



**Maidstone & Malling Alternative Provision**  
INSPIRING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

**Management Committee Visits to School Policy  
2018-2019**

This policy was adopted on: 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2018
The policy is to be reviewed: November 2020

## **Management Committee Visits to School Policy**

### **Context**

One of the key roles and responsibilities of the Management Committee is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Management Committee's role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress.

The Management Committee has approved Terms of Reference for Monitoring by Individuals or by pairs/groups of Management Committee, which anticipate that at least three monitoring visits will take place each year. In some cases (ie SEND, Safeguarding and Data Monitoring), more frequent monitoring may be appropriate. A programme of monitoring visits will be approved annually by the Management Committee and will take account of the priorities set out in the approved School Improvement Plan.

A visit does not necessarily have to take place during the time when pupils are in school and could be carried out by meeting the Head of Service/lead professional before the start of, or at the end of the school day.

### **Visiting the School**

#### ***Benefits of visiting the School:***

Visits enable Management Committee to:

- See the school at work and observe attitudes, behaviour and achievements
- Meet and chat with the pupils
- Get to know the staff (put faces to names) and demonstrate their commitment to the school and to working in partnership with staff
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning
- Monitor progress and inform their evaluation of the school
- Find out what resources are being used, evaluate resources and discuss further requirements with staff
- Gain first hand information from seeing policies and schemes of work in action, which can assist with policy making and decision taking
- Gain a more informed understanding of classroom life and practice.

They also can be positive for staff, by giving them:

- The opportunity to find out more about the role of the Management Committee;
- The chance to illustrate the theory and policy in practice;
- The opportunity to draw attention to any issues or questions they wish to raise
- Opportunity to reflect upon practice through discussion.

#### ***Arranging a visit to the School:***

Before making a visit, Management Committee should:

- Contact the Head of Service and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- Clarify the expectations for the visit (these should be shared with any staff who will be involved in the visit by the Head of Service)
- Agree which staff will be involved in the visit and, if appropriate which classes will be visited
- If appropriate, discuss the context of the lesson/activity to be observed and agree their role within it

- Agree a timetable for the visit
- Never turn up unannounced!

### ***Carrying out the visit: Ground Rules***

On any visit to the School, Management Committee should:

- Arrive on time, sign in at Reception and wear an identification badge
- Be accompanied at all times whilst on the School premises
- Meet with the Deputy Head of Service/subject coordinator/lead practitioner to confirm the timetable for and scope of the visit
- Act as an observer and only participate in a class or activity at the invitation of the teacher
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
- Keep an open mind about what they see
- Be sensitive to the circumstances and flexible in their expectations. No two days are ever the same and there may be times when arrangements have to be changed or alterations made
- Remember that members of staff are very busy people whose first priority must be the pupils
- By all means ask questions (preferably at the end of the lesson/activity) but be sensitive to the extra demands of differentiation and inclusion that teachers now face
- Maintain confidentiality
- Enjoy the visit!
- Remember that the aim of the visit is NOT to:
  - 'Inspect' the School or staff
  - Make judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher - that remains the responsibility of the Head of Service and other education professionals
  - Check on Management Committee's own children (it might be wise for Management Committee to avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present)
  - Pursue a personal agenda
  - Arrive with inflexible pre-conceived ideas.

### ***Additional points for observing a lesson or activity:***

Management Committee should:

- As part of the planning process, agree what their role will be. For example
  - Acting as a classroom helper during their visit
  - Talking to the pupils about what they are doing
  - Working with a small group.
- Discuss particular issues or set the context with the class teacher or subject co-ordinator before the lesson or activity starts.
- Clarify some 'what-ifs' beforehand - for example:
  - "What if I see pupils misbehaving when the teacher doesn't?"
  - "What if a student asks me how to do something?"
  - "What if I have a suggestion to make?"
- Introduce themselves when they go into the classroom and answer any questions
- Do not interrupt the teacher or distract the pupils from their task
- Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the pupils.

### ***Formal Visits***

- Where three formal monitoring visits have been timetabled during the year, the purpose of each visit should be:
  - First Visit: To meet with the lead professional within the school to gain an understanding of the scope of the target and the activities the school is conducting to achieve success

- Second visit: To monitor the progress of school activities towards the target
- Third visit: To evaluate the extent of success at the end of the set timescale.
- Management Committee visiting more frequently (ie SEND or Safeguarding Management Committee) may work to a different timetable, but should still agree the purpose and scope of each visit with the Head of Service/lead professional at the beginning of each year.
- Management Committee should establish whether it would be useful to find out anything before their visit – this may include background reading on the topic of their visit
- Management Committee should make a list of any questions they may want to ask.

### ***Informal Visits:***

In addition to formal monitoring visits, Management Committee might like to visit to meet the staff or the pupils, to find out about an aspect of the school in which they have a particular interest, or to get to know more about the school generally. This may include:

- Visits to class or school assemblies
- Attending events or activities.

### ***Observing the 'ethos' of the School***

Whilst in the school, during a 'formal' or 'informal' visit, Management Committee should observe the 'ethos' of the School, including the learning environment and student's behaviour and attitude towards each other - for example:

- Is the School friendly and welcoming to visitors?
- Is the environment attractive and clean and free of litter?
- Do the pupils show a positive attitude: are they interested in the questions asked? Are they focussed or easily distracted?
- Are pupils presented with a variety of materials and resources to learn with?
- Are pupils thinking for themselves and not relying on the teacher?
- Is there evidence of student's work, displays and/or information within the classrooms and around the School?
- Do work and resources appear to be well organised and easily available?
- Are pupils encouraged to help each other where appropriate? Do they work well together and are they caring towards each other?

### ***After the visit***

Management Committee should:

- Not leave the site without acknowledgement/signing out
- Remember to thank the teachers and pupils if they have been observing a lesson or activity, or any other staff who have been involved in their visit
- Acknowledge openly to the staff what a valuable gesture they have made in welcoming them into their workplace, and comment on favourable impressions
- Meet with the Head of Service/lead professional to give a verbal report and raise any issues that arose.
- Consider the value of the visit – for example
  - Were the objectives of the visit realistic and appropriate? Were they achieved?
  - Did Management Committee read the right material and talk to the right people when preparing for the visit?
  - Was there anything, which Management Committee would like to have seen or have explained, or whether they would like to see something introduced or improved?
  - If checklists were used, were they checklists useful/adequate?
  - Are there any suggested improvements to the process?
- Complete a written report on the visit: This should be done whether the visit has been an informal or formal one. The report should be sent to the Head of Service and Chair within

two weeks of the visit and sent to the Clerk, for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting of the Management Committee. Management Committee must report without giving opinions and individuals should not be named.

### **Policy Review**

The policy should be reviewed every two years.

The key questions to consider as part of the review should be:

- Has every Management Committee/Monitoring Group/Pair played their part in monitoring?
- Have Monitoring visits achieved the potential benefits identified in this policy?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can we make policy and practice even better?

## **Appendix 1: Monitoring Visit Report Form – General Monitoring**

*Dissemination, monitoring, evaluation and review*

### **Management Committee' Monitoring Pairs Record Form**

<b>NAME/S OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/S</b>  <b>DATE:</b>  <b>NAME/S OF STAFF:</b>
<b>Purpose of visit</b>
<b>Links with the School Improvement Plan (SIP)</b> <i>(How does the visit relate to a priority in the SIP?)</i>
<b>Observations and comments by the Management Committee</b> <i>(e.g. What you saw in relation to the defined purpose of your visit; what you learned; what you would like clarified; how long the visit lasted)</i>
<b>Any key issues arising for the Management Committee in relation to the defined purpose of the visit</b> <i>(e.g. Progress in implementing a key Policy)</i>
<b>Action following Management Committee meeting</b> <i>(Record any action agreed by the Management Committee with regard to this visit)</i>

## Appendix 2: Monitoring Form – Subject Visits

<b>Management Committee' Monitoring Pair</b>		
<b>Key Area</b>		
<b>Specific Focus</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Management Committee present</b>	<b>Staff Present</b>
<p>Invite the member of staff to present their work to the Management Committee for 10-15 minutes – they can then either respond to specific questions related to their presentation of address areas suggested below (which are by no means exhaustive)</p>		
	<b>Points</b>	<b>Monitoring notes</b>
<b>Suggested Questions</b>		
<b>What are your main priorities this year?</b>		
<b>Why?</b>		
<b>What progress are you making on them?</b>		
<b>How do you know?</b>		
<b>Show me evidence of...</b>		
<b>What will the impact of this work be in 3 months/ 6 months' time? How will you know?</b>		
<b>What support do you get?</b>		
<b>Is this enough?</b>		
<b>General questions about the welfare of the member of staff and their teams</b>		
<b>Actions and Key Issues for the FBG, including any follow-up</b>		

## Appendix 3: Checklists for Monitoring Visits

### Health and Safety Visits

<b>External Areas:</b>	
Walk the perimeter of the building looking at the roofs and elevations from ground level. Examine footpaths, paved areas and fences.	
<b>Items to be inspected</b>	<b>What to look for</b>
External Walls	Missing or obviously displaced bricks or other elements. Cracks in brickwork Bulging or leaning walls Rotting timber supports or cladding boards. Damaged cladding tiles or roof sheets
Roofs	Slipped or missing tiles, slates or roof sheets Cracked or leaning chimneys Damaged or leaking roof lights or guttering Gutters or down pipes not blocked or leaking Excessive sagging of flat roofs with poor water run-off and/or leaks TV and other aerials firmly fixed
Fire Hydrants	Hydrants on or near the site are accessible
Paths etc	Paving slabs which rock or project above or below adjacent paving to an extent likely to cause a tripping hazard. Potholes in pedestrian tar paved areas, roadways or car parks. Slippery surfaces. Areas covered with water affecting access or use
Steps	Loose, crumbling or badly worn steps Damaged, loose or missing handrails
Drains etc	Broken, raised or sunken drains or inspection covers Blocked drains causing pollution or external Surface water
Fences and Walls	Loose wire or wire projecting, particularly at eye or foot level and adjacent paving Fences or walls leaning over footpaths Cracked or bulging walls Missing or displaced bricks
Gates	Difficult to open/close or secure
Mobile Classrooms	Structure sitting evenly or moving on support Loose or damaged steps or handrails (including emergency exit steps) Steps moss covered or otherwise slippery.
Lighting	Site lights all working
<b>Internal Areas:</b>	
Room by room and include areas such as lobbies and corridors etc. Where the building has a second storey, work floor by floor. Windows and doors should be inspected as well as the floor. Visually check electrical fittings including switches and socket outlets.	
<b>Items to be inspected</b>	<b>What to look for</b>
Fire Precautions	Bells, etc. all audible everywhere Call points not obstructed Fire notices up to date and accessible
Fire Fighting Equipment	Sufficient and suitable General conditions

	Regularly maintained
Telephones	Access to at all times for emergencies
Wash Basins and Baths	Cracked or unclean Adequate supply of hot and cold or warm water Outlets are not blocked
WCs	Cracked pans or seats Unclean pans or seats Cistern firmly blocked
Urinals	Outlets not blocked Unclean, including surrounding floor Flushing mechanism works properly Cistern firmly fixed Extraction fans working
Drinking Fountains	Clean Working properly
Pipework	Corrosion or leaks
Hot Water	Excessively hot
Soap, Towels, Toilet Paper	Readily available
Electrical Equipment	Leads properly fixed into appliance and plug (Coloured conductors should not be visible) No frayed or knotted cables or cables with temporary joints Items inspected (and if appropriate, tested) at least annually by someone competent to do so No exposed conductors on mains equipment Fuse board kept closed
Boiler Rooms	Leaks Damaged heat insulation on equipment pipework
Furniture	Damaged Sharp corners Unstable
First Aid	Boxes are accessible, clean and properly stocked
Tidiness	All areas clean and tidy A place for everything and everything in its place Fire exits not obstructed
Overcrowding	Are any areas overcrowded?
Food	No food left to rot in bins
Rubbish	Accumulation of dirt and rubbish removed at least daily from floors Rubbish sacks stored tidily and protected from animals and vandalism
Spill/Leaks	Spills or leaks, especially oil or other slippery materials, properly dealt with
Visitors	Clear notices for visitors showing where they are expected to report

## **Appendix 4: Checklists for Monitoring Visits**

### **Classroom Visits**

The list below is a suggestion of what to look out for during a visit to observe a lesson or other classroom activity, but is not prescriptive.

<b><i>Interacting with each other and adults</i></b>
Do the pupils listen to instructions and to each other?
How do the pupils address adults – polite conversations?
Do the pupils talk to each other about their work where it is appropriate?
How do the pupils talk to each other?
Do the pupils reason with each other in problem solving situations in order to offer solutions?
<b><i>Learning behaviours</i></b>
Do the pupils settle quickly to their work?
Do the pupils follow oral/written instructions?
Do the pupils accept guidance?
Are the pupils allowed to make mistakes and do they learn from their corrected errors?
Can the pupils cope with distraction?
Are there opportunities for problem solving?
Do the pupils show initiative in tackling their work?
Do the pupils continue to work well by themselves without teacher direction?
Do the pupils want to discover answers for themselves?
Are the pupils involved in their task?
Do the pupils show a flexible response in solving problems appropriate to their age and ability?
<b><i>Confidence</i></b>
Do the pupils present explanations clearly and concisely?
Do the pupils know how to get help when they need it? Do they know when they do not need help?
Do the pupils appear confident in their own abilities?
Do the pupils know what is expected of them?
Do the pupils participate in any group work or discussions?
<b><i>Workbooks and presentation</i></b>
Is the pupils' written work neat and well presented?
Are the pupils able to present their work satisfactorily, diagrammatically or written?
Is the writing suitable for their age and is there evidence of progression within the class/each child's work?
<b><i>Equipment and Resources</i></b>
Do the pupils know where to get equipment?
Is the equipment readily available?
Is there equipment provided if the pupils need/wish to solve a problem practically?