



The Dartmoor Federation comprises:

- Boasley Cross Primary School
- Bridestowe Primary School
- Exbourne Church of England Primary School
- Highampton Community Primary School
- Lydford Primary School
- Northlew & Ashbury Parochial Church of England Primary
- Okehampton College



Lydford Primary



Okehampton College

## Governor Visits Policy

This policy was adopted by The Dartmoor Federation Governing Board on

20<sup>th</sup> February 2012

and reviewed by The Dartmoor Federation Governing Board on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017

### Introduction

The Dartmoor Federation recognises that personal observations made on school visits are a major source of information and as such welcomes visits by Governors. The Federation also recognises that visits by Governors form a vital part of their role as well as enabling them to develop good business relationships with teaching and support staff. This policy provides the framework against which Governor visits are made.

### Policy

Governors should try to visit all schools within the Federation and the departments or areas which are in line with their agreed Governor responsibilities. A rolling programme of visits is suggested, the ideal being all schools to be visited by each Governor once per year.

Visits should be made on a pre-arranged basis at a time to suit both the Governor and the areas being visited.

Both Governor and staff should have a clear understanding of the purpose and likely duration of the visit.

School staff will make available such information, including school records as may be relevant to the Governor visit. If school staff believe that the request for information is not appropriate the matter is to be referred to the Federation Strategic Executive Group whose decision is final.

Governors are not inspectors or advisers and the professional competency of teachers and support staff is not a matter which forms any part of a visit or post visit feedback.

Governors are encouraged to provide feedback and comment at the end of a visit, such being covered in a private meeting with the staff concerned.

Governors are required to provide the Full Governing Board with a short report, which may be written or verbal, at the Full Governing Board Meeting following their visit.

Governors will follow the guidelines which are attached to this policy and are issued to Governors as part of their Induction Pack.

Should a Governor see or hear anything that raises their concern, that a child is being abused, whether in or out of school, they should follow the procedures laid out in the Safeguarding, Managing Allegations or other related policies. Pass it on, don't take it on!

This policy is designed to cover formal visits by Governors, individually or as a group. It is not intended to cover informal visits undertaken as part of the ongoing Governor role or any made in connection with students for whom the Governor may be parent or guardian.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GOVERNOR VISITS**

Governor visits to the Federation's schools and in particular the department or area for which you have Governor responsibility should form part of your commitment as a Governor. You should endeavour to complete such a visit to all schools at least once a year and provide the Full Governing Board meeting following your visit with a verbal or written report. Follow the guidelines set out below.

### **Do:**

- arrange a mutually convenient time with the member of staff concerned, usually this will be the teacher responsible for the area or department to be visited
- make clear the purpose of your visit
- take into account that your presence may affect proceedings
- thank the staff concerned at the end of your visit
- give praise where it is due and always give feedback at the end of the visit in private
- make a point of listening rather than talking
- dress appropriately and follow the normal school rules – for example, don't chew gum, make sure your mobile phone is switched off
- discuss any concerns with the Federation Strategic Executive Group
- be polite, tactful and sensitive
- avoid stressful periods such as during or just after an Ofsted inspection, the first and last weeks of term, 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

### **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 the teacher or support staff, even in a constructive manner – this is not your role
- make promises to staff on behalf of the Governing Board
- remember, don't take it on, pass it on!