



Bramley Vale Primary School - Policy for Governors' Visits

We support the school's vision that at Bramley Vale, Every Child matters Every Day. We uphold our school values and its commitment to the CRAVE curriculum so that our children are inspired to learn, make progress, and achieve to the very best of their potential.

Every visit will be driven by our mission statement.

The purpose of this policy

Governing bodies have a statutory responsibility to promote high standards at their school, and must monitor and evaluate its effectiveness in this respect. Through visiting our school, governors can get to know it better. The governing body is a corporate body and every governor will visit the school as a representative member of that body, not as an individual. An effective partnership between governors and staff, based on mutual understanding, benefits the whole school community. This policy will provide an agreed framework within which governors will plan and carry out their school visits.

The organisation of the governor visits at Bramley Vale Primary School

This policy has been produced by the Governing Body in consultation with senior leadership team in the school.

Visit programme

The programme of visits will be organised as follows. At the beginning of each school year the governors will set out a visiting programme that focusses on the current school priorities. These might be areas identified, for example, through relevant feedback from OFSTED inspections and/or key areas identified by the school and its governing body.

Governor visits may be conducted by pairs of governors depending on the identified areas.

- The expectation will be for at least one visit to take place per term to cover each of the priorities. We would not expect each visit to last more than half a day. The content of each visit will depend on that issue being covered but we would expect governors to meet with key staff for that area of work and spend some time in class to see how the area being addressed is covered in practice. It is important that the visits take place without disrupting the work of the school.
- When the programme of visits is decided, governors will be allocated to each of the priorities, and would, normally, remain covering that area for the whole of the school year.



- Usually, governors will cover the priorities in pairs (to help reduce workload and to support each other). New governors will be included in the visit programme as soon as they join.

Content of visits

- The programme of visits will be shared with staff as soon as it has been agreed with the governors.
- A list of suggested questions should be agreed in advance of the visits to allow staff to prepare. (See Appendix 1)
- On some of the priorities it will be important for governors to seek the views of the pupils. This will be done in consultation with staff.
- If, as part of the visit, governors see something that concerns them, they should report the matter to the headteacher as soon as possible.
- There is nothing to stop parent governors visiting their child's class, but this should be avoided, if possible, to ensure no conflict of interest
- All governors should remember the need for confidentiality e.g. if a governor has looked at work samples.

Staff involvement

- This policy and any linked guidance will be made available to assist staff in understanding why governors visit.

Reporting

- Governors can give immediate feedback on the day if appropriate.
- Governors will use the standard visit reporting form to report back to other governors. (Appendix 1)
- The final reports will be circulated to governors by the clerk to the governing body, once they have been finalised. Opportunities to ask questions will be made available at the following full Governing Body meeting.
- Reports will be published as an addendum to the Full Governing Body meeting minutes.

Procedure for carrying out visits at Bramley Vale Primary School

Our governor visits will be organised as follows:

Before the visit

- Agree a mutually convenient time to visit with the relevant staff member. Avoid stressful or busy periods in the school calendar.



- Clarify the purpose of the visit and agree this with the Headteacher and relevant staff. Agree together, how best to approach the identified focus to make effective use of everyone's time.
- Agree how you will be introduced to the children and young people and the extent to which you will be involved in any activity or lesson.
- Agree a convenient time to discuss your observations with the class or subject teacher. This will also be your opportunity to clarify any issues about which you are unclear.
- Prepare for your visit by reading any relevant documents.
- Ensure that you are aware of the core principles underlying the governors' visits and this policy and abide by them.

During the visit

- **Remember this is a visit, not an inspection.** Governors are visiting to learn more about the school and to gather information to inform decision making by the governing body. It is not the governors' role to judge the quality of the teaching. Monitoring staff performance and the quality of teaching and learning is the job of the Headteacher.
- Remember that you are an invited guest.
- Be aware of, and adhere to, the school's Child Protection policies and procedures.
- Be punctual, sign in and wear a name badge.
- Try hard not to disrupt the normal working of the school by monopolising the teacher's time.
- Smile and listen. Try to relax and enjoy yourself.
- Think carefully about what you say and do. Remember that a visit by a governor can be stressful for staff. Be courteous, tactful, positive and interested. Avoid criticism e.g. Never make a comment on the teacher's conduct during the lesson or on individual pupils.
- Try not to draw too much attention to yourself. Avoid overtly making notes as this can be disconcerting. Instead, write down your thoughts as soon as possible after the visit as is practical.
- Remember that you are representing the governing body. Governors should be prepared to explain policies but should avoid giving personal opinions which could be misinterpreted as the views of the governing body.
- Avoid making promises on behalf of the governing body.
- Only go into the staffroom if you are invited to do so.
- Observe previously agreed levels of confidentiality.
- Remember to thank the staff for supporting you in your role as governor.

After the visit

- If you have seen something that worries you, you should normally discuss this first with the teacher or, if more appropriate, the headteacher.



- Discuss your visit with the Headteacher and agree a draft of any written report with the Headteacher, and with staff, as appropriate. This may be carried out in person or by e-mail. Be prepared to take the comments of others on board before you circulate your report to governors and the clerk.
- Send a message to thank the relevant staff. Be open and honest; recognise and celebrate achievement.
- Reflect upon your visit. Your views will inform the review of the policy and procedures.

Reporting on your visit

Following a visit, governors will share their impressions with the governing body using the standard report form. Give staff the opportunity to comment on the governor visit (as above). Copies of approved and finalised written reports should be given to the Headteacher and Chairman and subsequently made available to governors for discussion as an agenda item in the next meeting. Reports will be kept with minutes to governor meetings.

Evaluating the visit

Following a visit, governors may reflect on the following questions:

- How did the visit go?
- Were you clear about your objectives?
- What, if anything would you do differently next time?
- Are there further areas you would like to explore?
- How has the visit helped you, the School and/or the governing body? E.g. in collecting monitoring evidence, in greater understanding of a particular aspect.

Monitoring, evaluation and review of this policy

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at full Governing Body meetings. This policy will be reviewed after its first year of operation and thereafter every three years. The views of the staff will be sought. The governing body will consider if governor visits are contributing to the information that the governing body has about progress towards meeting priorities and targets identified in the School Development Plan.

This policy was approved by the governing body of Bramley Vale Primary School on 12.03.2024

This policy will be reviewed on _____

Signed _____ (Chairman) Date _____

Signed _____ (Headteacher) Date _____



Appendix 1

DATE

School Governor Visit Record - **SUBJECT**

Governing Body Mission Statement

We support the school's vision that at Bramley Vale, Every Child matters Every Day. We uphold our school values and its commitment to the CRAVE curriculum so that our children are inspired to learn, make progress and achieve to the very best of their potential.

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Name/s of Governor:

Date of Visit:

Purpose of Visit:

Links with the School Improvement Plan:

Governor Questions/Comments:

Questions:

Response:

Key points arising from the visit.

Next steps/Focus for next visit

Date report sent to headteacher: