



TRUSTEE VISITS POLICY

APPENDIX A = Feedback Proforma

Formulation date:	May 2017	Reviewing Committee	Pastoral and Inclusion
Approved on:	June 2017	Next Review date:	June 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

- Visiting the school is an important part of the work of a Trustee. To be at their most effective and supportive, Trustees should get to know the school. This will help them to become involved in the life of the school and understand the many issues that affect it.
- Trustee visits can have a variety of purposes – for example as part of the induction arrangements for new Trustees, to support Trustees who may have an interest in or responsibility for a particular curriculum area or to aid the work of a particular committee of which the Trustee is a member.
- Visiting the school and talking with both students and staff will help them to get an understanding of the workings of the school, and learn first hand about the challenges and opportunities involved.
- It is important to develop a culture of trust and understanding in the school that supports Trustee visits. Both Trustees and school staff must recognise that visits have the potential to be stressful experiences for all concerned.
- Clarity about the purpose and focus of visits will help the development of positive, relationships based on mutual trust and understanding.
- Ultimately, a real sense of understanding and awareness of the school will improve the quality of decision-making by the governing body.

2. AIMS OF VISITS BY TRUSTEES TO THE SCHOOL

- To increase awareness, and understanding of the work that goes on in the school.
- To develop positive and supportive relationships with both students and staff at the school.
- To learn more about their own roles as school Trustees and give a sense of reality and meaning to their work in the governing body and committee meetings.
- To see first hand:
 - The ways in which Trustees' policies impact on and influence the working life of the school
 - Opportunities for either revising existing policies or developing fresh areas of policy development
 - To monitor and evaluate the impact of the school development plans, other plans and the policies of the governing body.
 - To share the visit experiences with the senior team.
 - To support the development of Trustees who may have particular responsibilities.

3. OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED FROM TRUSTEE VISITS

- Trustees have the knowledge and understanding to make a valuable contribution to discussions concerning policy issues.
- Trustees are known by and have positive relationships with students and school staff.
- Trustees are able to act as a channel of communication between staff and the governing body.
- Trustees develop an understanding about current and foreseeable issues affecting students and staff and how they can help these issues to be addressed.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF TRUSTEES

- Each Trustee should try to visit the school at least once per year.
- Each new Trustee should undertake a visit during the first six months of her/his tenure as a Trustee.
- Visits should be arranged using agreed procedure and should not be cancelled except in exceptional circumstances.
- Feedback from visits will normally be via the feedback proforma shared at meetings of the governing body or appropriate committees.
- A Trustee will usually thank staff for hosting the visit.
- Where a Trustee has a cause of concern arising from the visit she/he will raise this with:
 - The Headteacher if the concern relates to the implementations of a policy.
 - The Chair of Trustees if it is a matter that relates to the nature of a policy.
 - The DSL if a safeguarding concern.
- Trustees will adhere to agreed procedure for Trustee Visits.

5. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Policy will be formally reviewed within four years from the date on which it is adopted.

6. AGREED PROCEDURE FOR TRUSTEE VISITS

a. PLANNING THE VISIT

Visits should have a pre-agreed and clear purpose – for example as part of a Trustee Induction Programme, linked to the School Development Plan, or geared to the monitoring and evaluation of a specific policy.

Some visits have a particular focus e.g. Pupil Premium.

Trustees' committees and working parties should consider visits when reviewing policies and deciding how information will be gathered to aid decision making.

The purpose of the visit should clearly be set out in writing in advance of the visit. This will normally be done by the SLT with responsibility for Trustee visits stated clearly at the top of visit programmes.

The method through which the Trustee reports back to the school should also be agreed in advance of the visit, and will generally be using the feedback proforma (See Appendix A).

b. BEFORE THE VISIT

- Be sure that both the Trustee and school staff are aware of the purpose and/or focus of the visit.
- The Trustee should be supplied with any relevant paperwork before the visit, including a timetable/programme.
- The SLT with responsibilities for co-ordinating Trustee visits should support, organise and communicate:
 - What they expect from the Trustee during the visit
 - How and when the Trustee wishes to be introduced
 - The role of the Trustee in the classroom/around the school
- The Trustee should make a simple list of the questions that she/he may wish to ask of students or staff and discuss these with the SLT with responsibility for Trustee visits before the date of the visit.
- The Trustee should give as much notice as possible if the visit has to be cancelled for exceptional reasons.

c. DURING THE VISIT

- The Trustee should make sure that she/he arrives on time.
- The school's security procedures must be complied with at all times.
- The Trustee should always remember to be polite, positive, purposeful, friendly and supportive.
- The Trustee must remember that the visit should never take the form of an inspection.
- The purpose of the visit should be adhered to.
- The Trustee should avoid getting drawn into any discussion on personal or general grievance issues.
- The Trustee should look relaxed, get involved and generally blend in – she/he should remember that note taking is disconcerting for everyone.
- The Trustee should talk to both staff and students, keep an open mind and actively look for opportunities to praise.

d. AFTER THE VISIT

The Trustee should:

- Thank staff and students for hosting the visit
- Make notes as soon as possible whilst the visit is fresh in the mind
- Ask for explanations on anything on which she/he is unsure
- Feedback her/his observations to the staff concerned and the nominated member of ASLT using the feedback proforma
- If required, feedback observations to the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees
- Make sure that a letter of thanks is sent to the students and staff who have hosted the visit
- Take the time to reflect on what she/he has learned and how this links in with the priorities of the school
- Share her/his experience with fellow Trustees at the next available meeting of the governing body (whole or committee). This may be verbal only.

APPENDIX A



Trustees' Monitoring Visit Report

Expand boxes as appropriate

Name	
Date of Visit	
Focus of Visit	
Purpose of Visit	
Links with development plan	
Activities	

Feedback

Comments and Recommendations for consideration

Name _____
(Trustee)