



GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY

Date of last review	7 May 2024
Review cycle	2 years
Policy due for review and approval by Local Governing Body	May 2026

Introduction

One of the key roles and responsibilities of the Local Governing Body (LGB) is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the governors' role in the strategic management of the school by supporting its activities, holding it to account and evaluating its progress. LGBs draw on a range of evidence in order to carry out these functions and one source of information is their visits to the school.

The LGB is an important part of the school team and governors are welcomed into the school by staff. To enable governors' visits to be an enjoyable experience and allow for the effective monitoring by the LGB contributing to school improvement, agreed principles and procedures need to be followed.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make focused visits to the school, so that they can build effective working relationships with the staff and have a better understanding of the context in which they work, gain up-to-date information on the work of the school, and question its activities and progress. Every governor will visit as a representative of the LGB and not as an individual (e.g. as a parent/carer or member of staff).

Governors will monitor policies and plans being implemented in the school on a day-to-day basis, and their findings should help the LGB to make well-informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the subject area and school development plan. This process will enable the LGB to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of students and staff and to identify further areas for development.

Conduct

Governors will comply with the school and LGB's Code of Conduct and the standards of presentation expected of staff and be aware that they are representing the whole LGB through their words and actions.

Governors will be mindful not to refer to their school visit as a chance to 'observe' teaching and learning, as this could cause unnecessary confusion: 'lesson observation' has a specific meaning in a school context and is an activity undertaken by the school leaders in order to collect evidence about teachers' performance for the purposes of appraisal. It is not within the remit of the LGB to inspect or judge teachers' performance.

Link Governor Visits

An integral part of a Link Governor's role is to visit their link area, gather information on the work of that area, view lessons and learn about teaching and learning and student progress.

Before the visit, governors should:

- Be aware that on any visit it is not acceptable to pursue personal agendas neither as a governor nor as a parent/carer.
- Ensure that the purpose and structure of the visit has been agreed with the subject leader.
- Agree a clear timescale for the visit with start and end times.

- Think of the visit as an opportunity to build positive relationships with staff and students.
- Prepare for the visit by familiarising themselves with relevant documentation, especially subject area development plan objectives for the year.
- Be clear that this is not an opportunity to question students or members of staff who are not directly involved in the visit.
- Agree with the teachers concerned how they will be introduced to a class and where they would like them to be in the classroom.
- Make sure they know the names of the members of staff they are going to visit and, if there is a classroom visit, which groups of students they will be meeting.
- Ensure that members of staff they are meeting are satisfied with the visit arrangements.
- Find out whether the teacher minds if they talk to students and/or look at their work. Occasionally, there may be particular reasons when the teacher would prefer visiting governors not to interact with the students.
- Inform the Governance Officer and the Headteacher's PA of all visit dates in advance.

During the visit, governors should:

- Ensure they follow the security and safeguarding procedures, including signing in and out and wearing their visitor ID badge at all times.
- Meet with the teacher before the lesson starts and agree the length of the visit. It is not necessary to stay for the entire lesson.
- Be friendly, willing to listen and engage in conversation with staff and students.
- Agree whether or not they will make notes during the visit or make them afterwards.
- Observe the obvious courtesies in a classroom: do not walk in with a clipboard, interrupt the teacher, or stay seated at the back making notes.
- Remember that they are not visiting the classroom to make judgements on teaching and learning.
- Remember that they are entering the teacher's professional space and be aware that any visitor entering a classroom may alter the dynamics of the teaching and learning environment.
- At appropriate times in the lesson, talk to students and ask them about their targets, ask if you may look at their workbook and observe their written work over time and the marking by the teacher.
- Establish where the subject area is in relation to achieving development plan objectives and student progress against targets.
- End the visit at a time agreed before the meeting. Do not exceed this time as teachers have a variety of other commitments as part of their workload. Do not expect to monopolise the teacher's time on conclusion of the visit.
- Provide verbal feedback to the subject leader. This should be related to the focus agreed for the visit.
- Always thank staff and students they come into contact with.

Aspects for consideration during the visit:

- General ethos and atmosphere of the area visited.
- Attractiveness or otherwise of the area visited.
- Availability and use of resources.
- Any health and safety issues. Any issues should be communicated to the Head Teacher as soon after the visit as possible.
- Student behaviour and attitudes.
- Student engagement in lessons, particularly in group activities or question and answer sessions.
- Relationships observed.

After the visit, governors should:

- Be very clear about the reporting format set out on the visit report form.
- Ensure the visit report does not name any individuals other than the member of staff they were meeting or to whom they were referred for information purposes.

- Write up the visit report as soon as possible after the visit.
- Agree the report with the subject leader by email; once agreed, the report should be passed to the Head Teacher.
- Once the report is signed off by the Head Teacher, a copy must be passed to the Clerk to Governors for record-keeping. The visit report will also be reviewed by the LGB at the next available meeting.

Confidentiality

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

Frequency

LGB Governors will undertake a minimum of one visit to the school per academic year, but not more than once each term.

Key staff	Head Teacher Chair of Governors, SVC LGB Senior Leadership Team Governance Officer Clerk to Governors
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Person responsible for updating this policy: Head Teacher

**Saffron Valley Collegiate
Governor Visit Report**

Name	
Date of visit	
Focus of visit	
Classes/staff visited	
Summary of activities <i>e.g. viewing classes, talking to staff and students, looking at resources, had lunch, etc.</i>	
Governor's observations and comments	
Any key issues arising for the Local Governing Body	
Ideas for future visits (if applicable)	
Any other comments	

Signature

Date