



"To make children's first experience of school secure, happy, positive and fun."

HillsideNursery School

Guidance to Governors on visiting the Nursery as a Governor

Why should Governors visit?

- Mainly to get to know the Nursery – what is learnt from visiting the nursery would add to what the Governing Body as a whole know about the Nursery;
- To demonstrate to staff that responsibilities are taken seriously and Governors are interested in what they do;

First Principle

Visits should relate to responsibilities as Governors. When visits are used to gain information and impressions help in the tasks as Governors, it should be done as “*observers*” and not as “*inspectors*”. Governors should avoid making judgements about what they see/find, but should instead ask questions of the head teacher for clarification or to set matters in context.

Second Principle

Governors visiting the Nursery do so in connection with their responsibilities as Governors and the visit is on behalf of, or has been sanctioned by, the Governing Body.

Visits are planned and conducted so as to respect the operational needs of the Nursery and the courtesies of the Governor/staff relationship; they work well and everyone benefits.

Framework for Visiting

Preparation

- Agreement should be reached about a programme of visits for the year – where possible linked to priorities identified by the school and to match the needs of individual Governors;
- A visit ought to have clear objectives;

- Once the visit's objectives have been agreed, the details of the programme should be agreed with the head teacher;
- The programme should have a slot at the end of the visit with the head teacher so that immediate impressions can be recounted, points clarified or pursued, and the visit set within a whole school context. It may help establish confidence and trust if the programme includes a meeting with staff concerned with the visit;
- Once a visit has been fixed, it should not be called off unless it is absolutely unavoidable;

During the visit

- On arrival sign in at the office and discuss or collect the programme form the head teacher;
- Some visits may entail observations in main nursery during continuous provision, others may involve taking part in group or snack time in which case it is important that Governors arrive promptly in order to limit disruption to the children's routine;
- The relationship that nursery staff have with the children have developed over a period of time and Governors should please take care to ensure that their presence does not disrupt it;

Developing the Policy

- Nursery staff have varied reactions to being visited by Governors. Try to put yourself in their place and understand their feelings/anxieties. When a visit has been arranged please ensure that you acknowledge openly what a valuable gesture this is;
- It is important that the framework/policy has been discussed and agreed with staff and the whole Governing Body;
- New Governors should be made aware of the policy as part of their induction.