



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL
& NOTTINGHAM

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Policy for Developing the Role of Link Governors

1 Introduction

In order for Local Governing Body (LGB) members to have a clear understanding of the work of the academy it is important that governors get to know the academy first hand. This means they will be more aware of the quality of the experience learners are having, issues they face and how the academy needs to develop and improve. LGB members are, therefore, strongly encouraged to take advantage of the range of opportunities available to them to get to know staff and students informally and to participate in the academy activities to which they are invited. They are also expected to take on a link governor role.

2 Purpose

The main reason for having link governors is to widen and deepen members' knowledge of the business of the academy by;

- informing LGB members in more depth about an aspect of the academy and increasing their understanding of the learning environment and how learning takes place
- providing LGB members with an overview of how areas of the academy are performing
- giving LGB members exposure, during their time as a LGB member, to a variety of academy activities.
- providing opportunities for staff and students of the academy to meet with LGB members both formally and informally.

In addition to this link governors can play a part in ensuring initiatives and policies are implemented and see how these are contributing to achieving improvement plan goals.

LGB members are asked to remember that the purpose of these arrangements is not to bring their expertise to an area of which they are knowledgeable or to act in any management capacity.

Staff are asked to remember that LGB members are not to be used as channels of communication for problems where management structures and procedures already exist to deal with them.

3 Curriculum Links

- 3.1** Some LGB members will be assigned to an area of the curriculum within the academy and will be the link LGB member for that area with a named academy contact. The main purpose of curriculum links is to better inform LGB members about that area of the curriculum and help them to understand teaching and learning issues. They also bring LGB members into closer, constructive relationships with staff and students. Following a curriculum link visit or meeting, a LGB member should feel that he/she understands more clearly the programme being offered in that area, the direction of the team, progress, student and staff achievements, further plans for developing the curriculum area etc. LGB members will also be interested in how the teams are linking

with strategic issues in the improvement plan and other issues e.g. Equality & Diversity, Inclusion, etc.

- 3.2** Staff should feel that a LGB member has shown genuine interest in their work, has empathy for the multiple roles they have and the variety of challenges they face and shares their passion for the value of learning and supporting learners.
- 3.3** LGB members can be involved in a variety of activities as a Link governor depending on the curriculum area e.g.-
- attending a curriculum team meeting
 - having a tour of the faculty with the Head of Faculty
 - visiting a lesson or series of lessons
 - talking to a group of learners to get a sense of “student voice”
 - being part of a department or faculty review
 - attending an annual activity day or session e.g. maths challenge day
 - attending a performance e.g. sports fixture, play, concert
 - being an extra 'responsible adult' in supervising a day trip or residential event
 - assisting the academy in attracting some sponsorship for an activity
 - spending a day as a helper with a curriculum enrichment activity
 - offering to mentor students
 - providing a work placement for a student or member of staff
- 3.4** It is expected that at some point curriculum link governors will have;
- met with a curriculum/subject area leader to consider performance and progress issues
 - attended an appropriate staff training session devoted to the subject /curriculum area
 - paid visits to view lessons and any other relevant activities, in accordance with the LGB members Academy Visits Guidance in the subject/curriculum area and reported back according to the policy/procedure
 - taken time to understand the allocation of resources to the subject/curriculum area
 - found out about how parents can support and be involved in their children's learning in the subject/curriculum area
 - attended appropriate LGB member training
 - acted as an advocate to the LGB on behalf of the subject curriculum area.
- 3.5** All curriculum links will be reviewed annually. At the start of each academic year, the academy will ensure that all LGB members and link staff are aware of necessary contact details and each will take responsibility to make contact with each other and agree dates and times for visits and activities. LGB members and link staff will be asked to review these at the end of the year to inform the annual review process.

4. General Links

There is an annual schedule of academy activities and events. The academy will ensure that LGB members are kept well-informed of all events and reminded of the activities available to them to which they are invited. These will include;

- open days and evenings
- presentation of awards
- student performances, concerts and shows

- special services
- events

In addition, LGB members will also have the opportunity to meet with staff and students at training events and in connection with formal meetings.

LGB members' attendance at these activities will be logged so that their level of involvement can be reviewed and monitored.

5 Focus Area Links

5.1 Training/Induction Governor

Role: The co-ordination of training and development to meet the identified needs of the LGB and to ensure that new LGB members receive induction training following their appointment to the LGB.

The remit is to:-

- develop an annual overall LGB training programme for the whole governing body to include response to identified needs and monitor the effectiveness of the programme and governors' involvement in the academy
- ensure that training and development opportunities are brought to the attention of, and discussed by, the LGB on a regular basis including supporting members with the booking of courses
- help the governing body understand the most cost effective means of achieving the training programme
- report termly to the LGB on training undertaken
- evaluate the success or otherwise of the training provision and make recommendations on how to further develop it
- monitor expenditure on training
- ensure new members have an understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the LGB, receive key documentation and policies and are made aware of the training opportunities available for new LGB members

5.2 Safeguarding Governor

Role: This role is an essential role in ensuring that students are kept safe from harm. The safeguarding governor plays a key part in ensuring oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding policy, procedure and practice on behalf of the full governing body.

The remit is to:-

act as a 'critical friend' to the school, in order to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda and all statutory governing body responsibilities are met.

- monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy
- ensure there is a suitably qualified, trained and supported Designated Senior Person who has responsibility for responding to and overseeing safeguarding issues and that this person is supported by a Deputy Designated Person
- ensure there is a robust system for recording, storing and reviewing child welfare concerns.
- provide reports to the governing body to enable adequate oversight, understanding and development of solutions.
- ensure that school staff and governor training is up to date.
- attend Basic Awareness Safeguarding training every 3 years and other training as appropriate to the role
- ensure at least one governor on the recruitment and selection panel for staff has successfully completed accredited Safer Recruitment training and that interview panels follow and safer recruitment training
- have oversight of the single central record and ensure it is up to date and maintained in line with guidance.
- take account of how safe students feel when in school.
- ensure the academy reviews the curriculum in order that key safeguarding 'messages and lessons' run throughout.
- ensure the academy does not operate in isolation and has a full awareness of agencies available to support children and families

5.3 SEND Governor

Role: The SEND governor plays a key part in ensuring that the academy's SEN policy is implemented appropriately and that the academy's approach and provision meets the needs of all students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and enables them to make the best possible progress.

The remit is to:-

- make sure that a 'responsible person' is appointed to ensure that all involved with teaching students with SEN or disabilities are informed about policy and practice
- build a trusting and supportive relationship with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- keep up-to-date with knowledge of the academy's SEN provision, including how SEN children are identified and use of additional funding and deployment of staff/resources
- ensure that the governors SEN Information Report is published
- ensure that all SEN and students with disabilities are fully involved in the academy's activities
- ensure that parents of SEN students are notified of the provision for their child
- ensure that the SEN policy is regularly reviewed
- report back regularly to the LGB about the quality and effectiveness of SEN provision and make recommendations for inclusion in the academy improvement plan

5.4 Governor Representative on School Improvement Monitoring Group

APPROVED BY MAT BOARD MARCH 2015

Role: To monitor the improvement of the academy and ensure the improvement plan is fit for purpose and that resources are targeted at those areas that will have maximum impact in terms of accelerating progress and improvement (This group consists of the Headteacher, members of SLT, MAT Directors, Diocese school effectiveness adviser and Governors)

The remit is to:-

- monitor progress against identified success criteria
- support and challenge leaders within the academy responsible for aspects of the academy improvement plan
- ensure that partner organisations deliver effective and timely support
- identify barriers to progress and enable them to be overcome
- identify additional resource requirements where necessary and challenge those responsible for providing
- make alterations to the academy improvement plan as appropriate
- support the Headteacher in being accountable to the governors and Multi Academy Trust

5.5 Christian Distinctiveness Governor

Role: To ensure that the Christian ethos of the academy is being promoted and developed effectively and in a way that enhances the education of all students and the whole academy community.

The remit is to:-

- evaluate how Christian values are being worked out and built into the ethos of the academy through policies and the way it conducts its business
- ensure collective worship is given priority and that it engages students and enables them to experience awe and wonder and a spiritual dimension of life
- ensure the importance of RE is recognised within the curriculum and delivered in ways that are meaningful and relevant
- link with the academy chaplaincy team and discern how effectively they are contributing to the pastoral and spiritual life of the school
- monitor the use of Christian signs and symbols around the academy to remind the academy of the Christian ethos
- to ensure that the academy takes the views of different sections of the academy community seriously especially the voice of the weakest
- to ensure that the academy plays a part in promoting community cohesion both within the academy and in the wider community it serves

6 Commitment Expected

LGB members should try and visit/take part in an activity twice a term in addition to attending formal meetings in the academy.

7 Feedback

The analysis of LGB members' involvement in academy activities in this way will be reported formally as part of the annual review of LGB member training.

8 Review Date

The implementation of this policy will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher annually and they will report on progress in these areas to other members of the LGB.

9 LGB Noting and Review Date

This policy has been formally noted and adopted by the LGB at a meeting on:

Appendix 1

LGB Member Visits

Useful Forms

- 1. Academy Visits – a check list**
- 2. Guidelines for LGB Members on monitoring visits**
- 3. LGB Member Visit - report proforma**
- 4. LGB Members Monitoring Visit proforma – Academy Improvement Plan**
- 5. Ground rules for conducting classroom visits**

Academy Visits – a check list

What is the purpose of the visit?

- What is the focus of my visit?
- Is the reason specific or general?
- What are my/other people's expectations?
- How will my visit benefit my work as a governor, the teacher and the children?

How shall I carry it out?

- Which age group(s) or subject do I need to focus on?
- What are the questions that can be answered by observation?
- What questions should I ask?
- Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

- To what extent did I meet the purpose of my visit?
- Which of my questions did I answer?
- To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?
- What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

- Have I recorded my experiences?
- Did I 'report back' to the relevant staff?
- Have I prepared a short report for the next LGB meeting?
- How can I build on this for the next visit?



Guidelines for Local Governing Body Member Monitoring Visits

Before making a visit

The LGB members will:-

- ensure they are familiar with safeguarding/signing in procedures
- contact the relevant senior leader and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
- plan which classes will be visited
- draw up a timetable for the visit with the curriculum/subject leader

A senior leader will:-

- ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

On the day of the visit

The LGB member will remember to:

- arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the senior leader or curriculum leader
- act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher
- respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
- be calm and enjoy the visit

After the visit

The LGB member will:

- remember to thank the teachers and children
- meet with a senior leader to give a verbal report, and to raise any questions that arose
- complete the LGB member visit proforma, reporting on the focus.
- LGB members must report without giving opinions and where possible individuals should not be able to be identified.

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily.

The visit is not about:

- inspection
-

- making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- checking on your own children
- pursuing a personal agenda
- arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas

LGB members are an important part of the academy team and are welcomed into the academy by staff. It is important that LGB members remember to respect the professionals and the children. support the Headteacher and the staff, and acknowledge that



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agreed principles and
LGB member visits will be
all involved, and will result
LGB, which will contribute

LGB Visit Report

Name
Date of Visit
Focus of visit
Classes / staff visited
Summary of activities e.g. observing classroom, talking to staff and students, looking at resources, event
What I have learned as a result of my visit?
Positive comments about the focus
Aspects I would like clarified / questions I have

Ideas for future visits
Any other comments

Signed _____
(LGB member)

Signed _____
(Senior Leader)

LGB Visit Report

Monitoring the Academy Improvement Plan

Focus Area on Academy Improvement Plan	
Source of Evidence of Progress	Comment on Impact

Evaluation and Impact (So What?)

Signed _____ Signed _____
(LGB member) (Senior Leader)

Date: _____ Date: _____



Ground Rules for Conducting Classroom Visits

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit Agree purpose of visit Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed Agree role within the lesson	Turn up unannounced
During	Keep to the role agreed Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over Please remember confidentiality Stick to the times and purpose agreed Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children	Assume a different role Walk in with a clipboard Interrupt the teacher Distract the students from their task
After	Thank the teacher and the students Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience Feedback to the governing body	Leave without acknowledgement Break rules of confidentiality

What to Avoid

It is important for all parties to note that LGB members' visits are not a form of inspection and do not involve LGB members making a judgement about teaching in any official capacity. That remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and other education professionals with QTS.

It might be wise for LGB members to avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present. It can cause discomfort for everyone! They should also be aware of 'pursuing personal agendas' and make sure they fulfil the code of conduct as it is outlined here.

Please remember that members of staff are very busy people whose first priority must be the children. There may be times when arrangements have to be changed or alterations made. Please be sensitive to the circumstances and flexible in your expectations. No two days are ever the same.

Keep an open mind about what you see. Education and classrooms have changed a great deal since you were at school and practice is very different. Don't expect to see the formal type of lesson you might remember from your own childhood. By all means ask questions (preferably at the end of the lesson) but be sensitive to the extra demands of differentiation

and inclusion that teachers now face.

Format of the Visit

After planning your visit with the curriculum leader or class teacher you might have agreed to:

- take part in a lesson acting as classroom helper during your visit
- do a more formal observation-taking no immediate role other than talking to the children about what they are doing
- work with a small group
- observe - focussing on an agreed area/issue that the class teacher would like some feedback on e.g. the involvement of a particular group of students

Please remember that observations do not require judgement on the teacher. It might also be useful to clarify some **'what ifs'** beforehand. For example:

- What if I see children misbehaving when the teacher doesn't?
- What if a student asks me how to do something?
- What if I have a suggestion to make?

Discussing the Visit

It is important that a time is agreed between yourself and the class teacher to discuss the lesson you have taken part in or observed. During this time you might refer to notes you have made. The structure might include;

- asking the teacher for any further clarification of the lesson or for their views on how it went.
- giving your own impressions on what you saw
- providing any positive comment.
- raising any issues that appeared to develop.
- any further questions you might have
- a summary of the feedback you will be giving to the governing body.

At the end of the feedback both you and the teacher should be clear about what you will be sharing with the LGB - there should be no surprises!

The **LGB members' visits report** proforma should be completed as soon as possible after the visit. It should reflect the discussion you have had with the teacher. The report should be copied to:

- the Headteacher
- the curriculum leader
- the teacher concerned
- the link governor for training