



## The Robert Carre Trust

### Link Trustee & Link Governor Roles

#### Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to ensure that the Robert Carre Trust operates a consistent system of Link Trustees/ Governors across the Trust that is effective in creating worthwhile links between school and the various levels of governance, to foster mutual understanding and efficiencies, by providing a framework for governors to make focused visits to school so that they can build an effective working relationship with staff and have a better understanding of the context in which they work and the assurances that they seek. Trustees/ Governors will observe policies and plans being implemented on a day-to-day basis. Their findings should help the local governing body and other levels of Governance make well-informed judgments about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the School Development Plans. This process will enable the governing body to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of students and staff and identify further areas for development.

Visits are *not* about making judgments on the quality of teaching – this is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher/Head of School; nor are they about checking on the progress of individuals or pursuing personal agendas.

#### Role of Link Trustees/ Governors

- To be informed about relevant documents and legislation applicable to the linked activity;
- To maintain effective communication with the activity and report back to the relevant Governing Body as necessary as part of the assurances process;
- To represent the activity at the Governing Body and Board, where required;
- To offer help with relevant skills as appropriate;
- As a member of a working party to input and support the project as required.

#### The RCT Trustee Board

The RCT Trustee Board agreed that the LGBs should appoint Link Governors for

- Safeguarding
- SEND and Disadvantaged
- Health & Safety
- Curriculum
- School Food
- E-Safety
- Careers IEG
- Finance (as representatives on the FR&A Committee)

The Board itself will appoint Link Trustees for

- Safeguarding
- SEND and Disadvantaged (Inc Pupil Premium)
- Health & Safety
- Curriculum
- Careers IEG
- Finance (Chair of FR&A Committee)

The appointments will be made at the earliest opportunity in each Academic Year.

Link Trustees/ Governors will be introduced to the lead professional for their Link and will then make their own arrangements for visits to school (which could include phone, email or online virtual

conversations) and meetings with counterparts during the year.

Trustees and Governors may be given other roles, not specified above, and arrange appropriate visits as necessary, in order to gather evidence for assurances.

Link Trustees and Governors for specific aspects may meet and conduct their visits together, for a more effective use of time, both for them and staff involved.

## **THE ROBERT CARRE TRUST LINK TRUSTEES/ GOVERNORS CODE OF PRACTICE Purpose**

### **Relationship to other policies**

This statement elaborates on the points made in the RCT Code of Conduct in respect of school visits.

The focus of a visit could be on one or more of the many policies/processes in place at the school.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the Executive Headteacher/Head of School, Staff and Trustees/ Governors**

**Trustees/ Governors**, with the help of the **Executive Headteacher/Head of School** and staff, will organise visits throughout the year. The aim will be to achieve a minimum of one visit per Link Governor per year. Visits may be conducted in pairs. The Executive Headteacher/Head of School, along with the Senior Leadership Team, will guide governors on the areas of the curriculum, policies, School Development Plan priorities and targets to be covered.

Individual Trustees/ Governors will be allocated an aspect of the school's work upon which to focus. This will enable individual governors to develop a deeper understanding of a subject, a policy or policies or a year group. They will focus on areas where they have an interest or expertise. The aim will be for them to get to know an aspect of the school really well, increasing their confidence and knowledge. It will help to maximise the effectiveness of the governing body team in gaining assurances on behalf of the Board/LGB.

When organising and conducting a visit, Trustees/ Governors should be courteous and considerate at all times, respecting the professional roles of the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and staff. Trustees/ Governors should confirm with the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and member of staff the date, time and focus of each visit at least one week in advance. This will include agreeing what will be observed and to whom it would be useful to talk. If time permits, they will discuss the proposed agenda with the staff involved.

At the end of each visit, the Trustees/ Governors (s) will discuss what they have observed with the member of staff and clarify any points they are uncertain about. They may discuss their observations with the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and agree how and when they will report to the governing body.

**Teachers and support staff** should at all times be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by governors to the school. They should make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits so as to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This should include specifying the evidence that could be shared with governors. Whenever practical, they should invite their Link Trustees/ Governors to relevant staff meetings and training sessions, and to come in when the Faculty/Department/Team is undergoing the self evaluation process

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Trustees/ Governors' visits should be an agenda item at each meeting of the LGB/Trust, in conjunction with monitoring assurances. By reviewing the minutes of meetings when reports of visits were discussed, the LGB/Trust should judge the extent to which the information gathered informed the governors' understanding of the progress made towards meeting priorities and targets.

Staff governors may also feed back from colleagues. They will be able to identify what worked well and what, if anything, needs to be re-considered.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TRUSTEES/ GOVERNORS' VISITS - AT A GLANCE**

### **Purpose of Visits**

*For Trustees/ Governors to:*

- Recognise and celebrate success
- Develop relationships with staff
- Get to know the students
- Understand the environment in which teachers are working
- See policies and/or schemes of work in action
- Inform decision making
- Find out what resources are needed and help to prioritise them
- Seek assurances on behalf of the Board / LGB

*For staff to:*

- Ensure Trustees/ Governors understand the reality of the school's daily life
- Understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
- Have the opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
- Highlight the need for particular resources

### **What Trustees/ Governors' Visits are NOT About**

*They are not about:*

- Making judgements about the quality of teaching and learning
- Checking the progress of own children
- Pursuing personal agendas
- Monopolising staff time

### **Visit Protocols**

*Before the visit:*

- Arrange details of the visit with the member of staff concerned in good time, having informed the Executive Headteacher/Head of School that a visit will be taking place
- Agree the level of confidentiality
- Agree the purpose of the visit
- Discuss the context of the visit

*During the visit:*

- Sign in and sign out at the Reception
- Wear a name badge, or some other form of identification
- Observe any class/area guidelines/rules, where appropriate
- Talk to the students, but do not disturb the lesson in any way

*After the visit:*

- Thank the teacher/member of staff and the students, where appropriate
- Discuss your observations with the teacher/member of staff.
- If there are any areas of concern, discuss these with the Executive Headteacher/Head of School before talking to the teacher
- Prepare a report for the relevant committee of the Trust or LGB, as below

### **Link Governors' GVO Procedure for visits**

#### **1.Report template**

Go to Link Governor folder on GVO and download the report template word document. This can either be completed electronically, or printed off, completed by hand and scanned as a pdf

#### **2.The Visit**

Carry out the visit, complete the form. If the visit takes the form of a meeting, the notes from that meeting will suffice, if all relevant points on the report are covered.

### **3.Sharing the Report**

Email the report to the Clerk, Chair and Executive Headteacher/Head of School promptly.

**Agreed** May 2021

**Next Review Due** June 2022 (annually)

Appendix 1 – Visit Report form



## Robert Carre Trust – Link Report Template

Name:	Date of Visit
<p><b>Focus of visit and name of lead staff member:</b>  <i>Link to strategy and/or school development plan, effective implementation of policy/ vision/values</i></p>	
<p><b>Summary of activities:</b>  <i>For example, talking to staff and pupils, looking at specific resources, specific questions (see NGA's knowing your school resources, which offer lines of enquiry into particular interest that may be of interest) etc.</i></p>	
<p><b>What have I learned as a result of my visit and how will I feed this back to the Board/LGB?</b>  <i>Relate this back to focus of visit</i></p>	
<p><b>Aspects I would like clarified/further questions that I have:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions for the Board/LGB to consider and/or actions for school staff to undertake following consultation with the appropriate executive leader:</b></p>	
<p><b>Any other comments:</b></p>	
<p>Signed</p>	
<p><i>(Governor/Trustee/Committee Member)</i></p>	