



Inspiring Educational Excellence for Everyone

ARDEN *forest*
C of E Multi Academy Trust

Governor Visits to School Policy

Review: March 2023

Next Review: March 2025

Governor Visits to School Policy

1 Aims

- 1.1 The Arden Forest C of E MAT Board welcomes the local governing body's (LGB) active involvement in school life. Governors are encouraged to visit their school during the working day to:
- Help inform the whole LGB on its fulfilment of its statutory role;
 - meet with the headteacher, senior staff, education consultants or LIOs (Learning Improvement Officers from the Local Authority);
 - improve governor knowledge of the ethos of the school and awareness of the work in the curriculum;
 - observe school policies in action;
 - carry out specific responsibilities on behalf of the LGB, e.g. health and safety checks;
 - see and hear classroom practice;
 - develop governor links with staff, new staff, pupils and parents/carers;
 - attend school functions;
 - assist with understanding the effectiveness of the school's improvement plan (SIP);
 - have an enhanced level of understanding of an aspect of the school's work so that the LGB as a whole has a deeper context for its decision-making and monitoring roles;
 - assist the headteacher in staff selection, job descriptions, person specifications and interviews;
 - highlight the needs for particular resources.
- 1.2 The role of a governor on a school visit does not include making a qualitative judgement about a professional matter, i.e. the quality of teaching in individual lessons. It is not the governors' job to *observe* lessons in the sense of evaluating them.

2 Timetable of visits

- 2.1 We hope that all governors will be able to visit the school during the working day at least once a year.
- 2.2 Schools will offer all new governors an introductory visit as soon as possible after their appointment.
- 2.3 We recognise that pre-planning is essential if the governor's visit is to be of worth, and that professional courtesies are to be observed. Members of the local governing body agree that visits will always be discussed and arranged in advance through the Head. Staff will always be notified of the purpose of the visit in advance.

3 Visits to classrooms

- 3.1 The school welcomes governors' presence in lessons. The school will prepare for such visits by providing visitors with information about the purpose of the lesson and suggestions for the role a governor might play, e.g. a sample list of questions that pupils might be asked during their independent work.
- 3.2 A visiting governor will not take notes during a classroom visit, and will be guided by the teacher in appropriate participation.
- 3.3 Any report made to the LGB following classroom visits, will have been discussed with the Head and member(s) of staff before hand. The report will be written by the visiting governor using the 'Governor Visit Reports Guidance' document. The LGB will ensure that no teacher or other member of staff will be named through the report, and that no qualitative judgement about a professional matter, i.e. the quality of teaching in individual lessons, will be made.
- 3.4 The LGB will ensure that any information about any individually named pupil's attainment or progress should not form part of the visit or be communicated in any subsequent report.
- 3.5 Governors recognise that no comment about the lesson, its content or the pupils should be made within the hearing of any pupil.

- 3.6 Governor visits to classrooms containing pupils from their own families should be avoided where possible, although in some contexts this may be unavoidable.

4 Activities away from classrooms

- 4.1 Individual governors are encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of the work of the school through links to specific subjects/key stages. Subject leaders are given time within their work plans to discuss subject policies, strengths and weaknesses within the subjects including overall standards, and action plans for school improvement. Governors, for their part, are encouraged to report the main points to the LGB or appropriate committee where relevant.
- 4.2 Governors are encouraged to attend all events at which parents/carers are present. They should wear an identification badge and encourage parents and carers to discuss the school. Any feedback should be discussed with the Head and reported to the LGB in such a way that no parent or carer can be identified.
- 4.3 Governors are encouraged to attend and play a full part in staff professional development days. Details of the following term's training activities will be passed to the clerk at the end of previous term. Governors planning to attend should inform the headteacher beforehand.

5 Policy Monitoring and Review

- 5.1 This policy will be discussed with staff and reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if necessary.