

**PEOPLE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)**

**DEVON HOSPITALS SHORT STAY SCHOOL**

**SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT ON  
MANAGERS VISITING THE SCHOOL**

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**Rationale**

The involvement of managers in shaping the strategic direction and everyday running of the school is not only valued but essential in providing support and challenge.

Personal observations made on school visits are a major source of information. The experience involves teamwork, directed towards a common goal, founded upon good relationships with the professionals. There must be trust.

Visiting increases understanding and assists informed judgement; it can improve the quality of decision making.

**Purpose**

All visits need a clear purpose which forms a part of a policy agreed by the management committee, the Head teacher and teachers. Purposes may include:

- knowing more about the work and organisation of the school
- keeping up to date with developments
- offering visible support
- implementation of the School Development Plan or reviewing its success

Visiting is also a function of the management committee as a whole. All managers should decide on the structure and pattern of visiting by individual members.

It is crucially important to make clear in advance the status of a visit to school, when undertaken on behalf of the management committee.

**Managers are not inspectors or advisers; it is not their job to assess the professional competence of individual teachers.**

## **Guidelines**

Good visiting practice will:

- include clear objectives and intentions which, wherever possible, should be shared and agreed beforehand with the Head teacher
  - take into account that a visitor's presence may affect proceedings
  - give visitors a chance to get a feel for the school.
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## **Checklist for Visiting by Managers**

The following checklist may be useful.

### **For Management Committees**

#### **Do:**

- have an agreed policy (written or verbal) and a system for reporting back
- plan a timetable of visits so that every manager has the opportunity to visit during the year
- agree an explicit purpose and plan for each visit which has been communicated to all parties
- consider different styles of visit, for example paired visits where an experienced Manager partners a less experienced one

### **For individual Managers**

#### **Do:**

- negotiate a mutually convenient time with the Head teacher, teachers etc to ensure that the visit is expected
- thank the teacher, Head teacher, etc at the end of the visit
- give praise where it is due
- make a point of listening rather than talking
- dress appropriately and follow the normal school rules
- include a 'debriefing' session with the relevant members of staff
- discuss any concerns the visit may raise with the Head teacher
- be polite, tactful and sensitive
- avoid stressful periods such as during or just before an Ofsted inspection, unless specifically requested to attend
- visit at different times of the day, term, year
- try to attend any special occasions, especially if regular daytime visits are difficult
- try to attend when you have been specifically invited

- go in as a helper where appropriate and possible
- plan your visit so that you know your focus – it could be as part of the School Development Plan or form part of the SEF.
- remember the confidentiality issues surrounding all children
- Fill in a visit form for managers so that it is a record of your visit

**Please Don't**

- go in like an inspector
- sit at the back, writing notes
- go in unannounced
- interfere with the organisation of the class
- try to talk to the teacher while they are teaching - wait until the end of the session
- criticise the performance of a teacher, even in a constructive manner, during your visit
- make promises to staff on behalf of the management committee