

Learning and living as children of God

(Ephesians 5:1)(You are God's children whom he loves. Try to be like God)



Governor Visits to School Policy

Reviewed Sept 2021
To be reviewed Jan 2024

GOVERNORS' VISITS TO SCHOOLS

Every Governing Body has a statutory responsibility to establish and monitor its school's policies and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum. Governors are also held to account for their own school's performance.

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) assumes that Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and will test that assumption during a school inspection.

One of the best and most effective ways in which a Governor can get to know about their school is to visit during the school day and see it at work, talking to staff and pupils and finding out what happens in the school and the classrooms. If school and classroom visits are done well they will add immeasurably to Governors' understanding of their school, its staff and its pupils.

WHY VISIT?

A Governing Body has a duty to oversee the direction and policies of the school, to monitor its standards and to be held accountable for its conduct and performance.

Visits should be undertaken as:

A. Part of the strategic programme to-

- Improve Governor knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses
- Monitor and assess the priorities as outlined in the development plan
- Help the Governing Body fulfil its statutory duties.
- Acquire knowledge to enable the Governing Body to challenge as appropriate

B. Critical Friend -

- Monitoring, and evaluating plans, budgets, standards of education and achievement

C. Accountability

- Annual reports and meetings, publication of minutes, surveys of parental views

Many Governing Bodies, like ours, link Governors to subjects, classes or year groups as a way of monitoring the curriculum and also to the school priorities. This will involve individual Governors visiting the school and classrooms and

taking the opportunity to discuss issues with the Headteacher and relevant subject co-ordinator.

A number of Governors have specific responsibilities eg Safeguarding, Special Needs, English, Numeracy, Health and Safety, Race Equality and Looked After Children. The subject responsibility is allocated according to the Class teacher link and their subject leader responsibilities. This reinforces the need to visit not just the school but the classroom on a reasonably regular basis.

It also allows Governors, however, to focus on particular areas, eg:

- the management of the school's resources
- the condition of the building and its use
- the development of teaching and support staff
- a specific subject area
- a particular year group or class

By visiting school and becoming better informed Governors will be:

- more aware of the needs of the school
- more able to approach staff to meet those needs
- well placed to bring to the Local Authority or Diocese any matters of concern
- in a good position to support the school in its community

The main purpose of school visits

A Governor visits school to:

- learn so that you can increase the Governing Body's first-hand knowledge base, informing strategic decision making
- keep under review the way in which the school is operating
- experience the impact and progress of the implementation of the school improvement plan and school policies
- demonstrate to staff that the Governing Body takes its responsibilities very seriously
- establish and develop good professional relationships with staff, especially those that are linked with your individual area of responsibility, e.g. literacy, numeracy, Special Needs or Health and Safety.
- see in context some of the monitoring systems employed by the school

- demonstrate that the Governing Body is contributing to the school's self evaluation process
- show support and encouragement to staff and children

THE FOCUS OF THE VISIT

A visit can be either to see the school generally in operation or a specific classroom visit.

Visits can focus on the following:

The School in Operation

- The condition and maintenance of the premises
- The use made of buildings and premises
- Security on site
- Break and lunch times
- The monitoring of Health and Safety
- The use and condition of resources eg furniture and subject equipment
- Office procedures eg budget monitoring
- To see a class or teacher led assembly (to see how well information is provided)
- Pupil behaviour around the school

The Classroom Visit

- Visit of particular curriculum areas ie English
- Mathematics/Numeracy, Science, Information and Communications Technology
- Computing(encompass all aspects including programming and digital literacy/online safety, there is also an appointed e-safety governor), Design Technology (DT), History, Geography, Religious Education, Art and
- Design, Music, Physical Education or Literacy/Numeracy.
- The implementation of the curriculum
- Gain an understanding of the process of assessment and tracking pupil cohorts and their attainment
- Assessing a group of pupils working together on a task
- The impact of learning on educational visits
- To see the impact of the religious characteristics in Church schools
- The impact of class sizes
- The deployment of support staff

- To see a class or teacher led assembly (to consider SMSC)
- Pupil Voice
- Behaviour for Learning
- Work Scrutiny

School Development Plan (SDP)

SDP meetings will be lengthy discussions and the visits will be based around the following questions:

- how well leaders, managers and pursue excellence, modelling professional standards in all of their work?
- What is the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation?
- How does the school use performance management and effectiveness of strategies for improving teaching, including the extent to which the school takes account of the 'Teachers' Standards'
- how well leaders and managers ensure that the curriculum raises outcomes for children?
- how well leaders and managers demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement?
- what is the impact of middle leadership and what is the extent to which schools are adequately developing their middle leadership / succession planning and the development of future leaders in the school
- what is the impact of governance?
- how effectively does school promote the confidence and engagement of parents, including by encouraging the use of Parent View
- what is the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all pupils are safe?

Learning Walks

The Governing Body oversees the strategic operation of the school so it is important that its members have a clear understanding of how the school works and how children are learning. To do this, it is suggested that governors undertake Learning Walks. These should be planned beforehand, be part of an annual schedule and be integral to the monitoring and evaluation calendar. Confidentiality should be emphasised and maintained at all times e.g. during the planning, the implementation and in any follow-up discussions.

The purposes of Learning Walks are to;

- Increase Governors' knowledge and understanding of the school through seeing at first-hand how it operates.
- Experience the impact of plans and policies
- Demonstrate to the school community that Governors are taking their roles and responsibilities seriously
- Establish and develop good working relationships
- Be able to contribute effectively to the school's self-evaluation
- Show support and encouragement and be able to celebrate successes and achievements
- See evidence of work matching the individual needs of pupils
- Be able to see that resources and the learning environment are adapted to meets the needs as appropriate.

This policy was reviewed by staff and presented to the Full Governing Body for approval at the meeting of Oct 2021

Head teacher: Jayne Neveu

Signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors: Chris Davis Signed:

Date:

