



Goosewell School - Using Everyone's Talents

Policy Number	G4
Policy Name	Governor Visits
Related Policies	
Statutory	Best Practice
Issue Date	March 2016
Review cycle	2 years
Staff /Governor Reviewer	JS / AM / MM
Next review Date	March 2018
Signed	
..... Head Teacher Chair of Governors

Head Teacher, Mr J Stephens, Goosewell School, Goosewell Road, Plymstock,
Plymouth, PL9 9HD

Goosewell School

Governors' Visit Policy

Goosewell School acknowledges the importance of Governors visiting school as a vital tool in ensuring that the Governing Body can:

- improve their knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses;
- monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the School Development Plans
- assist the Governing Body to fulfill its statutory duties;
- develop positive relationships between all staff and Governors, fostering a sense of partnership.

Governors do not have a statutory right of access to the school and are not inspectors. Governors should always remember that they are visiting the school as a critical friend and a source of support to staff.

In addition to other visits which individual Governors may wish to make, Governor Days enable the entire Governing Body to gain a deeper understanding of school life, to monitor School Development Plan priorities and to strengthen partnerships with children, staff and parents.

Before visiting the school, Governors should:

- inform the school of the visit and seek approval of the arrangements (including any requests to meet with individual members of staff and classroom visits);
- share with the relevant staff any questions or issues that they would like to raise;
- ensure they are familiar with health and safety procedures including what to do in the event of a fire;
- ask if there is any information that should be read prior to the visit.

After the visiting the school, Governors should:

- complete a visit report outlining the objectives and results of the visit;
- report back to the relevant Committee or Governing Body as appropriate;
- provide constructive feedback to the school as appropriate.

It is important that Governors remember the purpose of the visit is not to assess the quality of teaching provision nor to pursue issues that relate to day-to day management of the school other than as agreed with the Headteacher / SLT.

What can Governors observe on a visit?

External appearance

Are the school grounds tidy, attractive and well maintained?

What is the general state of external decoration?

Is the school entrance welcoming?

Are there adequate signs directing you to the reception?

The school in general

Is the reception area well maintained?
Is there an adequate visitor signing-in procedure?
Are there lots of examples of children's learning displayed?
What is the overall atmosphere in school?
What sort of a general welcome did you receive?
What is the general state of the internal decoration?
Are there any obvious examples of community links?
What is the general standard of pupil dress and behaviour in school?
How effective are communications, within and outside of school, with parents, governors, community and interest groups?
How are success and behaviour measured and rewarded in schools?

The classroom

Are the pupils busy and active within the classroom?
Are the pupils interested in their topic?
How is the classroom resourced?
Are there any areas where resources could be improved with extra finance?
Were you welcomed into the classroom?
Is plenty of the pupils' learning displayed?
What is the standard of the displayed learning?
What is communication like in the classroom?

On the visit day

- ✓ Arrive on time, sign in and ensure you have a visit reporting form.
- ✓ Please take informal notes if it will help you prepare feedback for other Governors.
- ✓ When visiting classrooms, always be mindful to be supportive to teaching staff and pupils.
- ✓ Please be aware that teachers are working during your visit, and lengthy discussions are not possible when teaching. Arrangements can be made to discuss the visit afterwards, which staff welcome and appreciate.
- ✓ After the visit, thank the member of staff and the children.
- ✓ Prepare your feedback.
- ✓ Please send your completed visit forms to the Clerk who will arrange for them to be circulated to other Governors.

Procedures in the event of concern

Where concerns exist, it is vital that they are discussed immediately with the Headteacher. If you are not satisfied with the response and remain concerned, your next step should be to talk to the Chair of Governors.

And finally....

Enjoy your visits to school.

Encourage other Governors to visit.

Remember that, as well as being a duty and a pleasure, it is a privilege to go into a school.

You may observe children's work, health or they may innocently reveal things about their home life – it must remain confidential.

A good reputation is very hard to gain and very easy to lose. As a Governor, you are part of the team aiming to build this good reputation. It can be extremely damaging if concerns are expressed to the community.