;
- Responsibility for ensuring that reports of governors' visits will be discussed at meetings of the Governing Body;
- Delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- Nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- Responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- Responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- Responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- Make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- Nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- Responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- Ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- Work with the nominated governor to plan an effective programme of visits;
- Provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- Provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

The Link Governor will:

- Work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
- Ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- Ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- Attend training related to this policy;
- Report to the Governing Body every term;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

School personnel will:

- Comply with all aspects of this policy;
- Be courteous and considerate and recognise the purpose of all visits;
- Identify an aspect of the school's work to focus on which will enable governors to develop a deeper understanding of a subject, a policy or policies, a priority of the school improvement plan, or a year group;
- Focus on areas where they have an interest or expertise;
- Be annually consulted on the success of these visits and on how they can be improved;
- Implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- Report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- Attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- Report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Pupils will:

- Be aware of and comply with this policy;
- Be courteous and considerate and recognise the purpose of all visits;
- Take part in questionnaires and surveys

Parents/carers will:

- Be aware of and comply with this policy;
- Be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- Support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Guidelines for School Visits

Governors are reminded that:

- They must be courteous and considerate at all times respecting the professional roles of the Headteacher and school personnel;
- Prior to the visit they will confirm with the Headteacher the date, time and focus of the visit, and a time for discussion after the visit;
- On the visit they must be punctual, wear a governor's badge, observe any class guidelines/rules, fulfil agreed purpose, thank the Headteacher, teachers and pupils;
- After the visit they will discuss what they observed and clarify any points about which they are uncertain and write a brief report for presentation at a future Governing Body meeting;
- they should never turn up at the school unannounced, interrupt the class/es and leave without discussing their visit

During a visit, governors should look for:

- How pupils respond to the teacher, Headteacher or any other visitor to the class;
- How friendly and relaxed are the pupils;
- How concentrated are the pupils on their work;
- Do pupils understand the lesson objectives;
- The behaviour of the pupils;
- The school and class environments;
- Teaching styles;
- Pupil groupings.

The end of visit report must:

- Be no longer than a page of A4;
- Be informative;
- Be to the point;

- Not include pupil names;
- Set out the objectives of the visit;
- Indicate if the objectives were met or not;
- Focus on what was actually learnt about the school;
- Contain statements of fact of what was observed;
- Contain information to assist decision making and evaluation;
- Must not contain judgments on the quality of teaching when observing lessons;
- Form part of the governors monitoring role;
- Be sent to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee for circulation with the agenda for a future meeting

Annual Programme of School Visits

The link governor and Headteacher will plan a programme of visits for each academic year by:

- Linking all governors with a curriculum responsibility;
- Linking all governors with a year group;
- Discussing the frequency and type of visit with each governor;
- Ensuring a reasonable distribution of visits across the year, across subjects, classes, and year groups

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- The school website;
- The Staff Handbook;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- School events;
- Meetings with school personnel;
- Communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters;
- Reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Governing Body;
- Information displays in the main school entrance

Training

All school personnel:

- Have equal chances of training, career development and promotion;
- Receive training on induction which specifically covers:
 - All aspects of this policy
 - Equal opportunities
 - Inclusion
- Receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information;
- Receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the link governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

This policy was reviewed and endorsed by the Full Governing Body of The Devonshire Hill Nursery and Primary School on Wednesday 9th December 2015.