

Trust Board Visits to School

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Aims:

This document aims to give guidelines to Trustees and Staff on the purpose and process of school visits. Trust Boards are responsible for promoting effective learning within the school. To this end, Trustees are linked to the main areas of the curriculum, and through visits and discussions between the Trustees and subject leaders, the Trust Board will be better informed about these areas of the curriculum. Trustees should use their visits to collect information to report back to the Trust Board on progress toward key priorities or initiatives in the Academy Improvement Plan.

1. Planned and focused Trustee visits contribute significantly to more informed decision-making by the Trust Board.
2. Through our program of individual link visits, we aim to improve Trustee knowledge of the ethos of the school and awareness of the work on the curriculum.
3. Assist the whole Trust Board to fulfill its statutory role.
4. Improve Trustee understanding of the needs of the school and the priorities for the future Academy Improvement Plan.
5. Monitor and evaluate the current Academy Improvement Plan especially in relation to curricular issues.
6. Improve Trustee links with staff, pupils and parents.
7. Help Trustees to be better able to support the school community.
8. To highlight the needs for particular resources.
9. If possible, all Trustees to visit at least once a year during the working day.
10. All new Trustees are offered an introductory visit soon after their appointment to the Trust Board as part of their induction programme.
11. Trustees are welcome to informally visit the school (with prior notice) taking into account the needs of all concerned and the appropriate timing of visits e.g. assemblies.
12. Specific invitations are sent for some occasions.
13. Visits to talk with the head or subject leaders can also be made by appointment.
14. Trustees receive copies of parent newsletters, which contain notice of events and are welcome to attend these.

Types of Trustee Visits:**Monitoring Visit:**

15. Visits will focus on aspects of the Academy Improvement Plan, and on carrying out the work of the Trust Board e.g.; SEN, Health and Safety, Literacy link roles.
16. The visits could have particular emphasis on one-year group, or on one major aspect of delivery of the curriculum.

Formal Visits:

17. To consider the plans for delivering a subject across the whole school especially in terms of linkage to the academy improvement plan and targets.
18. To see how a subject is monitored and managed within the school.
19. To discuss with staff and students' particular subject areas.
20. To gain knowledge of how a subject is taught.

Informal Visits:

21. To become more familiar with daily school life.
22. To help in the classroom.
23. To join in and be part of the school community.
24. Each of the above types of visit is equally valid and useful for Trustees and the school. The aim is a mix of both types of visit with as many Trustees as possible participating in visits.
25. Trustees should familiarise themselves with supporting documents and in particular the Academy Improvement Plan and the current version of the School Self-Evaluation document.
26. It is the responsibility of the Trustee to keep the Headteacher informed of proposed visits.
27. Participation in Trustee visits is an important and formal part of the subject leader's role and should be given appropriate priority by teaching staff.
28. As a matter of course, any information Trustees are planning to feed back to the Trust Board should be discussed in the first instance with the member of staff involved in the visit. Any written report should be shared with the appropriate member of staff before presentation to the Trust Board.
29. Formal feedback; A feedback form should be completed for all formal visits. A copy of the feedback form is attached.
30. Informal feedback; This is to include general observations on visit that may include feedback from children, staff etc. These could inform the basis of an oral presentation to the Trust Board.
31. Trustees should aim to have two formal visits per year arranged around the subject monitoring cycle or area of interest, with possibly an initial meeting with subject leader to discuss plans for the development of the subject and a review meeting to discuss how matters are progressing, particularly with regard to any targets that may have been set in the Academy Improvement Plan and performance in internal or external examinations. Trustees should also aim to see their subject in action in the classroom.
32. Informal visits to be undertaken by individual Trustees at their convenience.

Format for Visits:

33. Arrange a visit with the appropriate teacher and agree the aim of the visit and arrangements for it in advance. Out of courtesy and in order to get the best from a visit, particularly formal visits, it is best to arrange visits at least two weeks in advance.

34. Ensure the Headteacher is aware of the details of the visit.
35. Most visits take place in the classroom and staff will have been consulted about the date and purpose of the visit. This will have enabled them to prepare any information related to the focus of the visit and to set up a programme for the Trustee. This might include:
 36. Supporting a group of children on a set task
 37. Informal observations of children at work
 38. Opportunities to speak with children on their work in progress
 39. Opportunities for observing displays of work in the classroom which show progress over time
 40. Opportunities for pupils to demonstrate work to Trustees
 41. Trustees would be expected to be present at the beginning of a lesson - this will enable the teacher to introduce them to the class and explain the reason for their presence.
 42. Trustees should be aware of the confidentiality of what they see and hear
 43. Trustees should be discreet so as not to disrupt the lesson in progress.
 44. A further meeting with the Headteacher or curriculum coordinator to review the focus of the visit and clarify any queries.

The follow up:

45. Trustee to fill in a report sheet for Trust Board/staff as appropriate (as attached)
46. Feedback to Trust Board in full Trust Board meeting/curriculum committee that the visit has taken place.
47. Staff and Trustees to give opinions on the effectiveness and success of these visits
48. Trustees and staff to update the policy every three years.
49. Please remember to:
 - Arrange details of visit in advance.
 - Agree levels of confidentiality.
 - Observe any class rules.
 - Be sensitive about taking notes.
 - Save your questions/comments for staff until the lesson is over.
 - Thank the class before you leave them.
50. What Trustee visits are NOT about;
 - Making judgements about quality of teaching and operational management
 - Checking the progress of their own children
 - Pursuing personal agendas
 - Monopolising teachers' time
 - Arriving with inflexible preconceived ideas
 - Interrupting, giving ideas or suggestions during teaching time

Appendix to Policy:

Appendix 1 Trustee Visit Report Form

Name:	Purpose of Visit:	
Role:		Key Personnel:
Date:		
Links with the Academic Improvement Plan:		
Trustee observations / Key Questions:		
Actions for Trust Board:		

SIGNED:

Trustee:

Subject Leader:

Headteacher:

Signed by Chair of Trustees.....Date.....

Appendix 2 Trustee Visit Report Form

Name of Trustee:	Date:
Name of subject leader:	
Subject under discussion:	
Objectives of visit:	
Consideration of current situation in terms of the development of the subject and meeting AIP objectives (e.g. what activities are current, planned etc.):	
Progress on delivering the development plans: General comments (e.g. where has there been good progress? Where are there causes for concern?)	
General comments (e.g. where has there been good progress? Where are there causes for concern?) Subject Leader's comments:	

SIGNED:

Trustee:

Subject Leader:

Headteacher:

Signed by Chair of Trustees.....Date.....