

# Chapelford Village Primary School



## Protocols and Procedures for Governing Body visits to school

### DOCUMENT STATUS

Version	Date	Action
1	February 2016	New Policy – protocols & procedures for GB Visits
1	Spring 2016	Adopted by Governing Body
2	Spring 2018	Revised policy – name change and additions to policy
2	Autumn 21	Review policy

## Contents

**Introduction**

**Pupil's Expectations**

**Preparing for the visit**

**Following up the visit**

**Lesson Observations**

**Monitoring the effectiveness  
of governor's visits**

**Protocol**

**Appendix 1 – Record of Visit**

**Appendix 2 - Learning Walk Check List**

## **Governors Visiting School**

### **Introduction**

Governing Bodies have a statutory duty to promote high standards of educational achievement at their school and they must monitor the school performance to that end. Governors cannot do this unless they know the school well. One way in which Governors can acquire up to date knowledge is to make periodic visits to the school, in addition to attending governor's meetings and school functions.

There are two types of "Governor visit" the formal and informal. The informal visits may involve Governors offering to help run a stall at a major fundraising event, attending the Christmas Carol Concert or taking part in a school visit. All these are valuable at earning the good will of the staff, as well as helping to establish good working relationships with the staff and pupils. However, they should not be regarded as an alternative to the formal visit.

The cycle of formal visits should be identified termly and they will usually relate to the priorities identified on the School Improvement Plan. The formal visit should usually last a whole or half a day, in which individual Governors act as the representative at the Governing Body, with the expectation that they will subsequently report back. Some formal visits may be allocated to specific Governors with designated responsibilities, for example Special Educational Needs, Premises, English and Maths.

### **The Monitoring Cycle**

Data Analysis is undertaken – ASP and IDSR for end of key stage and also internal class and cohort monitoring is undertaken in ISPP meetings – this information informs the emerging School Priorities in the **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Monitoring is undertaken in the forms of:

**ISPP Meetings**  
**Learning Walks**  
**Book Scrutiny**  
**Lesson Observations**  
**Data Analysis**  
**Pupil Voice**  
**External Reviews**  
**Governor Monitoring**  
**Appraisal**

The outcomes from monitoring are then fed into the school self-evaluation – **SES**.  
The monitoring also informs required **CPD and support for staff**.  
Monitoring informs developments to the school improvement plan /specific subject plans.

### **The Rational for Governors Visiting School**

- To enable Governors to fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities
- To enable Governors to be better informed at Governors' Meetings and to be able to make an informed contribution to the strategic work of the school

- To gain a better understanding of particular areas of school provision
- To understand more about the deployment of school resources
- To be better informed about the implementation of the school's policies
- To get to know staff better
- To talk to the staff and pupils about their experiences in school
- To listen to the voice of the child
- To be able to demonstrate that the Governing Body of the school take their responsibilities seriously

It is worth remembering that "Governors are not there as inspectors or to pass judgements on the work of individual teachers and much will depend upon the sensitivity of the governors to the feelings of the teaching staff about being observed." (A Guide for Governors)

### **Pupil's Expectations**

Pupils were interviewed in order to gain their perception of the value of governor's visits to school. The children view the visits as a positive way to improve the school. They believe there are a number of ways in which governors can become more involved in the life and work of the school for example:

- Vision Team meetings
- School Council Meetings
- Visits to talk to children about their learning
- Visits to school to help the children with their work
- Visits to the classrooms
- Assemblies
- Lunchtimes – to share a meal
- Performances/activities/celebrations

The children thought governors needed to be mindful of the following when they made their visits. Governors:

- Need to understand how the school works - for example changes that are made
- Needed to respect confidentiality
- Need to celebrate good work
- Need to listen seriously to what children say about the school and try to do something to improve the school

### **Preparing to Visit**

Governors, who are planning on making a visit to school, whether it is formal or informal, need to have made prior arrangements with the Headteacher /DHT.

They need to be clear about the purpose of the visit and what they will be focussing on. The length of the visit will be agreed beforehand, and any additional information that may be useful will have been circulated beforehand.

It is important that everyone involved in the visit is prepared for it, and that all teachers are aware of the purpose. The Headteacher/DHT will approach the teachers concerned before the visit takes place.

### **Follow up to the Visit**

At the end of their time in school the Headteacher/DHT will try to meet with Governors to discuss the visit.

All formal visits should be reported back to the full Governing Body using the report visit card. When reporting back it is important to remember that Governor visit should relate to their responsibilities as governors. It is the Head Teacher's job to manage the school, in accordance with the aims and objectives and policies approved by the Governing Body. To judge the quality of teaching and learning in the school requires specialist skill, and Governors are not in a position to make those judgments based on short occasional visits. When Governors use visits to gain information to help in them in their role, they do so as observers and not as inspectors.

The report should be written. A **brief** written report serves better than an oral report in that it helps to clarify the issues for discussion or suggestions for further action. However, as a written report, like other papers from the Governing Body, it is open to public inspection, **it should avoid naming individuals**. It should not be tabled at the meeting, but given to the Clerk in time for distribution with the agenda. The report should also be discussed with the Head teacher and the Chair of Governors in advance of the meeting.

### **Governors' Lesson Observations**

Although not all the visits by Governors will involve lesson observations, a great deal of time will be spent in classrooms. As well as watching the teaching and learning that takes place, there will also be the opportunity to move around and talk to the pupils about their work, as well as the look at the classroom environment i.e. displays, resources, books labelled equipment etc. At the end of the lesson, time will be arranged for the Governor and teacher to talk about the lesson and address any questions.

When carrying out lesson observations it is important that all Governors are aware that there are children with special needs in every classroom and teachers use a variety of appropriate strategies for dealing with the behaviour.

### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of Governor Visits**

All Governors are accountable to the Governing Body for the formal visit that the individual has made on their behalf. The visit will always contribute to the relationship between the Governing Body and the staff. Reflecting on a visit can make subsequent visits for effective. Governors should always ask themselves:

- Were the objectives for the visit clear?

- Were they realised and if not why not?
- What if anything could have been done to make the visit more useful?
- Did you require any additional information to enable you to place the visit in context?

All Governors are welcome to visit the school, in the belief that they will help to keep the Governing Body better informed about the work of the staff, pupils, and parents. It is our intention that this policy should support the development of a good working relationship with the Governing Body and the staff, so that we all work together on planning how best to support the aims and objectives of the school.

## **Protocol for Visiting Governors**

### **Before the Visit**

Governors will each identify a particular area of responsibility or interest which will be the focus of their visits, for example:

- A Strategic School Improvement Plan Priority
- Safeguarding
- Special Educational Needs
- Curriculum areas including Literacy and Numeracy
- Premises and Health and Safety

**Governors will always make arrangements for the visit, with both the Headteacher /DHT and the teachers/staff involved.**

## **Aims of the Visit**

The main aims of the visit will be:

- To gain a deeper understanding of their responsibilities as a governor
- To get to know the staff and develop a supportive relationship
- To get to know the school and to get to know the children
- To focus on their particular area of responsibility or on an agreed aspect of the strategic school development plan

## **During the Visit**

- Governors will respect confidentiality at all times but will also have due regard for safeguarding policy and procedures
- Governors will remember that they are not visiting the school in an inspectoral role
- Governors will comply with and observe any school rules and/or routines

## **After the visit**

- Governors will thank the relevant school staff
- Governors will discuss their school visit with the Headteacher
- Governors will respect rules of confidentiality at all times
- Governors will complete the relevant Proforma for their visit
- Governors will circulate and present the report to other members of the Governing Body at their next full meeting



**Record of Visit Impact Report**

Name of governor		
Date and time of visit		
Involving:		
<b>Focus of the visit</b>	<b>Monitoring to be undertaken.</b>	<b>Date</b>
Governor Involvement		

What is going well?	Evidence base...
Impact of actions ...	Next steps identified.

**Signed:**

<b>Headteacher</b>		
<b>Staff involved</b>		
<b>Governor</b>		

### Aid Memoir for Governors – A Learning Walk Check List

Checklist for a Learning Walk			
Focus	Example	Observation	Next Steps
Learning Environment	Are: Targets displayed? Key learning Objectives evident? Success criteria on display? Aid memoirs for learning in place? Labels used to encourage independence? Working walls in use and are children adding to them? Learning walls in place? Clear areas demarcated? Different subjects displayed etc? Room set out for easy access? Rooms attractive, tidy and well resourced? Are high expectations tangible?		
Who is doing the talking?	Do all pupils get the opportunity to get actively involved?		
Is there opportunity for interaction?	Can the pupils work together in pairs, groups etc? Do they know how to work together? Do they work together effectively displaying effective behaviours for learning?		
Is the setting appropriate for that style of lesson?	Are pupils sitting in groups? Working in pairs? Can they all see what is going on?		

Checklist for a Learning Walk			
Focus	Example	Observation	Next Steps
Are all pupils on task?	Are they engaged and actively involved in the task and learning ? Can they work independently without constantly asking their teacher for help?		
Do the pupils Know what they are learning as opposed to what they are doing?	Can they say what they are learning and why?		
Is there differentiation?	Can all pupils access the lesson at their level?		
Questioning	Does the teacher use questions that challenge all pupils? What kinds of questions are being used? Are they open ended? Is any time given for reflection?		
Modelling and Demonstrating	Do the pupils know what the aim of the lesson is - the final picture? Does the teacher demonstrate how to get there in clear easy steps?		
Problem-solving	Are the pupils given opportunities that challenge their thinking? Can they work together to develop solutions?		
Planning	Does the lesson follow the planning? Are layered targets evident in the teaching?		

Checklist for a Learning Walk			
Focus	Example	Observation	Next Steps
	<p>Does the teacher audit previous learning?</p> <p>Is there a plenary – a time at the end of the lesson to share the outcomes and what has been achieved?</p>		
Deployment of teaching support – within class teaching	<p>Are support staff clear of their role – understand the planning – fully involved in the learning taking place?</p> <p>Do they only work with SEN children?</p> <p>Do teaching assistants support and promote positive behavior in the classroom?</p> <p>Is the TA adding value to the learning and work of the pupils and teacher?</p>		
Assessment	<p>Who is working with the target group and what are they focussing on?</p> <p>Are the children on task?</p> <p>Are the pupils involved in their own assessments?</p> <p>Do children know what they have to do next to reach the next level?</p>		
Feedback and Academic Guidance	<p>Are the children's books marked and up to date?</p> <p>Are they marked using the school policy?</p> <p>Are children responding to the teachers marking – MAD TIME ?</p> <p>Do the children understand the marking policy and how it can help them improve their learning?</p>		
ICT	<p>Are the children and the teacher making effective use of ICT?</p>		

Checklist for a Learning Walk			
Focus	Example	Observation	Next Steps
Progress	Can the children demonstrate that they know more by the end of the lesson than they did at the beginning?		
Enjoyment	Do the children enjoy the lesson? Is the teacher/TA enjoying the lesson?		
Behaviour	Are the children well behaved? Is any inappropriate behaviour dealt with quickly and positively?		