



Governor Monitoring Visits Policy

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1. Introduction

The Governing Board has 3 core functions - ensuring:

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

Monitoring visits form part of Governors' monitoring activity and are an essential source of evidence for the Governing Board enabling both better challenge of information presented by the school and informed contribution to discussions with Ofsted Inspectors.

The DfE's Maintained Schools Governance Guide (March 2024) states that:

Occasional visits to schools enable governors to:

- *fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school*
- *see whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans*
- *see how their policies and improvement plans are working in practice*

and

Focused governor monitoring visits should be:

- *in line with SIP priorities*
- *for an identified purpose linked to the governing body's responsibilities, such as safeguarding*
- *pre-arranged with the headteacher or executive headteacher*

2. Roles

The Governing Board believes that its corporate responsibility should be shared equally amongst all Governors. Specific monitoring roles will be agreed/confirmed by the Governing Board at the first meeting of the academic year. Roles may alter, depending upon school priorities but should always include the statutory areas and monitoring of the effectiveness of leaders in improving the curriculum and therefore outcomes for pupils.

The monitoring roles in place for the 2024/2025 academic year are:

- Additional funding to include Pupil Premium/PE and Sports Premium
- CiC/CPiC
- Safeguarding
- SEND

- Early Years
- All National Curriculum subjects
- Attendance
- Behaviour

3. Visits

Governors do not have the right to visit the school unannounced.

Formal visits should be arranged with the Headteacher, with adequate notice and agreed with the relevant member of staff. Visits should not clash with important events or busy periods in school life.

The Governing Board has produced an Annual Programme of Monitoring Visits which sets out the date and purpose of visits planned for the year to help everyone plan their diaries and prepare accordingly. Formal visits are likely to be linked to a specific issue or governor monitoring activity, with informal visits for special events such as an assembly or a school trip. Both formal and informal visits should take place in accordance this policy.

Governors should be mindful that visits to school are not about:

- inspection or investigation
- making judgements about the professional expertise of the Teacher
- checking on your own child
- pursuing a personal agenda
- arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas
- monopolising staff time

Governors must maintain confidentiality at all times in relation to visits.

3.1 Formal Visits

Formal monitoring visits are important to support Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governor monitoring is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar, and all formal visits will be detailed on the Annual Programme of Monitoring Visits. Visits provide an opportunity for Governors to evaluate policies in action, increase their understanding and develop a first-hand knowledge of the school to enable them to ask informed questions during Governing Board meetings.

It is an expectation of the Governing Board that all Governors complete at least one formal monitoring visit per year in relation to each area of responsibility.

Formal monitoring visits will have a clear focus, mirror the school improvement plan priorities and enable the Governing Board to have a clear view of their link area. All

monitoring visits will consider safeguarding and the work of the school in meeting the needs of all pupils.

Typically, visits will be linked to one of the school's strategic priorities but may also be linked to/suggest information about:

- a particular subject, key stage or class
- attendance
- behaviour
- health and safety
- impact on the school of any changes e.g. reduced classes in a key stage
- safeguarding
- SEND
- the condition and maintenance of the premises
- the use of additional funding such as Pupil Premium or PE/Sports Premium
- the use made of the buildings or the site
- use of resources

Following the visit, a written report will be produced on the agreed template (Appendix A) and shared with the Headteacher, Chair and member of staff involved. Once approved, all monitoring reports will be uploaded to GovernorHub for consideration by the Governing Board at the next appropriate termly meeting, to allow the knowledge gained from the visit to be shared with all Governors. It is an expectation that other Governors will have reviewed the report and where appropriate, discuss the content in an appropriate forum.

3.2 Informal Visits

Informal visits are those on a more personal basis but must always be with the knowledge and approval of the Headteacher.

Visits may include:

- assisting at a school function or on a school trip
- attendance at assemblies/celebration events
- Chair's regular visit to meet the Headteacher
- tour of the school for new Governors as part of induction
- volunteering in school or in a class on a regular basis

3.3 Virtual Visits

Where appropriate monitoring can be undertaken virtually. The Annual Programme of Monitoring Visits must document where a visit is to be conducted virtually.

Virtual visits should be planned in the same way as in person visits.

4. Safeguarding

It is important that all Governors have regard for Safeguarding expectations as part of any visit to school. Governors should consider how pupils are kept safe, made aware of the risks they face (age appropriate) both in the real and virtual worlds through the curriculum.

The following should be considered:

- are agreed procedures and practices followed e.g. sign in procedures
- are staff practicing policies e.g. wearing lanyards, not using mobile devices
- do pupils and staff appear confident and safe in their interactions
- how is information shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to keep all staff and Governors safeguarding knowledge up to date – is it relevant, current and meets the needs of all groups
- are the school grounds and indoor spaces risk assessed in providing pupils with a secure environment to learn and thrive

5. Protocol for Visits

In addition to the Governing Board's Code of Conduct, the following agreed protocol must be observed during all visits to the school:

5.1 Before the Visit

- familiarise yourself with the Governor Monitoring Visits Policy
- contact the Headteacher and/or member of staff to agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- contact the member of staff to clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations during the visit.
- ask for any specific documentation to be made available in advance of your meeting
- prepare questions and submit to member of staff in advance.

5.2 During the visit

- remember you are making the visit on behalf of the Governing Board, **it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the Governing Board**
- arrive on time with your i.d. and any paperwork for the visit.
- wait in the Reception area to be collected by the member of staff
- decide how you will be introduced and what your role in the school/classroom will be.
- act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the Teacher
- don't distract the Teacher during a lesson but be prepared to talk and show interest
- be courteous and friendly not critical
- interact, don't interrupt

- remember why you are there - don't lose sight of the purpose of your visit
- listen to staff and pupils
- if you are meeting with pupils for a discussion as part of the visit, please ensure you follow the appropriate procedures as advised by staff
- adhere to all safeguarding practices
- be calm and enjoy the visit but do not go beyond the agreed timescale

5.3 After the Visit

- thank the member of staff for allowing you to conduct your visit
- discuss your observations with the member of staff and use the opportunity to seek clarification on issues you may be unclear about
- speak to the Headteacher or DSL immediately following your visit with any safeguarding or Health and Safety concerns
- say goodbye to the Headteacher
- complete a written report of your visit using the agreed template and send to the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the member of staff for approval
- reflect on your visit – how did it go? has the visit enhanced relationships/ Have I learned more about the school? what has been the impact and what is next?
- upload the agreed report to GovernorHub for consideration at the next termly meeting

6. Review

This policy should be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

Governing Body Monitoring Proforma

NAME:	Date:
Governor Responsibility:	Staff seen during visit
Focus of previous visit (if applicable);	
Reason for visit (i.e. routine monitoring, specific focus):	
Links with School Improvement Plan	
Preparation/background to visit (eg reading policy, discussion with Head/teacher, LA focus	

Information gathered during visit:

(e.g. What you saw, what you learned, would you would like clarified. How long the visit lasted)

Any key issues arising for the governing body

(e.g. the way resources are allocated; the way the school communicates; progress in implementing a key policy)

Action following governing body meeting

(record any action agreed by the governing body with regard to this visit e.g. training for governors)

Signed	Signed
<i>Governor</i>	<i>Headteacher</i>

Name:		Date of visit:	
Governor's Area of Responsibility:			
Focus of visit:			
Member(s) of staff involved and role:			
Link to School Improvement Plan/SEF:			
Sources of information used:	Viewed/Undertaken ✓	Information Type	Comments
		School Improvement Plan	
		Policies	
		Data	
		SEF	
		Classroom observation	
		Discussion with pupils / staff	
		Pupil Books	
SEND	e.g. seek assurances that pupils' needs are being met		
Summary of activities	e.g. talking to staff/pupils, looking at specific resources		
Key findings:	e.g. what have I learned as a result of my visit (relate back to focus) Anything to note in relation to safeguarding?		
Safeguarding	e.g. seek assurances that pupils' needs are being met		
Impact and questions for Governors to consider:			
Key questions for next visit:			
Date of next visit:			