



Governor Visits Policy

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Review schedule:	Triennially
Policy Area:	Curriculum

1. Aims and Ethos

At All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery it is our aim to raise standards by promoting a school ethos that is underpinned by core Christian values. Our Christian values support all areas of learning and can contribute to pupils' motivation to learn. It is recognised that this will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children. All our policies and decision making are formed through the lenses of these Christian values to ensure that our school lives them out in all aspects of its collective life.

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all governors to follow when making visits to the school. Governors do not have an automatic right to enter All Saints School. When they do so, they are invited guests.

This policy sets out the procedure which all governors are expected to follow when visiting All Saints School and how they are expected to report back on that visit to the governing board.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that all governors understand their role and purpose so school visits are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

2. Guidance and Scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the [Governance Handbook](#) (section 3.4.2).

2.1 Governors are observers

Boards must know their schools to maintain robust accountability. Governor visits are a formal part of the overall monitoring programme for the school. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors will:

- Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school improvement plan
- Observe how those procedures are working in practice
- Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

2.2 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

For those governors who wish to spend time in a classroom, they will make it clear about their purpose in doing so.

3. Visits programme

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:

Type of Visit	Frequency	Reporting to
Health & Safety, SEND, Safeguarding	Termly monitoring visits with corresponding staff leads Any additional ad hoc visits on issues specific to their area of responsibility.	Full Governing Body
Subject Focus Visit	Termly monitoring visit with the subject lead (focus subject areas linked to the SDP)	Full Governing Body
All Governors	Carry out at least 1 Learning Walk or Monitoring visit each term Attend at least 1 school Collective Worship each year Attend at least 1 educational visit or school led extra-curricular activity each year	Full Governing Body

4. Before a visit

Governors will:

- Have read this policy and be familiar with the purpose of Governor Visits in general
- Have discussed the Governor Visits with the Chair of Governors or relevant Governor responsible for coordinating visits, to clarify the purpose of the visit and ensure it forms part of the agreed monitoring programme for the school (Termly Operational Plan – TOP)
- Notify the headteacher and the chair before scheduling a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit
- 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 with the relevant member of staff
- Send any specific questions in advance to the staff member so everyone can feel properly prepared
- Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures

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:

- Follow safeguarding policies and procedures while on site, including reporting concerns to a DSL if necessary
- Be on time and meet with the headteacher ahead of the visit
- Always wear a 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 than 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 (unless concerns are regarding safeguarding, in which case the safeguarding policy and procedures must be followed)

6. After a visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable and within two weeks. The usual expectation is that the last 30 minutes of a visit can be used to write up the report. A template visit form is provided in Appendix A.

In completing the report, governors will ensure to:

- 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
- The chair of the governing board or the relevant committee, as agreed

7. New Governors

Governors within 1 year of their appointment would normally not conduct a Governor Visit alone – they should shadow or be supported in their own visit by a more experienced Governor. This will help them to understand the role of the Governor and the visits made. When completing a written report, it should be shared with a more experienced Governor to seek supportive feedback and suggestions as appropriate. This is because Governor Visit reports form part of the school's monitoring record.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governors every three years (or sooner if required) to ensure that it remains appropriate and relevant. There will also be an annual discussion of the policy to ensure all Governors are clear on their role and the purpose of Governor Visits.

APPENDIX A: Governor Visit Form

All Saints CE Primary School & Nursery

Nurturing, Resilience & Achievement for all!



Governor Visit Form

Part 1: plan the visit

Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus	
Relevant school objective or priority	
Questions to ask	<i>See Appendix B for suggested questions or lines of enquiry</i>

Part 2: in the meeting

Account of governor visit

Tips:

- Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where'
- Do not be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with
- If talking to pupils, do not ask them for views on individual teachers and don't note their names.
- Remember you are **not** there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer
- When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils
- Include specific evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area
- Where a positive impact has not been made yet, note down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress
- Record safeguarding questions asked of pupils and responses. **If a child discloses a concern or safeguarding matter, DO NOT record it on this form – use a Record of Concern form (yellow) available in the staffroom to record disclosure and give directly to DSL. Do not retain a copy of that disclosure.**

Any strategic issues arising for the governing body?

Part 3: Follow up questions or actions

Appendix B: Possible questions for subject-linked governors

The full governing body retains the responsibility for raising standards. A nominated governor who takes a special interest in a curriculum area or areas can help to ensure that this issue remains high profile on the governing body's agenda. The following questions will help you as you find out about teaching and learning across the school. Use them as a guide in a meeting or on school visits – it is not intended you work systematically through the list.

Discuss with your headteacher how best to use these questions to help you gradually build up a picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Your role, in partnership with the headteacher, is to provide a link between your governing body, its committees and the staff of your school.

A good website to use as a resource can be found here:

[Hamilton Academy - Questions for Governors to Ask](#)

Achievements and attitudes

For the core subjects:

- What are the broad trends in the school's achievement in English and maths
 - compared to similar schools?
 - in relation to the national rates of increase?
 - in relation to the national picture in terms of gender?
- How do children's results in English/maths/science compare?
- How do they compare with other subjects?

For all subjects

- Where have we improved? Do we know why?
- Are there differences between the achievement of different groups, and if so, why?
- What aspects of the subject do pupils find easy and which hard?
- Are there significant differences in the performance of:
 - girls and boys?
 - looked after children?
 - child carers?
 - pupils with special educational needs?
 - gifted & talented pupils?
 - pupils with English as an additional language?
 - the majority and any other minority ethnic groups, such as travellers?

In meetings with the subject co-ordinator can you tell how much progress pupils are making? For e.g. you could look at:

- Key Stage test results and teacher assessments
- the work of a range of pupils – average, below average and above average
- other evidence

Special Needs

- How are pupils with SEN integrated into lessons?
- How have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) been adapted to support children in their lessons?

Management of the subject

- How is the role of the co-ordinator developing?
- Does the School Improvement Plan address the identified needs?

- What is the allocation of funding to the subject for this financial year?
- How has it or will it be spent?
- Is there a need for additional resources for any aspect of the work?
- What further training to teachers and support staff need?
- How much additional support does each class have?
- How is the support used and what impact does it have?
- (Literacy only) Does the school offer a range of reading books catering for all abilities, cultural backgrounds and tastes, especially boys? Are pupils using the library? What links does the school have with the local library?
- How does the school use all its resources (ICT, books, materials and displays) to promote reading and writing or Numeracy?

Communication

- How are parents kept informed about pupils' progress?
- What steps are being taken to encourage parents to support their children's learning?
- How are governors kept informed about standards and the progress of pupils?
- How do governors celebrate the schools achievements and successes?