



Governor Visits Policy

Policy schedule	
Written	Spring 2026
Date shared with Governors	Spring 2026
To be reviewed	Spring 2028

1. The purpose of this policy

The core strategic functions of a Governing Board include:

- Ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school is clearly defined
- Ensuring that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

The Governing Board, as a corporate body, has additional responsibilities in relation to areas such as Health and Safety and Child Protection and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). Additionally, it has an important role in monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and understanding the progress that is being made towards targets set out in the School Development Plan (SDP).

Visiting the classrooms and speaking to staff is one way in which this can be achieved. Governors are an important and integral part of the school community and are welcome in school. Governors are expected to be involved in a formal way through their governorship and are also encouraged to be involved in an informal way through attending school community events for example.

There must be an effective partnership between governors and staff, based on mutual understanding and trust, which benefits the whole school community.

This policy will provide an agreed framework within which governors will plan and carry out school visits.

2. Background

It is essential that governors see classes at work and be familiar with the life of the school during the working day. This enables governors to be good ambassadors of the school and increases their knowledge base, so that they can make wise decisions and provide effective support and challenge at Governing Board meetings.

In addition to visiting the school and attending meetings, governors should ensure that they undertake appropriate training to support them in their role.

Governors have no automatic right as individuals to visit the school, and it is crucial that governors and the staff understand the governors' role – in particular that governors do not have an inspectorial role and have no right to go into school without notice.

The Governing Board is a corporate body which means that no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full Governing Board; all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made and the overriding concern of all governors is the welfare of the school as a whole.

Everyone concerned should understand that governors go into school primarily to learn and not to judge. Most visits occur because the Governing Body has decided it can be an important way for governors to measure success and understand the progress of activities and priorities identified in the School Development Plan (SDP).

Governors should be aware of the need for confidentiality and be familiar with the Safeguarding Policy.

Governors should be both sensitive, supportive and positive towards staff, pupils and the school environment.

3. Guidance and scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the [maintained schools governance guide](#).

3.1 Occasional visits (e.g. learning walks)

Governors will visit the school on an occasional basis as such visits enable governors to:

- Fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school
- Observe whether the school is implementing its policies and improvement plans
- Observe how its policies and improvement plans are working in practice
- Pre-arranged with the headteacher

3.2 Focused visits (e.g. formal monitoring visits)

Governors will also take part in focused governor monitoring visits, which should be:

- In line with School Development Plan (SDP) priorities
- For a specific purpose linked to the governing board's responsibilities, such as safeguarding or SEND
- Pre-arranged with the headteacher

3.3 Governors are not inspectors

Governors:

- Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- Will not manage the school or interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school

4. Visit programmes

Governors will carry out regular school visits in order to meet the board's statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness.

There are 2 types of visits:

- **Formal monitoring visits**, where governors discuss the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member
- **Learning walks**, where governors will go around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area and are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils

Governors will carry out school visits according to the following schedule:

4.1 Governors for health and safety, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), finance and safeguarding

These governors will attend:

- A termly 1-to-1 monitoring visit with corresponding staff leads
- Ad-hoc meetings as required or requested on issues specific to their areas of responsibility

3.2 All governors

All governors will:

- Carry out at least 1 learning walk or formal monitoring each term
- Attend at least 1 school assembly in the year

5. Before a visit

Governors will:

- Notify the headteacher and the chair before scheduling a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware as a matter of courtesy
- Schedule an appointment with relevant members of staff in order to avoid friction and ensure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are more productive when conducted during a school day
- Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time
- Clarify the purpose of the visit in advance with the chair, the headteacher and/or relevant member of staff
- Send questions in advance to the staff member, so everyone can feel properly prepared
- Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures
- Let the headteacher know as soon as possible if the visit needs to be re-arranged or cancelled

5. During a visit

Governors should know how to conduct themselves appropriately during visits in order to minimise disruption for staff and pupils, and to receive the maximum benefit from the time spent.

Governors will:

- Be on time and meet with the headteacher ahead of the visit
- Always wear a governor/ visitor's badge
- Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are to be avoided unless specifically agreed with the headteacher for a specific purpose
- Remain as observers; they are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them
- Ensure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so
- Check with teachers before speaking to pupils
- Pass on any concerns the staff raise with the relevant people
- Be friendly but professional, and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils

Governors will not:

- Pass comment on classroom practice or any specific incidents that happen, judge teaching methods, assess the quality of teaching, or comment on the extent of learning
- Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school
- Behave in a manner that would make staff feel that they are there to inspect, e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard
- Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the chair of governors or headteacher after the visit

6. After a visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the form attached as Appendix A. In completing the report, governors will:

- Use neutral language at all times

- Remain observational, and describe only what they see
- Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit and its strategic role

Once complete, governors will submit their reports to the following people, in the following order:

- A more experienced governor for feedback – if they've been in place for less than 1 year
- The relevant staff member, both as a courtesy and to check for accuracy
- The headteacher, as a courtesy
- Each visit record should be sent to the Clerk to the Governors who will save onto the Governor Hub. The Chair will then ensure the visits are minuted and feedback from the visits are discussed at the next Full Governing Body meeting.

7. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the headteacher and agreed by the Governing Board.



Appendix 1- Governor Visit Report

Name of Governor:	Date of Visit:
Area of responsibility: (if applicable)	
Classes/staff visited:	Purpose of visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reference to SDP, delegated responsibilities etc.
Summary of activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">E.g. talking to staff and pupils, looking at resources, observed playtime etc.	
What have I learned as a result of my visit? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Summary of the key facts you have learned, impressions formed as a result of your visit	Positive comments about the visit:
Aspects I would like clarified/questions that I have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Anything you were unsure about or did not understandAnything you forgot to ask or questions that your visit has raised	
Ideas for future visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none">How you would like to follow up your visit (if appropriate)	
Other comments:	
Staff and Headteacher comments:	
Signed (Governor) _____ Date _____	
Signed (Subject Co-ordinator/Teacher/Headteacher) _____ Date _____	