



Governor school visits policy

Date policy adopted: July 2021

Date for review: July 2022

Signed: (Chair on behalf of governing board)

Signed: (Headteacher/CEO on behalf of the school/trust)

Policy aims

This policy aims to ensure that all governors understand:

- the purpose of monitoring visits
- the expectations for carrying out visits including preparation, expected conduct and reporting back to the governing board

Purpose of visits carried out by governors

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows governors/trustees to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development as identified in the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in the life, work and achievements of a school
- experience the culture and ethos of the school

Monitoring visits should focus on:

- strategic priorities and key policies
- the evaluation of progress and how this is being monitored within the school
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils and well-being of staff are being met

Frequency of visits

The frequency of governance visits should be in accordance with the schedule established by the governing board and agreed with school leaders and relevant staff. Visits should be scheduled to allow governors to see relevant activities, subject leads, staff members, relevant documentation as necessary.

Arranging and preparing for visits

Visits should be arranged according to the agreed schedule set by the governing body, with adequate notice, and agreed with the relevant members of staff.

Due regard should be given to:

- how the visit fits with the schedule of board and committee meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion
- how to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life
- the workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits

Governors are encouraged to prepare for their visit. This may include:

- reading and familiarising yourself with the governing board's protocol for visits and the expected conduct
- reading and familiarising yourself with the school's policy for visitors (this is different from the governor/trustee visits policy) that includes relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions
- reading the background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information
- clarifying the purpose of the visit with the head teacher and or relevant member of staff
- confirming the visit schedule and activities

Conduct on visits

When visiting the school in a governing capacity, you should:

- arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures (such as signing in and producing identification)
- adopt a friendly and positive approach
- be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this
- if you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching)
- any questions asked should be closely linked to the purpose of your visit

Governors are also expected to behave in line with the governing board's code of conduct, being aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.

Expectations following a visit

A report should be completed as soon as possible after each visit. A draft will be shared with the headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next governing board meeting (this may be the full governing board or a committee, as appropriate).