



A School Partnership In Rural England

Motto : ‘ **We Aspire to Inspire** ’

Our Values – using the initials of the names of the schools.

K – Kindness

U – Understanding

P – Patience

H – Honesty

L – Love

B – Boldness

Guidelines for Governor Visits

Document History

Original KULB policy reviewed and adopted by EHT for ASPIRE wide use July 2020. Noted at ASPIRE Federation GB meeting 7 July 2020

Review Bi-Annually – next review June 2022

The term ‘school’ refers to the schools in the ASPIRE Federation: Kingswood Primary, Ulcombe CE Primary, Platts Heath Primary and Leeds and Broomfield CE Primary. The term may refer to them jointly or individually.

Introduction

The ASPIRE Federation Governing Body is accountable to parents, pupils, the local authority and Central Government through Ofsted. It is responsible for everything from Health and Safety and Child Protection to the school budget, Teaching and Learning and pupil progress. Because governing bodies have a statutory responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum, governors need to know what progress is being made towards targets set out in the Federation Improvement Plan (FIP). Visiting the classroom can help to support this process.

Ofsted inspection assumes that governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This depends on governors assessing performance data presented to them by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), in the context of an understanding of what happens in the classroom.

It is also important to Ofsted that the Governing Body makes an impact on school improvement and visiting school to see it in operation, and to be aware of standards and progress are important aspects of this crucial role.

Governors are not qualified to assess standards but they need to visit lessons in order to:

- Appreciate and understand the work of the staff (teachers and support staff) and how the pupils are learning;
- Be aware of the response of pupils to their work and check that the pupils are aware of what they are learning;
- Be aware of resource issues;
- Be able to ask appropriate questions and hold sensible discussions with the professionals;
- Understand as fully as possible the meaning of the results of monitoring reported to them.

N.B. Governors are not inspectors and are not present in a lesson to make judgements about the professional expertise of the teachers. That remains a task for the head and/or other education professionals. It would be inappropriate, therefore, for governors to:

- Make judgements about the quality of teaching;
- Report on the progress of individual children;
- Pursue personal agendas;
- Monopolize teachers' time;
- Arrive with inflexible pre-conceived ideas.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be adhered to regarding classroom visits. Observations and comments should be shared with the teacher concerned, and with the Head of School/Executive Headteacher, but not with other staff or with parents. And the approach of a governor should be to ask for explanations of anything not understood, not to make assumptions.

Reports to the Governing Body should not identify individuals in a critical manner: this is not the role of a governor.

Minimum commitment

Individual governors have differing amounts of time to commit to an exercise such as classroom visits. It is important, however, that all governors should try to make visits at some time, beyond that initial general visit to the school when one is newly appointed to the governing body.

Governors are expected to:

- **undertake visits at least three times per year** with each of the ASPIRE schools being visited at least once in an academic year.
- **Provide written monitoring reports** – using the correct documentation – and share these at Full Governing Body meetings preferably during terms 2, 4 and 6.
- **Governors can have multiple allocated responsibilities and roles and therefore will need to undertake visits and provide reports for each of their allocated responsibilities.**

Ground rules

It is useful to follow some basic rules in planning visits.

School Visits – an Aide-Memoire

What is the purpose of the visit?

What has prompted my decision to visit?

Who has prompted my decision to visit?

Is the reason specific or general?

What are my/other people's expectations?

How can my visit benefit the teacher?

How shall I carry it out?

What particular areas of the school am I interested in?

What particular activities am I interested in?

What particular age-group(s) am I interested in?

Are there any questions that can be answered by observation?

What questions should I ask?

Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

To what extent did I address the reason for my visit?

Which of my questions did I answer?

To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?

What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

Have I recorded my experiences?

Did I 'report back' to the head and staff?

Have I prepared a report for the next governors' meeting?

How can I build on this for the next visit?

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit. Agree purpose of visit Discuss the context of the lesson / activity to be observed. Agree role within the lesson / activity	Turn up unannounced
During	Keep to the role agreed Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over Remember confidentiality Stick to the times and purpose agreed Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children.	Assume a different role Walk in with a clipboard Distract the pupils from their task
After	Thank the teacher and the pupils -Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience -Feedback to the governing body	Leave without acknowledgement Break rules of confidentiality

Review

The guidelines should be reviewed by the Governing Body bi-annually or as required. We would need to ask:

- o Are our visits proving useful? Have there been benefits, particularly unexpected benefits, from our visits?

Governor Monitoring Visit Report

Date of visit:	Term:
Location of visit (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingswood • Ulcombe • Leeds and Broomfield • Platts Heath 	
Monitoring Visit & Report Completed by:	
School staff met:	
Activities undertaken on this monitoring visit:	
Tick/X	FIP Priority/Area of Responsibility to be Monitored
	PRIORITY 1 (FOR THE CURRENT YEAR) TARGET:
	PRIORITY 2 (FOR THE CURRENT YEAR) TARGET:
	PRIORITY 3 (for the current year) TARGET:
	PRIORITY 4 (FOR THE CURRENT YEAR) TARGET:
	PRIORITY 5 (FOR THE CURRENT YEAR) TARGET:
	Finance / Health & Safety / SEND / Child Protection and Safeguarding / SIAMS / Training / Other (delete or list as appropriate)

Objective/purpose of visit: <i>(highlight specific CIP target/milestone to be monitored)</i>
Key questions & discussion: <i>(send the questions to the school before the meeting if possible)</i>
Observations and comments: <i>(what you saw; what you learned; how long the visit lasted)</i>

Any further questions/concerns for clarification & responses given:

Summary of Visit:

Methods of Monitoring (tick all relevant)

Tick/X	Method	Tick/X	Method
	Met with HoS / EHT		Classroom visit
	Met with teaching staff / Support staff		Viewed pupils work
	Met with pupils		Desktop document review
	Met with subject team / leader		Pupil Progress Meeting attended
	Other (<i>list</i>):		
	Documents/data analysed (<i>list, for example, policies, LA reports, staff meeting notes</i>):		