



Governor Monitoring Visits Policy

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all governors. It is a requirement that all members of the governing body have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

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<i>Date agreed by FGB</i>	<i>March 2023</i>
Governing Committee responsible	S&C



Stocks Green School Governing Body Monitoring Visits Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to school visits made for the purpose of governance and not to visits to the school site that any individual may make in other capacities e.g. as parents, vicars, volunteers or members of staff.

Purpose

All school visits will:

- Have a clear focus, linked to strategic priorities and designated statutory governor roles and be timely, planned and on the approved monitoring schedule which is agreed by the full governing board
- Be arranged with adequate notice through the Headteacher who will agree it with the relevant members of staff
- Be of value to the governing board which can be demonstrable evidenced to outside agencies e.g. Ofsted or the Local Authority

It is not the role of those governing to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits and individuals should make every effort to avoid this impression.

See *Appendix B Governor Visit Checklist*.

Governor Conduct

Governors undertaking visits will comply with the school and governing body's codes of conduct and the standards of presentation expected of staff. They will be mindful that they are representing the whole governing body through their words and actions. The governing body's code of conduct will contain reference to governor visits.

Governor reports following visit

Governors undertaking their visits will have the opportunity to discuss the visit, including any concerns, with the Headteacher immediately or soon after the visit.

Governor Visit Record forms see *Appendix C Formal*, *Appendix D Informal*, will be completed as appropriate after each visit.

A draft will be shared with the Headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be sent to the Clerk to be included in the supporting papers for discussion in the next governing body meeting or committee meeting as appropriate from the monitoring schedule.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be adhered to regarding visits. Comments should be limited to the Headteacher with whom the visit was arranged but not with other staff or with parents. Individual children or staff members (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) should not be identified in school visit reports.



Frequency of Visits

Governors will undertake visits as agreed in their approved monitoring schedule with a minimum of one visit to the school per academic year but no more than three times a year unless the school circumstance necessitates.

Monitoring and review of school visit policy

The policy should be monitored and reviewed annually.

Areas we should consider when reviewing are:

- Are our visits achieving the potential benefits we identified?
- Are our visits timely against the School Improvement Plan
- Do we have the right governor monitoring roles against the current school priorities?
- Are we better informed and can evidence the accuracy of Headteacher and SLT reports
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can we make our practice even better? Is there anything we need to change in how visits are conducted from feedback from staff

Purposes of a governor visit

The benefits to governors:

- To see the strategies in action as outlined in the school improvement plan e.g. meeting with the subject lead of an area for improvement and learning about the strategy adopted and how this translates through to classroom practice and children's learning
- To improve knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses
- To develop an understanding of issues facing the school and how they are dealt with on a day to day basis to inform strategic decision making
- Gaining an understanding of a particular curriculum area or year group
- Gaining an understanding of the process of assessment and tracking pupil cohorts
- To see the use of resources and how the premises are utilised, understanding the environment for teachers and pupils
- To recognise and celebrate success
- To show themselves as part of the school and to gain stakeholder engagement with pupil, parents, staff or the wider community e.g. Pupil voice, school council, parent forum
- To evidence the governing boards ethos, vision and values in action
- To observe the impact of policies in action including monitoring the implementation of a particular policy e.g. safeguarding, behaviour
- To assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties and demonstrate their accountable role as both supportive and challenging.



The potential benefits to staff:

- To ensure governors understand how school priority strategies are embedded in practice, understanding the reality of the classroom and environment
- To get to know and build positive relationships with governors
- To understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
- To feel valued

The potential benefits to pupils:

- To ensure governors understand the reality of the classroom environment, broad curriculum and school life
- To get to know governors
- To understand better governor roles and responsibilities
- To give feedback about the school and their views of the impact of policies to the governors

The potential benefits to parents:

- To ensure governors understand the issues that parents have
- To get to know governors
- To understand better governor roles and responsibilities
- To give feedback about the school to the governors

What a visit is not about

- Visiting classrooms to observe a lesson, unless as part of an accompanied learning walk against a specific school improvement priority. This prevents any confusion on a class visit being confused as a form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of a teacher.
- Undertaking staff role's e.g. touring the school undertaking health and safety checks, even if professionally qualified in this area.
- Checking on progress of individual children
- Pursuing a personal agenda
- An opportunity to tackle staff about specific issues

Annual programme of visits

A programme of visits (*Monitoring schedule Appendix A*) should be planned, using the School Improvement Plan and subsequent approved, priority and statutory monitoring governor roles, spread evenly across the school year in consultation with the headteacher. Regular analysis of this schedule enables governors to ensure they are monitoring and triangulating against the current school priorities and know the school in terms of being able to describe to Ofsted or other outside agencies.

The number of visits by each governor should be a minimum of once a year and not more than three times a year, unless the school situation necessitates.



Visits can take the form of:

- Learning walks with members of staff
- Pupil voice in the class or interviews in groups
- School council
- Parent forum
- Visiting break and lunchtimes
- Looking at pupils work against marking policy
- Monitoring implementation of a policy e.g. behaviour, equality
- Gaining an understanding of the broad curriculum, or particular area
- Gaining an understanding of the impact of spend of funding with spending leads
- Ensuring finance processes are in place
- Monitoring the culture, ethos and values , including British values
- Monitoring the preparation for the next stage of education
- Seeing in action deployment of staff and impact of any change e.g. reduced class sizes/ split classes
- Reviewing the environment, the condition and maintenance, use made of the buildings or the site and resources of the school
- Annual Governor days in school

Informal Visits

Visits may also take place in an informal capacity for less formal occasions such as school plays, sports day, and celebration events. 'Discreet' information can be gathered on these visits which build on your knowledge of the school. It is vital that everyone is clear about the capacity in which they are visiting and not to confuse the role. Visiting governors should ensure that they follow the governor visits protocols as appropriate and report using the informal template (Appendix D)

For example, times when governors may be visiting the school as governors not against an agreed monitoring schedule:

- The chair making a regular visit to see the Headteacher
- To get information from the office relating to a committee meeting
- New governor tour of the school
- Attending working groups, committee or board meetings
- Invited to attend prize giving or celebration events

For example, times when governors may be visiting the school NOT as a governor:

- To help in a class
- To lend a helping hand with a school event
- To speak to a teacher/ Headteacher in relation to your own child
- Attending a school function or educational visit
- Visit in relation to your position as the local vicar or councillor



Appendix A:

Monitoring Area	
Quality of Education	
<p>How does attainment at this school compare to national averages and the government's floor standards?</p> <p>What, if any, impact does the context of our school have on pupil's attainment?</p> <p>Is the school performing in English and Maths?</p> <p>How do children in our school progress compared with expectations?</p> <p>How does the school's performance compare to those for similar schools?</p> <p>Which groups of pupils are the highest and lowest performing, and why?</p> <p>Do school leaders have credible plans for addressing underperformance or less than expected progress? How will we know that things are improving?</p> <p>How is the school going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those with special educational needs, those receiving free school meals and those who are more broadly disadvantaged, boys and girls, those of a particular ethnicity, and any who are currently underachieving?</p>	
Pupil Premium targeted funding	
<p>Can we identify how much money is allocated to the school for the Pupil Premium?</p> <p>i. Is it identified in the school's budget planning?</p> <p>ii. Can we identify the Pupil Premium funding separately to any other funding for disadvantaged pupils?</p> <p>In determining the strategy for spending the pupil premium, have we considered the Ofsted/Education Endowment Foundation information about what methods are effective in raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils?</p> <p>Do the school's improvement/action plans identify whether there are any issues in the performance of pupils who are eligible for the Pupil Premium?</p> <p>Do the actions noted for improving outcomes for Pupil Premium pupils:</p> <p>i. give details of how the resources are to be allocated?</p> <p>ii. give an overview of the actions to be taken?</p> <p>iii. give a summary of the expected outcomes?</p>	
SEND/AEN	
<p>Does the SEN policy reflect current practice?</p> <p>Does the policy reflect and meet the needs of pupils?</p> <p>How does the school's SEN policy link with its other policies, such as those for behaviour and health and safety</p> <p>How confident are you that money for pupils with SEN is being used efficiently and effectively compared to other pupils</p>	



<p>Is the notional school budget for SEN being used effectively to meet the needs of all pupils on the SEN record? Is there a suitable range of provision to meet all SEN pupils' needs Is there sufficient time given to non-class based tasks e.g. preparations of resources, administration, review meetings, meeting time for teaching assistants? How is support from the educational psychology service used? What is the progress and attainment of children with SEN compared with that of other pupils? How does the attendance of pupils with SEN compare with the attendance of the pupils as a whole? If significantly lower, why is this? How does the unauthorised absence rate compare with that of the school as a whole? If significantly higher, why is this? How does the number of pupils with SEN excluded compare with that of all pupils excluded? Are pupils doing better in certain subjects than others e.g. is there better progress in reading than writing? Why is this? Do pupils with a particular area of need do better than others e.g. do pupils with specific learning difficulties make better progress than pupils with general Are pupils in particular year groups doing better than others? Why is this? Are there significant differences in results between boys and girls? How are parents informed that their child has SEN? Is information for parents available in accessible formats? How are parents involved in reviews of individual education plans? How many respond to invitations to be involved? What is the attendance rate of parents at annual reviews for statemented pupils? When were SEN-related staff skills last reviewed? What training has been undertaken by staff?</p>	
<p>Curriculum</p>	
<p>What is our curriculum rationale? What are the key curriculum drivers in this school? (e.g. The National Curriculum, local curriculum, league tables, Ofsted, pupil needs. What is the balance of these?) How do we ensure our pupils receive a broad and balanced education? i. How do we know that the curriculum meets the particular needs of each of our pupils? ii. How do we ensure there is an appropriate balance of subjects? iii. How do we ensure students gain the skills they need (as well as the knowledge) and develop appropriate attitudes to enable them to flourish in and outside of school? iv. How do we ensure that every colleague/every team plays their part? If there were no rules, how would you change the curriculum? If so, what's stopping you? How do you ensure that the curriculum across the school promotes i. the ethos of the school ii. the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?</p>	



<p>What do internal assessments by staff tell us and parents? I.e. is it just pupils' progress through the curriculum? Or does it tell us about the skills, values, and personal qualities they've developed? How does it help parents support their child's learning?</p> <p>How could the curriculum be made more exciting/stand out more?</p> <p>Have you asked the pupils what they want from the curriculum? And what did they say?</p> <p>What do other local schools offer in their curriculum which is different from ours?</p> <p>How does the school use partnerships with other schools/businesses/the local community to enhance the curriculum? Have you developed links with infant/junior/middle/secondary school(s) and FE /tertiary institutions</p> <p>How are staff encouraged to be more innovative about the teaching of the curriculum? Is there sufficient lesson differentiation to provide for students of all abilities?</p> <p>How are you encouraging different key stage staff to collaborate and inter-department collaboration?</p> <p>How do you know that our assessment systems are robust and accurately measure pupils' progress?</p> <p>Have all staff received training on how to make best use of our assessment system? Are all teachers using the assessment system consistently and how do you know?</p> <p>Do you meet with other schools to moderate assessment levels – e.g. those which use the same assessment system?</p> <p>Have you explained to parents the way in which children are assessed?</p> <p>How are teachers communicating the results of their assessment to pupils and parents? What feedback have we had from parents about how well this is done?</p> <p>What information do you hold about the destinations of our pupils when they leave this school? What use do you make of this information?</p> <p>If the school has purchased an assessment system from an external provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Does this meet our school's individual needs? ii How do we know the system is robust? iii. What has the impact been on teacher workload? iv. How do we know it is good value for money? 	
<p>Leadership and Management</p>	
<p>Do we have a clear vision and strategy for the school for where we want the school to be in 3-5 years' time?</p> <p>Is our vision ambitious but achievable?</p> <p>Does our vision set out what we want our pupils to have left our school having achieved (e.g. in terms of personal development, attainment, progress etc.)?</p> <p>Have we taken into account the views of parents, pupils and staff when developing our vision?</p> <p>Do we have a strategy in place to achieve the vision?</p> <p>Do we have clear key performance indicators/outcomes against which to</p>	



<p>measure success?</p> <p>What are the school's values?</p> <p>When did we last review our ethos/values statement?</p> <p>Are the school's values reflected in its development plans?</p> <p>How do we publicise our values (e.g. are they on our website)?</p> <p>How do staff and governors promote the school's values in their conduct?</p> <p>Do students know what the school's values are?</p> <p>How do we ensure that students leave our school equipped for the next stage of life?</p> <p>Does the school curriculum reflect and develop our stated values?</p> <p>How do staff embed the school's values into their teaching?</p> <p>Are we actively promoting British values in our school?</p> <p>What are the provisions in place in our school for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils?</p> <p>How do we encourage pupils to show mutual respect towards their peers, including individuals with a protected characteristic?</p> <p>How do we encourage pupils to show tolerance and respect for different faiths and beliefs?</p> <p>Are teaching staff aware of the duty to promote British values? Does our curriculum already meet the requirement to promote British values? If no, what steps are we taking to meet the requirements?</p> <p>How would we demonstrate to Ofsted that we promote British values?</p>	
<p>Behaviour and Attitudes</p>	
<p>Is this a happy school with a positive learning culture?</p> <p>i. What is the overall picture of behaviour in this school – how does it compare with other schools?</p> <p>ii. How is good behaviour rewarded? And how often?</p> <p>How are pupils, parents and staff made aware of the school behaviour policy</p> <p>i. What measures are in place to ensure good behaviour, discipline and respect is communicated to pupils?</p> <p>ii. Are staff clear about the school's behaviour policy and the extent of their disciplinary authority/powers?</p> <p>iii. What steps do we take to inform parents about how they are expected to behave while on school premises?</p> <p>What impact does the behaviour policy have on classroom practice – how do you know?</p> <p>How do you monitor whether the behaviour policy is being applied consistently across the school?</p> <p>How do you assess/monitor pupils' attitudes to learning?</p> <p>What information do you have about</p> <p>i. the levels of attendance,</p> <p>ii. incidents of bullying (including cyber-bullying and homophobic bullying),</p> <p>iii. levels of poor behaviour?</p> <p>iv. What are you doing to address any issues?</p>	



<p>What measures are in place to deal with persistent poor behaviour? E.g. systems to identify and address the needs of pupils who continuously display disruptive behaviour.</p> <p>i. How do you monitor pupils causing concern? ii. Do you/the staff know the root causes of poor behaviour? iii. What external support do the staff have for dealing with any behaviour issues? iv. Have all staff received appropriate training in relation to dealing with aggressive pupils where restraint may be required?</p> <p>How many pupils have been excluded (fixed term and permanently) in the last term/year/three years? How many managed moves have taken place this term/year? How do you deal with poor behaviour that takes place beyond the school gate?</p>	
<p>Safeguarding</p>	
<p>How do you deal with cyber bullying?</p> <p>i. What steps do we take to educate staff about the issues of social media ii. What steps have you taken to inform/educate parents about the potential pitfalls of social media, for example, cyber-bullying, 'grooming' and 'unfriending'?</p> <p>How many Children in Need reports have been filled in on pupils in this school? How are child protection issues monitored, do we have a child protection coordinator (name, contact details)?</p> <p>i. Are staff aware of the procedure that needs to be followed when they have concerns about child protection? ii. Have staff and governors received appropriate child protection/safeguarding/Prevent training? iii. Do we run e-safety awareness training for staff, governors, pupils and parents? iv. Have we ensured we have sought information to identify any members of staff who may be disqualified under the new disqualification criteria in early years?</p> <p>How do we know that all staff know the correct procedures for child protection incidents? How many incidents related to child protection have there been in the last year? How does the school ensure that all pupils know what they should do if involved in a child protection incident? Have we updated the child protection policy in line with the new statutory guidance? Who takes responsibility for inducting new members of staff with reference to child protection?</p>	
<p>Personal development, Learning outside the classroom and Extra curricula links</p>	
<p>How do you deal with poor behaviour that occurs during a school organised or related activity/trip?</p>	



<p>Does the school have clear and proportionate procedures in place for approving (risk assessing) school trips/outdoor activities? Is the school offering a good range of sports, and other outdoor activities? i. How many pupils are participating in these? ii. What could be done to get more pupils involved? Do the extra-curricular activities on offer complement the school's values? What do the pupils gain from the extra-curricular activities on offer? Are extra-curricular activities integrated into the school improvement plan? If not, how could this be done? How do the extra-curricular activities contribute to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? Is the range of activities broad, including a wide range of arts, sports and other out-door pursuits? How are extra-curricular activities organised? i. Could this be done more effectively? ii. How are extra-curricular activities funded? iii. Could this be done more efficiently? iv. Are the activities sustainable? e) Are the extra-curricular activities physically and financially accessible to all pupils? Are extra-curricular activities part of the plan to close the gaps in attainment between different groups of children, particularly those from poorer families? What efforts are made to involve/engage parents in extra-curricular activities? How could this be done/done better? Is there any local community involvement in extra-curricular activities? How could this be done/improved? How do you monitor the impact of extra-curricular activities? Is this used to improve and adapt them?</p>	
<p>Finance</p>	
<p>Do we understand how the delegated budget received from the local authority or the Education Skills & Funding Agency has been calculated? Are we clear what items of expenditure this budget is meant to cover? How often do we receive reports from the headteacher/school business manager about spending across different departments within the school? Is this sufficient enough to allow the governing body to effectively monitor and review spending? Do we have the necessary skills on the governing body to effectively monitor the finance and procurement processes effectively? Are there clear terms of reference for any committee(s) dealing with finance? Are there a clear financial procedures, including procedures for procurement, in place? i. Are there appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that the agreed procedures are being followed? ii. Have we taken/received advice from the local authority/our auditors on our financial systems?</p>	



<p>iii. Do we have sound procedures in place for fraud detection? Are we allocating funding in line with development/improvement priorities? Are we making efficient use of all our financial resources? Are there areas in which we could obtain better value for money from our budget? Are we under or over spending in any areas of the budget? Why is this? Do we have a deficit and do we have a clear plan for eliminating it? Do we have any reserves and do we have a clear plan in relation to spending them? Budget forecasting i. Have we/our business manager produced forecasts for the next 3 years? ii. Do we know the cost to the school of the pension increase in the coming and future years? iv. Do the forecasts take account of the impact of annual salary increases? Have we considered all avenues of income generation?</p>	
<p>Health and Safety</p>	
<p>Do we meet the statutory health and safety requirements? i. How does the school ensure it keeps up to date with relevant health and safety regulations and guidance? ii. Is there a designated health & safety co-ordinator; are governors and staff aware of who this person is? iii. How often are safety inspections carried out and are the outcomes reported to the governing body. iv. Are the school's procedures for dealing with a breach or incident clear? v. Are staff clear about the procedures for dealing with health and safety emergencies?</p>	
<p>Pay and Performance</p>	
<p>Have we got an effective pay structure in place? i. When did we last review our pay policy? ii. Is it clear how performance and pay are related? iii. Are we able to use the pay structure to reward our best staff? iv. Maintained schools – does our policy reflect the new rules on leadership pay? How effectively are <u>all</u> the staff managed and appraised? i. Do all line managers meet regularly 1:1 with their staff? ii. How does the school go about setting objectives? iii. Do all classroom-based staff (teaching and non-teaching) have performance objectives which relate to the school development priorities? iv. What moderation does the SLT undertake in relation to performance</p>	



management objectives?

v. How many staff achieved their objectives for the past year?

vi. What additional support is being offered to staff struggling to meet objectives and is that working well?

vii. Are any teachers subject to capability proceedings?

Is there correlation between appraisal outcomes, pay and the quality of teaching and learning?



Appendix B: Governor Visits - Good Practice Check list

<i>Preparing for a visit</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Check the agreed policy and schedule for governors' visits	
Arrange a mutually convenient time to visit, within the monitoring schedule window, with the Headteacher.	
Discuss the visit and agreed timetable with the Headteacher and ensure that any member of staff who will be involved in the visit, understands the arrangements.	
Clarify the purpose of the visit as outlined within the monitoring schedule and background preparation reading required. Understand your strategic monitoring role.	
Review the action points in the School Improvement Plan? What are the relevant school policies associated to this area? How does this determine the activities I am interested in seeing in action? What questions do I want to ask?	
Discuss with the Headteacher/staff lead if any new supporting information is available – Ofsted report, improvement plan, performance data.	
Ensure that you are familiar with safeguarding and health and safety procedures	
Read the Governing body Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct to ensure understand behaviours required.	
<i>During the Visit</i>	
Remember you are making the visit on behalf of the governing body; it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the governing body.	
Be punctual. Report to reception and signing in as a governor. Wear your lanyard for identification. Keep to the agreed timetable but be flexible to the school needs.	
Decide with the Headteacher how you will be introduced and how you will address staff and pupils	
Be courteous and professional throughout the visit, friendly not critical, including thanking members of staff before leaving.	
Remember you are there to learn, it is a visit not an inspection.	



Keep to the role agreed; only talk to pupils if invited/ agreed to do so.	
Observe discretely. Remember that excessive note taking can be disconcerting and may make your visit look like an inspection.	
Interact, don't interrupt.	
Remember why you are there. Don't lose sight of the purpose of your visit.	
Respect confidentiality	
Meet the Headteacher at the end of the visit and discuss what you have seen, any issues or concerns you may have. Refer to the purpose of the visit. Consider together whether it has been achieved.	
Ensure that you have signed out	
After	
Share any concerns with the Headteacher and Chair, however trivial. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about.	
Thank the staff by email via the Headteacher for contributing to the success of the visit and for supporting you in your role as a governor. Be open, honest, and positive.	
Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind. Complete the agreed visit template proforma (see appendix B/C).	
Draft the report ensuring individual children or staff members (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) are not identified in school visit reports.	
Send the draft to the Headteacher and once you have taken their comments into account send the final written report to the Clerk for circulation at the appropriate committee or governing board meeting.	
Ensure that your visit is included as an agenda item at the next appropriate committee or governing board meeting.	
Reflect: how did that go? Has the visit enhanced relationships? Have I learned more about the school? Have I helped the governing body fulfil its duties?	