Governor Visits Policy

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Section 1 - Statement of intent
1.1. Through this policy, The Pioneer Learning Trust aims to embed effective procedures concerning local governing body monitoring visits across the Trust. Each governor is expected to make at least one visit during the academic year, demonstrating the governing body’s role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice.

1.2. Governor visits inform understanding of the school’s practices and procedures, allow opportunities to speak to pupils and teachers, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the School Improvement Plan in action.

1.3. For staff, governor visits allow staff the chance to find out more about governors, provide an opportunity to draw attention to issues or questions they wish to raise, and provide an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss current practice.

1.4. Governors must:
- Remember to respect school staff and pupils.
- Support the headteacher/head of school and school leaders.
- Acknowledge that they represent the full governing board.

1.5. By following the agreed principles and procedures, governor visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved and will significantly contribute towards school improvement.

Section 2 - Legal framework
2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
- The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013
Section 3 - Roles and responsibilities

3.1. Governors are responsible for:
   - Meeting their target of one visit per academic year.
   - Understanding the needs of staff members through discussions with at least one staff member per academic year.
   - Reporting their observations to the full governing board during a full governing board meeting.

3.2. The headteacher/head of school is responsible for:
   - Facilitating governor visits.
   - Discussing completed visits with governors, prior to a report being made to the full governing board.

3.3. A number of governors are linked to particular subjects or areas of the school’s provision. These links are as follows (each school to complete as appropriate):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject/area of school provision</th>
<th>Name of governor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SEND</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Quality of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing the Gap – Pupil Premium</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Behaviour and Attitudes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership and Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Quality of Early Years Provision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 4 - Annual schedule

4.1. The annual schedule of visits is as follows (each school to complete as appropriate):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Visiting governors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn half-term 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn half-term 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring half-term 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring half-term 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer half-term 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer half-term 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 5 - Etiquette

5.1. Governor visits are not a form of inspection, and governors will not make judgements concerning teaching or other areas of school provision in any official capacity.

5.2. Governors will avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.

5.3. Governors will not pursue personal agendas during visits.

5.4. Governors will remain flexible and understand that the school must make pupils’ education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.

5.5. Governors will never visit the school unannounced.

5.6. Visits are not an opportunity for governors to check on individual children or monopolise the time of staff.

Section 6 - Preparing for a visit

6.1. Governors will arrange visits at least one week prior to the date of the proposed visit.

6.2. Before a visit, governors will:
   • Agree the purpose of the visit.
   • Discuss the context of the activities to be observed.
   • Agree their role within the activities.

Section 7 - During a visit

7.1. During a visit, governors will:
   • Adhere to their agreed role.
   • Where visiting activities involve lesson observations, not ask questions, interrupt the teacher or distract pupils during the lesson.
   • Adhere to confidentiality agreements.
   • Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.
   • Be sensitive to the needs of the pupils and the wider school community.

7.2. During a visit, governors will not assume a role different to that which has been agreed.

Section 8 - After a visit

After a visit, governors will:
   • Thank the staff, and pupils where appropriate, involved in the visiting activities.
   • Discuss the visit with the staff involved in the visiting activity at their convenience.
   • Provide feedback regarding the visit to the full governing board.

After a visit, governors will not:
   • Leave without acknowledging staff or pupils involved in the visiting activity.
   • Break confidentiality agreements.

Section 9 - Providing feedback

9.1. A time will be agreed between the governor and staff, at the staff members convenience, to discuss what was observed during the visit.

9.2. During the discussion, governors will adhere to the following framework:
   • Ask staff for their views on what happened during the visit
   • Present your observations
   • Provide positive feedback
   • Raise any issues
   • Ask further questions
   • Thank staff for the opportunity
9.3. By the end of the discussion, both the governor and staff members will be clear as to what information will be shared with the headteacher/head of school and full governing board.

9.4. The Governor Visit Proforma will be completed as soon as possible after the visit.

9.5. The headteacher/head of school and governor will discuss the observation prior to the distribution of the pro-forma.
   - 9.6. A copy of the completed proforma will be provided to:
     - The headteacher/head of school
     - The subject leader
     - The teacher concerned
     - The clerk to governors

9.6. A copy of the report should be circulated at the next appropriate committee or governing board meeting.

Section 10 - Monitoring and review

10.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board for consideration by local governing bodies.

10.2. When reviewing the success of the policy, the headteacher/head of school and chair of the governing board will take the following into consideration:
   - Has every governor conducted at least one visit during the academic year?
   - Has every governor made links with their allocated subject or area of provision?
   - Has every governor met with the staff members they are linked to?
   - Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
   - What worked well?
   - What did not work well?
   - Have there been any unexpected benefits?
   - How can practice be improved?

10.3. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all governors and staff members.

10.4. All governors are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.