

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## GOVERNOR LINK SCHEME

### Background

The College's Governing Body is committed to improving communication between governors, staff and students and to improving its own knowledge of the range of provision that the College offers.

### Purpose of the Governor Link Scheme

The primary purpose of links is to provide Governors with an insight into the chosen curriculum or support area and to create a better understanding of the way in which strategic decisions of the Governing Body influence provision at an operational level.

Governors recognise that there are a number of benefits to linking governors with areas of college activity:

- ✓ extending governors' knowledge of staff, students and the breadth of curriculum delivery and other provision;
- ✓ familiarising members with the college's physical environment;
- ✓ providing an opportunity for staff and students to meet informally with Corporation members;
- ✓ helping governors to develop in-depth knowledge of areas of college activity, including quality issues and targets;
- ✓ allowing governors to use their skills and experience to benefit the college directly.

If links are to work effectively it is important that the staff involved also understand these benefits.

The Link Governor Scheme is not for:

- X governor involvement in operational activity;
- X lobbying on behalf of a particular area of College activity.

Through links, governors will be able to better relate to the curriculum/support areas in which they have been involved when issues are debated at Governing Body and in other meetings. However, care should be taken to ensure that the arrangements are not used as a means for the representation of particular curriculum or other interests at Governing Body level.

Whilst arrangements can be tailored to suit the needs of individual governors there are some matters which need to be clear and consistent across the College:

- (a) The point of contact for the governor will be the manager of the relevant curriculum/support area.
- (b) Governors should not be expected to digest large quantities of written material.
- (c) Complaints - governors may be approached by staff who have complaints and concerns about some aspect of the college's affairs. Governors need to listen but they also need to be aware of two things in such circumstances:
  - that the primary responsibility for management rests with the Principal and managers;
  - that there are other avenues for staff to pursue areas of concern.

- (d) Governors should take care in expressing personal opinions, which may appear to give a commitment on behalf of the College. Views and opinions should not be attributable to the Governing Body unless that issue has been discussed by that Body and a conclusion reached.

Individual arrangements between governor and college area should be developed at a pace agreed between the governor and manager concerned. When determining the type of involvement account should be taken of the governor's level of prior knowledge of the relevant area and the demands placed upon their time.

### Ensuring the effectiveness of the Link Governor Scheme:

#### Governor links must:

- ✓ have clear objectives which are understood by all parties involved
- ✓ enable governors to feel that they are making a useful contribution
- ✓ encourage relationships with staff other than directors and managers who are already well known to governors
- ✓ not be onerous for either governors or staff, i.e. minimise additional meetings or paperwork
- ✓ offer flexible arrangements suited to individual need
- ✓ be monitored regularly.

In order for the scheme to work effectively, Governors will need to be linked with identified areas of the College. This might operate as indicated below:

<b>Area</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Governor</b>
Teaching & Learning	Directorate D (Accounts, Business, ILT, IT, Languages, Law)	
	Directorate G (Early Years, Health Care, Psychology, Public Services, Sociology, Sport & Fitness)	
	Directorate J (Art & Design, English, History, Philosophy, Politics)	
	Directorate P (Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics)	
	Directorate S (Dance, DJ Technology, Media, Music, Performing Arts)	
Cross College	College Information Systems	
	Facilities	
	Finance	
	Human Resources	
	Principalship (incl. admin)	
	Student Services	

#### The types of activities which might be engaged in are:

- tour of facilities;
- meetings with staff (perhaps during course team meetings) to discuss key issues;
- discussions with staff and students to aid understanding of the curriculum, the student experience, and the College's progress towards achieving its strategic objectives;
- lesson observation to increase a Governor's knowledge of the curriculum area;

- attendance at Open Days, student shows and exhibitions.

**The visits specifically do not include:**

- any element of assessment of teaching;
- reports on any individual.

**Managers should provide appropriate information/documentation to Governors in advance of visits, this might include:**

- structure Chart
- course portfolio, highlighting the area to be visited
- prospectus, highlighting the area to be visited
- list of classes to be visited (if any) on the day of the visit
- reports on recruitment, retention and achievement
- reports highlighting key aspects of the areas activities, e.g. a copy of the Planned Maintenance Programme for a visit to Facilities
- information about current performance targets.

**Governors should always discuss course performance against targets as part of their visit.**

**Commitment Expected:**

- Governors should try and visit once a term at the mutual convenience of the Governor and the Manager and Department.
- Governors should aim to spend at least four hours contact time per year in College (this will then contribute towards Corporation Performance Indicators).

**Contact Arrangements:**

- Contact visits will be arranged direct with the Manager of the area. However, it is the responsibility of the Manager of the area to advise the Clerk of the dates and times of proposed visits. Governors and Staff are asked to honour arrangements as far as possible and advise the Clerk to the Corporation if visits have to be changed.

**Rotation:**

- Governors will be linked with a particular area for a period of twelve months.
- At the end of each academic year all links will be reviewed to allow each Governor the opportunity to maximise exposure to different areas of the College.
- Whilst Governor preferences will be taken into account, it may not be possible to enable each Governor to visit an area which they have chosen.

**Feedback:**

- A record of Link visits will be reported to the Governing Body.
- Should any Governor have concerns arising from a visit, they should immediately inform the Clerk to the Corporation.
- Governors should give Managers feedback at the end of each visit.

- Managers should also give Governors feedback on how their visit was received. A section is added at the end of the form for key points to be noted. Managers will be expected to forward written comments to Governors after the visit, via the Clerk (in confidence if preferred).

## GOVERNOR LINK RECORD

Governor's Name	
Area Linked To:	
Date Visited:	
Met With:	
<b>Issues Discussed:</b> Staffing/Curriculum/Professional Development/Board Issues/Directorate Information/Self-Assessment Plan/Targets	
Other Notes/Comments	
Key Points for Feedback:	
Date of Next Meeting	

- Please complete this form after visiting the College
- Please send a copy to the Clerk to the Board of Governors for reference (Clerk to forward a copy to the Principal and the relevant Manager)
- Please ask a member of staff to photocopy this for your records