



Theale C of E Primary School

School visits by governors policy

At Theale CE Primary School the children come first. They are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity.

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12: v 30-31

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10

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School Visits Policy for Governors

1. Introduction

Governors are required to monitor and evaluate the progress that the school is making towards the priorities and targets set out in the School Development Plan. Much of this monitoring will be done through the Headteacher and other members of staff reporting to the governing body and its committees. However, it is also good practice for governors to visit the school during the school day to see at first hand the impact of their policies and plans on the school's performance. A carefully planned visit by a governor can generate evidence that will inform decision-making by the whole governing body or its committees. It is essential that governors and staff are clear about the reasons for such visits and have agreed the way in which they will be conducted.

As with all other visitors to the school, governors should sign in on arrival. It is also important to adhere to current requirements on checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make focused visits to school so that they can build an effective working relationship with the staff and have a better understanding of the context in which they work. Governors will observe policies and plans being implemented on a day-to-day basis, and their findings should help the whole governing body and its committees make well-informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the school improvement plan. This process will enable the governing board to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of pupils and staff and to identify further areas for development.

Visits are not about making judgements on the quality of teaching; that is the Headteacher's responsibility. Nor are they about checking on the progress of individual children or pursuing personal agendas.

3. Relationship to other policies

The focus of a visit could be on one or more of many of the policies in place in the school, especially school ethos, safeguarding, collective worship, pupil discipline, race equality, teaching and learning, health and safety. Visits may also be linked to a specific area of the SDP. Each governor may also have an opportunity to visit an allocated class.

4. Role and responsibilities of headteacher, other staff, governors

The governing body will, with the help of the Headteacher and staff, organise visits, as appropriate, throughout the year. The aim will be to achieve a minimum of one visit per governor per year. Visits may be conducted in pairs. The Headteacher will guide the governing body on the areas of the curriculum, policies and school improvement plan priorities and targets.

All governor visits will have a clear focus which is understood by everyone involved. This will enable individual governors to develop a deeper understanding of a subject, a policy or policies, or a year group. They will focus on areas where they have an interest, expertise or formal governor role. The aim will be for them to get to know an aspect of the school well, increasing their confidence and knowledge. It will help to maximise the effectiveness of the governing body.

5. Governor Monitoring Visits - process

When organising and conducting a visit, governors will be courteous and considerate, at all times respecting the professional roles of the Headteacher and staff. Working to the annual schedule agreed with the Headteacher and staff, they will confirm with the Headteacher the date, timing and focus of each visit at least one week in advance. This will include agreeing what will be observed and

to whom it would be useful to talk. If time permits, they will discuss the proposed agenda with any staff involved. They will prepare by reading relevant documentation/guidance.

At the end of each visit, if it is convenient, the governor(s) may discuss what they have observed with the teacher and clarify any points they are uncertain about. They will discuss their observations with the Headteacher and agree how, when and what they will report to the governing body.

Teachers and support staff will at all times be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by the governing body to the school. They will make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits in order to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the evidence that could be shared with governors. Whenever practical they will invite their link/ curriculum governors to relevant staff meetings and training sessions. Questions will be invited from governors, while being sensitive to issues of confidentiality.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

Governors will circulate a record of their visit, following the process shown and using the form shown in Appendix 1.

By reviewing the minutes of meetings when reports of visits were discussed, the governing body will judge the extent to which the information gathered informed the whole governing body's understanding of the progress made towards meeting priorities and targets. Staff governors will feed back from colleagues. They will be asked to identify what worked well and what, if anything, needs to be reconsidered. They will also be asked to describe the extent to which their understanding of the governing body's role has been enhanced.

APPENDIX 1

Governor Visit Feedback Form: to be completed by the governor(s) undertaking the activity.

The version of the form below is for information only; a more helpful landscape version of the form should be used. The four main boxes can be adapted and/or deleted as appropriate to make it a best fit for what is being recorded. For some visits, such as a Health and Safety audit, it may be more usefully recorded as a separate report to governors using whatever format is most effective.

Governor Activity Record and Report

This form should be completed within 48 hours of the completing the activity (school visit or training) and emailed initially to the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The Chair will then distribute to the Clerk who will circulate to governors before the next Full Governing Body meeting.

Record of a school visit or interaction by a governor



Governor's name		Date		Duration in hours	
Outline of visit: purpose, focus, type of activity					
Key positive features or aspects observed					
Key questions asked or points discussed					
Any post interaction observations					
Date form forwarded to the Headteacher		Date forwarded to the Chair of Governors			
Date form filed		Signature of governor			