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**BARROW CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**GOVERNOR VISITS AND MONITORING**

**POLICY & GUIDELINES**

This policy is to help governors and school staff to ensure that governor school visits are structured, productive and enjoyable for all concerned.

**Background**

Every Governing Body has a statutory responsibility to establish and monitor its school’s policies and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum. The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) assumes that Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and will test that assumption during a school inspection. We believe that the best and most effective way in which a Governor can get to know about their school is to visit during the school day and see it at work, talking to staff and pupils and finding out what happens in the school and the classrooms. It will also enable Governors to assess the information they are given in governing body meetings, regarding progress being made against strategic objectives in the School Development Plan. If school and classroom visits are done well, they will add immeasurably to Governors’ understanding of their school, its staff and its pupils.

**Objectives**

To ensure that all Governors meet their responsibilities to know their school through regular planned visits; to ensure that all Governors meet their responsibilities with regards to monitoring of the School Development Plan and policy implementation; to ensure that Governor visits are explicitly linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan or the terms of reference and have been agreed with the Governing Body; to ensure that Governors, as representatives of the Governing body, work with the head teacher and teachers in implementing this policy to help promote the best possible outcomes for our children, to ensure governor visits are carried out within an agreed framework, and are understood by Governors, Head Teachers and Teachers.

**Benefits to governors**

* To recognise and celebrate success
* To develop relationships with the staff
* To get to know the children
* To recognise different teaching styles
* To understand the environment in which staff work
* To see policies and schemes of work in action
* To inform decision making
* To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them

**Benefits to staff**

* To help governors understand the reality of the classroom
* To get to know the governors
* To understand better the governors’ roles and responsibilities
* To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
* To have the opportunity to share expertise
* To highlight the need for particular resources

**Guidelines**

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily. The visit is NOT about:-

• Inspection

• Making judgments about the professional expertise of the teacher

• Checking on your own children

• Pursuing a personal agenda

• Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas

In order to undertake their role with objectivity, ideally, governors will not monitor classes containing their own children.

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. It is important that governors remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Head teacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full Governing Body. As such, all governors must adhere to the highest standards of confidentiality. If any circumstances arise which concern a governor, they should refer any questions to the class teacher.

**How is a visit organised?**

Plan the visit to ensure that you are clear about its purpose e.g.:

* + Linking the visit to priorities on the Strategic Development Plan
	+ To understand the impact of the training or resources approved at Governors meetings
	+ To gain background information and get to know the school or class or year group

• To develop relationships with the staff

• To monitor a specific age group, subject area or activity

• To look at school premises to find out what resources are needed.

• To inform decision making

• To monitor how a particular policy or procedure is carried out

• To carry out Health and Safety reviews and monitor school practices.

Agree the plan with the Head teacher, member of staff and the governing body or governing body committee and arrange a convenient time to visit.

**Written feedback report**

This report helps to focus on what was actually learnt about the school and to pass this information on to the governing body. This report will form part of the governors’ monitoring role, and therefore it should contain statements of fact on what was observed or what was not observed. It should contain information to assist decision-making and evaluation by the whole governing body e.g. when reviewing the impact of a particular policy. It may be appropriate to give some recommendations. Please remember that the Head teacher is responsible for ensuring the quality of teaching, so you do not make professional judgments when observing lessons. Reports should be informative, to the point, and should not include any pupil names. The report should set out the objectives for the visit and indicate how well or otherwise they were met.

**Informal ways of getting to know the school**

Governors are actively encouraged to participate in the life of the school and are always welcome to attend school services and assemblies, Christmas and Easter productions etc. the dates of which are published regularly in the school newsletter and sent out to all governors. These visits are not included as part of this policy.

Appendix 1

Link or Monitoring Governor Visit Report

Signed: …………………………….. Chair of Governors

Signed: **……………………………………….** Head teacher

Date*: Autumn 2024* Date of review July 2026

**LINK OR MONITORING GOVERNOR REPORT**

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| --- | --- |
| **Link/Monitoring governor:** | **Staff member:** |
| **Subject area:** | **Date:** |
| **Key actions from last visit:** |
| **Purpose of this visit:** |
| **Links to school Development plan (SDP):** |
| **Notes and observations:** | **Comments and questions:** |
| **Issues arising for the governing body:** | **Actions:** |
| **Signature:** | **Date shared with governing body:** |