

Woodthorpe J.I. School

Governor Visits to School

One of the important responsibilities of governors is that of monitoring progress in the school. This can be achieved through the analysis of statistical data, reports from the Head Teacher and senior staff and governors visiting the school to exchange information and build relationships.

It is very important that visits by governors are conducted in a positive and supportive way, whilst giving the governor an opportunity to ask questions and find out more about a particular aspect of school life. For these visits to be informative and useful to all parties, it is helpful for a protocol of visiting to be agreed and observed.

Governor visits are not:

- To inspect the school
- To make judgements on the quality of teaching
- Unannounced and unplanned
- An opportunity to quiz pupils
- Unfocused

Governor visits should:

- Be prearranged with all parties
- Be an opportunity to be positive about the school
- Have a clear focus
- Be a positive experience for all involved
- Provide an opportunity for exchange of information
- Provide an opportunity to build relationships with staff and pupils

Before embarking on a programme of governor visits it is important to have an overall structure within which to work.

This could include:

- Setting a general timescale for when visits take place
- What happens during a visit e.g. a tour of the school followed by a study of a particular area of focus
- How and to whom the feedback will take place, etc

Once this general structure has been agreed, individual visits can take place in a positive environment.

Before the visit:

Clarify the purpose of the visit:

- Is it linked to the School Development Plan?
- Is it linked to a particular governor role?

With the Head Teacher, plan the agenda for the day:

- Will there be a tour of the school?
- Will you join an assembly?
- Who will you spend time with?
- What will you observe – lesson, group activity, playtime, etc?
- Will there be an opportunity for speaking to pupils, either formally or informally?

Where possible, speak to any staff directly involved:

- Ensure that they are happy with the arrangements
- Check on what session you are observing, making it clear what information you would like to find out
- Ask what they expect from you during the lesson
- Agree how they will introduce you to the class. Where they would like you to sit, whether you are to join in, etc
- Be positive, interested and friendly!

During the visit:

- Arrive in plenty of time
- Don't forget to follow the school's security procedures
- Keep to our agreed timetable – but be flexible
- Look relaxed and interested
- Remember that you are not 'inspecting' – you are there to learn
- Talk to staff and pupils showing interest and enthusiasm
- Look for opportunities to give praise

After the visit:

- Thank staff for hosting the visit
- Discuss what you have observed with staff involved – use the opportunity to ask questions and clarify anything you are unclear about
- Be positive and encouraging
- Discuss your visit and observations with the Head Teacher / head of department
- Complete an agreed report form – do this while it is still fresh in your mind

Reporting back to the governing body:

- Liaise with the member of staff you have been working with regarding your report
- Before your written report is to be circulated to governors, discuss it with the Head Teacher / chair of governors first to avoid ambiguity which could raise unwarranted concerns
- Ensure that the clerk to the governors receives a copy of the report in good time for circulation to members of the governing body.

The Rights of Every Child

Woodthorpe JI School uses the U.N. Convention of the Rights of the Child to ensure that every policy supports the improvement of life chances for children.

Articles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 28, 29.

Signed:

Approved: 6 September 2018

Review: September 2021

Woodthorpe Junior & Infant School

Governor Visit Report

Visit made by:.....

Date.....

Purpose of visit:

Observations:

Issues discussed:

Follow up action:

Signed.....