



## Policy & Procedures for Governor Visits

Category: Non-Statutory	Approved by: Full Governing Body
Approved: June 2022	Next Approval due: June 2025
Initial Review by: Chair of Governors	Formal Review by: Teaching Learning & Care Committee
Linked Policies: Curriculum Policy	

### Our Christian Vision:

*Built on the rock of Christian faith, we work as a community to create an environment which enables all to flourish. Jesus welcomed everyone and we embrace diversity, celebrating our different gifts and successes. Like St Peter, we are motivated by our values, learn from our mistakes and strive for the best outcome for all.*

### Introduction

Governors are required to monitor and evaluate the progress that the school is making towards the priorities and targets set out in the School Development Plan, and to assess the impact of the school's vision and values on the Christian ethos of the school. Through visiting the school during the working day, governors can see at first hand the impact of its policies and plans. A carefully planned visit by a governor can generate evidence that will inform decision-making by the whole governing body or its committees. It is essential that governors and staff are clear about the reasons for such visits and have agreed the way they will be conducted. A governor represents the whole governing body during a visit to the school.

### POLICY STATEMENT

Governor visits are intended to:

- provide a framework for governors to make focused visits to schools to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of pupils and staff and to identify further areas for development.
- develop a working relationship between the staff, children and the governing body.
- enable the staff and governors to understand each other's roles.
- give the staff a greater opportunity to share ideas with governors.
- see the impact of the Christian ethos on the school.
- witness policies and procedures in action.
- provide an opportunity for governors to reflect on findings of their visit and its impact.

Visits are not about making a judgement or assessment on the quality of teaching or to pursue a personal agenda.

## PROCEDURE

All Governors and Associate Members visiting the school should sign into the visitors book to capture their visit on arrival and complete a record note of their visit (see appendix 1), sending a copy to the Headteacher and the governing body Clerk.

School visits fall broadly into three categories.

### Learning Walks

A learning walk should be linked to either the School Development Plan or Governor Action Plan, the Christian Vision of the school, a strategic area or legislative and DFE imperative.

Learning walks are a process developed for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation and are led by governors independently. Observations should be recorded on the Governor Learning Walk and Visitor Record (see appendix 1) which is fed back to the Head Teacher and Chair of governors as part of the governance process.

The governing body with the help of the head teacher and staff, and ahead of the start of an academic year, will organise a schedule of learning walks with a clear focus relating to the School Development Plan and the Governor Action Plan. These will be carried out on a rota basis to ensure that every governor has the opportunity to complete a learning walk once during the academic year. The walk should be undertaken in pairs of Governors from the relevant committee and include the link Governor where appropriate.

### Link Governor and Staff Meetings

Termly meetings with Governor and staff leads in the key areas of safeguarding, health and safety, and SEN/PPG/Equality should take place to ensure compliance.

Curriculum link governors and staff will maintain termly contact to discuss progress in focussed areas linked to the School Development Plan or the Christian Vision for the school.

A record of the meeting should be completed on the Governor Learning Walk and Visit Record which is to be given to the clerk and the results shared with the relevant committee.

### Less Formal School Visits

These are a valuable opportunity to see the staff and children in a less formal environment, and should be undertaken in addition to learning walks and staff meetings.

- Volunteering within the classroom
- Assisting or running school clubs
- Accompanying school trips
- Attending Church services
- Supporting school performances or events

- Involvement in or attending whole school assemblies
- Meeting with the Head Teacher
- Attending Staff Meetings by invitation
- Meeting with Head Teacher

Governors should inform the clerk to the Governors when an informal visit has been made.

### **Prior to a visit**

Before the visit, the following needs to be clarified with the Headteacher or member of staff whose class is to be observed.

- When would be an ideal time and date for the visit to take place?
- What is the purpose of the visit?
- Are governors to be accompanied around the school?
- Which classrooms/staff are to be visited?
- What are the code and conduct expectations of the governor?
- Is there a focus for the term, whether directly relating to the visit or not.

Governors should understand the feedback and marking system within the school (see policy).

### **During the visit**

The visit is not about making judgements on the quality or method of teaching, or the extent of learning taking place, it is to generate evidence to inform decision making.

When in classrooms, governors should observe the agreed focus of the visit. Staff may ask you to introduce yourself to the class and explain your role as a governor. For learning walks, as a guide it would be expected to spend around 15 minutes within any classroom, plus conversations with teachers (again, being mindful of their need to be with the children). Other visits may include a book scrutiny, pupil voice (for example, taking a small group out during a lesson, or speaking to children during break time) and reading any pre-existing reports or planning documents. Staff will not receive feedback directly from governors, but it would be courteous to thank the class for the visit.

With all visits to school, it is important that governors are sensitive to the additional pressure that can be felt by teaching staff, and the potential to feel 'under scrutiny'.

### **After the visit**

Following a formal visit Governors might meet with the Head Teacher to discuss how the visit has helped develop their understanding of the focus area and to clarify any points they are uncertain about. The Governor Learning Walk and Visit Report should be completed, e-mailed and forwarded to the Clerk to be made available to the head teacher and all Governors. It is not necessary to complete a report following informal meetings, though a record of these visits should be emailed to the Clerk.

### **Monitoring and review**

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Teaching, Learning and Care committee. Governors will review the visits and evaluate the impact on their role through FGB meetings. School staff will have the opportunity to feed into a review through the Headteacher.



## Appendix 1

### **GOVERNOR LEARNING WALK AND VISIT REPORT**

This form should be completed within 5 days of completing the school visit and emailed to the Headteacher (once finalised this form should be sent to the Clerk for record keeping).

<b>Name of Governor:</b>	<b>Date of visit:</b>
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**\*NO CHILDREN OR STAFF ARE TO BE NAMED IN THIS REPORT\***

**Learning Walk/Link Governor Meeting\*** delete as applicable

**Purpose of visit:** SDP/ Governor Action Plan, Christian Vision, strategic area, legislative or DofE imperative

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**Brief report on Activity:** how observation was conducted, which year group(s) participated; where did the discussions take place; how long did it take; what other topics or questions were included; what feedback did you receive.

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**Findings from visit including:**

- Observations on general behaviour (comment on level of confidence, knowledge of subject, courtesy and politeness))
- Classroom environment (consistency of teaching, use of resources, display material relative to the topic)
- State of children's learning: (this may include looking at children's work and witnessing language of learning)
- Christian Ethos (pupil engagement in worship, demonstration of British values e.g. tolerance, respect, self-esteem, valuing difference )

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**Areas discussed with HT or member of staff** (feedback following Learning Walks **must** take place with Head Teacher before the report is given to the Chair)

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**How will our findings impact on our effectiveness as a Governor.**

(classroom interaction, knowledge of curriculum relative to age groups, meeting SDP targets, confirmation of achievements & development.

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date passed to Head Teacher/Clerk \_\_\_\_\_