

Vernon Primary School



Governor School Visits Policy

'Nobody else is quite like me'

Policy aims

This policy aims to ensure that all governors understand:

- the purpose of monitoring visits
- the expectations for carrying out visits including preparation, expected conduct and reporting back to the governing board

Purpose of visits carried out by governors

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows governors to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in the life, work and achievements of a school
- experience the culture and ethos of the school

Monitoring visits should focus on:

- strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board
- the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)

Frequency of visits

The frequency of governance visits should be in accordance with the schedule established by the governing board and agreed with school leaders and relevant staff. Visits should be scheduled to allow governors to see relevant activities and strategic milestones.

Arranging and preparing for visits

Visits should be arranged through the headteacher, with adequate notice, and agreed with the relevant members of staff.

Due regard should be given to:

- how the visit fits with the schedule of board and committee meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion
- how to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life
- the workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits

Governors are encouraged to prepare for their visit. This may include:

- reading and familiarising yourself with the governing board's protocol for visits and the expected conduct
- reading and familiarising yourself with the current school's policy for visitors including relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions.
- reading the background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information
- clarifying the purpose of the visit with the head teacher and or relevant member of staff
- confirming the visit schedule and activities

Conduct on visits

When visiting the school in a governing capacity, you should:

- arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures signing in and wearing governor identification
- adopt a friendly approach that puts everyone at ease
- be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this

- if you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching)
- ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit
- acknowledge and thank the staff and pupils you meet

Governors are also expected to behave in line with the governing board's code of conduct, being aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.

Expectations following a visit

A report should be completed as soon as possible after each visit, ideally within 2 weeks. The draft will be shared with the headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit. When agreed, a final version will be available on governor hub or via the papers for discussion at either the next committee if appropriate or the full governing body meeting.

Policy date – November 2021

Review Date – November 2024

Ratified by Governors – November 2021