



School Governor Visits Protocol and Policy

Introduction

The governing body has a duty to oversee the direction and policies of the school, to monitor its standards and be held to account for its conduct and performance. Visiting the school is the best way to learn how it functions, and to review how it operates thus informing strategic decision-making.

Visits should be planned to cover the full extent of the school day and to cover a wide range of schoolwork and activities; each visit should be agreed and have a clear purpose. Governors should arrange their visits with the Head Teacher.

Purposes of visit

- To develop relationships with the staff
- To get to know the children
- To recognise and celebrate success
- To understand the environment in which teachers teach
- To monitor policies in action
- To inform decision making
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them

During the Visit

- 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
- Keep to the agreed timetable and focus for the visit
- Only get involved with the children at the invitation of the teacher
- Remember it is a visit not an inspection.
- Observe discretely
- Don't distract the teacher during the lesson. Interact don't interrupt
- Be courteous and friendly, not critical.
- Remember why you are there. Don't lose sight of the purpose of your visit
- Listen to staff and pupils

Things to observe when visiting a classroom

- Relationship between staff and pupils
- Relationships between pupils
- Behaviour and attitude of pupils - are they attentive, motivated, listening, questioning, responding?
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils
- How the pupils are grouped
- How different abilities are catered for
- Displays
- Children's work
- Ethos - the atmosphere and values that are evident (are there high expectations, encouragement, praise, etc in line with school values)
- Use of space and working conditions
- Quality and quantity of equipment and resources.

After the Visit

- Discuss what you have observed with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about. For example, did your presence have any impact in the classroom?
- Thank the teacher and other staff for supporting you in your role as a governor
- Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind
- Reflect: how did that go? Have I learned more about the school in line with the focus for the visit? Have I helped the governing body fulfil its duties?
- Meet with the Head Teacher to give a verbal report and raise any issues
- Complete the governor visit pro-forma, reporting on the focus. The completed form should be given to the Head Teacher and then, after any possible alterations, the form will go to the governing body

The visit is not about: -

- Inspection
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teachers
- Checking on the progress of your own children

If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then governor Visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the governing body, which will contribute to school improvement.

Reviewed 10/01/2021

Appendix (i)

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree purpose of visit • Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed. • Agree role within the lesson 	Turn up unannounced
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep to the agreed focus • Keep questions for the class teacher until after the lesson • Please remember confidentiality • Stick to the times agreed • Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume a different role • Walk in with a clipboard • Interrupt the teacher • Distract the pupils from their task
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the teacher and the pupils • Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience • Feedback to the governing body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave without acknowledgement • Break rules of confidentiality

Quick reference guide

Visits could focus on the following:

The School

- The condition and maintenance of the premises
- The use made of buildings and premises
- Security on site
- Break and lunch times
- The monitoring of Health and Safety
- The use and condition of resources e.g. furniture and subject equipment
- Office procedures e.g. budget monitoring
- To see a class or teacher led assembly

The Classroom

- Observation of particular curriculum areas i.e. Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Design Technology (DT), History, Geography, Art Music, P.E
- The implementation of the curriculum
- Gain an understanding of the process of assessment and tracking pupil and their attainment
- Assessing a group of pupils working together on a task
- The impact of learning on educational visits
- To see the impact of the school values and mission

Appendix (ii)

Watchorn Christian School Governor Visit
Report form

Name of Governor:	Date and time of Visit:
Focus/purpose of Visit:	
Classes visited:	Staff met:
Information gathered during the visit:	
Head Teacher's comments:	
Points to take to next governor's meeting:	
Any Other Information:	
Signed _____ Governor	Signed _____ Head Teacher