

## Plymouth Nursery Schools Federation:

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**Ham Drive Nursery School and  
Day Care**



### **GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY**

#### **Rationale**

Governors are required to monitor and evaluate the progress that the nursery is making towards the priorities set out in the School Improvement Plan. Much of this monitoring will be done through the Headteacher and other members of staff reporting to the Governing Body. However, it is also good practice for Governors to visit the school during the school day to see at first hand the impact of their policies and plans on the school's performance. A carefully planned visit by a Governor can generate evidence that will inform decision-making by the whole Governing Body. Governors have a duty to oversee the direction and policies of the Nursery School and Day Care, to monitor its standards and be held to account for its conduct and performance. Visiting the Nursery School and the Day Care is the best way to learn how they function so that the governing body's first-hand knowledge can be increased, informing its strategic decision making.

Governors will observe policies and plans being implemented on a day-to-day basis, and their findings should help the whole Governing Body and its Committees make well-informed judgements about the progress being made. This process will enable the Governing Body to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of children and staff and identify further areas for development. Their visits should plan visits to cover a wide range of activities and each visit should be agreed and have a clear purpose.

#### **The Purpose of Governor Visits is to:**

- Recognise and celebrate success.
- Develop relationships with the staff.
- Get to know the children's activities and purpose.
- Understand the environment in which the staff work.
- Understand the Early Years Foundation Stage and see it working in action.
- Monitor policies in action.
- Inform decision making.
- Find out more about resource needs.
- Understand the range of the activities and purpose.

#### **For staff to:**

- Understand better the roles and responsibilities of governors.
- Get to know governors.

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- Share knowledge about learning and teaching to help governors understand.
- Highlight the need for particular resources.

### **Governor visits are not about:**

- Making judgements about professional expertise of the staff.
- Pursuing a personal agenda.
- Monopolising the staff time.
- Arriving with preconceived ideas.

### **Planning Governor Visits**

Governors are encouraged to meet with the Headteacher first if possible and are encouraged to visit at least once during the term.

### **Possible Activities/Focus for a Governor Visit**

- Attendance at planning meetings.
- Attend Nursery School sessions.
- Attend training sessions for staff and parents.
- Focus on a key aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage e.g., Positive relationships, Outside Learning Activities, Learning and Teaching, or the Learning Environment.
- Observe a small group session.
- Find out how the children's achievements are recorded.
- Visit or support a nursery performance or event.
- The condition and maintenance of the premises.

### **Visit Guidelines**

#### **Before the visit:**

- Arrange the date, time and duration of visit.
- Discuss the purpose.

#### **During the visit:**

- Get involved with the children.
- When appropriate, ask questions; be courteous not critical.
- Keep an open mind, be flexible and go with the flow.
- Follow the all security procedures carefully.
- Avoid getting drawn in to any discussion on personal or general staff grievances.
- Avoid distracting staff from their primary role by asking too many questions.
- Remember it is a visit, not an inspection.
- When visiting during the day, governors should be aware of safeguarding and confidentiality issues in their interactions with staff and children and parents.
- During the visit Governors should be aware of policies and procedures and observe all rules/guidelines.

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### **After the visit:**

- Discuss what you have observed with the teacher or key worker. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about.
- Thank the staff for supporting you in your role as a governor. Be open, honest and positive.
- Discuss your observations with the Headteacher.
- Agree with the Head when you will report on your visit to the governing body.
- Write a very short summary of your visit on the Governor Visit Form (this is easier if the visit had a focus). A copy of the report to be given to the Headteacher and any staff involved for them to check accuracy and sign.
- Share your report at the next governing body meeting.

### **Protocols for Governor Observations.**

#### **The purposes of governors' visits are to:**

- Get to know the children and celebrate their successes develop good relationships between governors and staff.
- Recognise and appreciate the different ways children are learning in the nursery.
- Observe the working environment of the nursery e.g. indoors /outside.
- Observe the use of (and need for) the practical resources.
- Ensure better informed decision-making at governor meetings.

#### **What it's not about:**

- Making judgements about the quality of teaching.
- Pursuing personal agendas.
- Monopolising the teacher's time.
- Arriving with pre-conceived ideas.

#### **Please observe the following:**

- Visits to be arranged with the nursery in advance.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained.
- Ensure that there is an opportunity for discussion with link staff / headteacher after the visit.
- Ensure that all nursery guidelines I rules are followed.
- Agree the level of feedback to the governing body.

### **Safeguarding / Health and Safety.**

Finally, if you have any concerns /comments about Safeguarding and/or Health and Safety, please report these to the Head (or a senior member of staff) **immediately**.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date: 19.4.18

Policy Review cycle: Three Yearly. Next review April 21.