



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

LINK GOVERNOR SCHEME & GOVERNOR INFORMAL VISIT (GIV) PROCEDURE

Departmental or Area Link Governor

Purpose

The main purpose of linking a Governor with a particular department or curriculum area of the College is to help the Governing Body achieve a deeper understanding and knowledge of the core everyday activity of the College. As a result, Governor Stewardship of the College should be improved, both with regard to oversight and scrutiny of the public interest, and to being well-informed when taking strategic decisions.

The Governing Body may also wish to appoint link Governors for other aspects of the College's activities and functions. In all cases a well-designed Link scheme will ensure that some aspect of the Governor's area of experience, expertise or knowledge in their own lives or career will relate to the area or department to which they are linked.

The role in practice

The Governor will in practice link with a specific Head of Faculty or other senior staff member e.g. Director and will visit the College at least 3 times per year. A variety of means can be employed to gain a deeper understanding of the activity of the department or curriculum area in question. For example:

- Meeting 1:1 to ask questions and receive information on such topics as: staff training; links with employers; condition and availability of resources; curriculum and timetable arrangements; special needs provision; planning, assessment and recording procedures; standards of achievement; quality of teaching. These meetings may follow a 3-step cycle of introduction/ beginning of year ("what are the plans?"), in-year update/monitoring ("how is it going?") and end of year evaluation ("what has gone well and not so well, what changes will be made for next year?")
- Accompanying the senior staff member on informal learning walks, going briefly into classrooms to see the student experience first-hand; hearing from the senior staff member about department themes in teaching, learning and assessment witnessed in the brief visits.
- Talking directly to students in the classroom or outside (e.g. in reception area); questioning them on their experience; talking informally to other staff members within the area of department
- Attending (i.e., sitting in on) departmental or curriculum area reviews held by senior management of the College.

- Attending student award or other events such as exhibitions, taking the opportunity to question students (and possibly parents/carers) on their student experience of the College.
- Occasional email communication with the senior staff member to efficiently stay abreast of latest developments.

After all Link visits the Governor will fill in the standard Visit Feedback Form, which includes a section to be completed by the senior member of staff and return it to the Clerk for distribution at the next QTL Committee or email their reflections to the Clerk.

Governor Informal Visits (GIV)

All Governors are expected to get to know the College through informal visits. Such visits could include meeting with the Principal and other staff, attending and participating in events, taking part in learning walks and or speaking to students directly. After such visits the GIV feedback form can be completed or an email sharing their reflections sent to the Clerk. The expectations set out below apply to all Governors regardless of whether they are acting as Link Governors or undertaking informal visits.

Expectations

Over time, the visits should be found worthwhile by the senior staff member (and others) and not merely a chore, i.e. effective support and challenge, assisting in the achievement of departmental or curriculum area targets; opportunity available to communicate directly with a member of the Governing Body. In return, it is expected that the senior staff member will pro-actively keep the Link Governor abreast of significant developments (if necessary, by email).

Link visits should not be onerous or inconvenient in terms of time required by the senior staff member or others; the Clerk should be made aware in advance of all planned visits.

The Governor should not make (since they are not qualified, and it is not their role), their own personal judgements on what they see (e.g., on classroom practice). They should however record, but limit themselves to recording, what they see and what they are told.

Link Governors should not involve themselves in operational matters or decisions, seek to lobby either the College management or the Governing Body on behalf of a curriculum area or department, or offer to take forward issues raised by staff members or students in a way that contradicts established College procedures or protocols.

Updated June 2019
Approved GB July 2019
Review Date: June 2023 (S&G Committee)
Approved at GB July 2023
Review Date: June 2027