

Association of Schools
Collett, FHEC, St Luke's
Policies, Guidance and Procedures



Governor Visits Procedures

Date established by governing body: 10 December 2013

Reviewed December 2015

Review by: September 2019

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make focused monitoring visits to the school so that they can build an effective working relationship with the staff and have a better understanding of the context in which they work. This is essential in facilitating appropriate challenge by the governing body and timely support for the staff.

Governors will be able to observe policies and plans being implemented on a day-to-day basis, and their findings should help the whole governing body and its committees make well-informed judgments about their relevance and impact.

In some cases it may be appropriate for a governor to observe a lesson but it must be understood that visits are not about making judgments on the quality of individual teachers' work; that is the headteacher's responsibility. Nor are they about checking on the progress of individual children or pursuing personal agendas.

Who was consulted

All staff and governors contributed to this policy and will be consulted at least annually on its impact.

Relationship to other policies

The focus of a visit will be on one or more of the policies in place in the school, on an element of the curriculum, or on a specific aspect of the school development plan or SEF.

Equality impact

If, in the process of a visit, issues are raised relating to the school's General Duty these will be highlighted in the record of the visit.

Roles and responsibilities of headteacher, other staff, governors

The governing body will, with the help of the headteacher and staff, organise a schedule of visits throughout the year. The aim will be to achieve a minimum of one visit per governor per year. Visits may be conducted in pairs. The headteacher will guide the governing body on the areas of the policies, Ofsted framework, school improvement plan priorities and targets to be covered each term.

Individual governors or pairs of governors will, with the guidance of their committee or whole governing body, identify which of those aspects to focus on. Choice of focus will be informed by the terms of reference for each committee and the specialisms of each governor.

When organising and conducting a visit, governors will be courteous and considerate, at all times respecting the professional roles of the headteacher and staff. Working to the annual schedule agreed with the head and staff, they will confirm with the headteacher the date, timing and focus of each visit at least one week in advance. This will include agreeing what will be observed and to whom it would be useful to talk. *[Once the initial schedule has been drawn up the headteacher may prefer governors to liaise directly with the staff concerned.]* They will discuss the proposed agenda with staff involved. They will seek suggestions from staff about what it would be appropriate to look for. On a visit focused on fostering children's independence as learners, for example, it would be wise to ask the teacher what children will be seen to be doing if they are becoming more independent in their learning. There may be a list of criteria that could be given to the governor. The governor will prepare by reading relevant documentation/guidance.

At the end of each visit, the governor(s) will discuss what they have observed with the staff involved and clarify any points they are uncertain about. They will jointly agree key points to report to the governing body.

Before leaving the school the governor(s) will aim to discuss their observations with the headteacher, if that has been agreed, and agree how and when they will report to the governing body.

Teachers and support staff will at all times be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by the governing body to the school. They will make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits so as to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the evidence that could be shared with governors. Whenever practical they will be proactive in fostering the working relationship, for example by inviting their link governor to relevant staff meetings and training sessions.

See the National Audit Office guidance *Improving School Performance: A guide for school governors* for examples of questions which could be asked/issues that could be a focus. Governors need to be sensitive to issues relating to confidentiality. They should not expect to study data about specific named children. While staff should take every care to anonymise any information or examples of work it may be possible for governors to identify individuals in discussions of progress and attainment of children in vulnerable or underperforming groups, such as children with special needs or looked-after children. Governors must be fully mindful of and committed to absolute confidentiality in such circumstances.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at committees, and, where relevant, issues may be raised at governing body meetings. At the final meeting of each academic year *the Chair of Governors* will

report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus. This report, and minutes of meetings when reports of visits were discussed, will enable the governing body to judge the extent to which the information gathered informed the governing body's understanding of the school's performance. This will also generate data for the leadership and management section of the self-evaluation summary.

Staff governors will feed back from colleagues. They will be asked to identify what worked well and what if anything needs to be reconsidered. They will also be asked to describe the extent to which their colleagues' understanding of the governing body's role has been enhanced.

GOVERNOR'S VISIT

Governor's name:	Governor Link (responsibility):	Date:
Teacher's name:	Subject:	Class:
Activity visited:		
Focus:		
Comments:		
Questions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To: • To:		
Teacher's comments:		

Signed: Date: