

St Saviour's CofE Primary School

GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY AND GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

This policy is to aide governors and school staff to ensure that governor school visits are structured, productive and enjoyable for all concerned.

2. Aims

School visits by members of the governing body are a key component to being an effective school governor and have potential benefits to both governors and staff.

Benefits to Governors:	Benefits to Staff:
To recognise and celebrate success	To help governors understand the reality of the classroom
To develop relationships with the staff	To get to know the governors
To get to know the children	To understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
To recognise different teaching styles	To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
To act as a 'researcher' for the teacher	To highlight the need for particular resources
To understand the environment in which teachers and other staff work	
To see policies and schemes of work in action	
To inform decision making	
To find out what resources are needed and priorities them	

3. How is a visit organised?

Initial visit to the school by a new governor

After the appointment of a new governor, the Welcome Letter from the Governing Body Chair and Headteacher invites the new governor to make arrangements to visit the school. This general visit would include a tour around the school, an opportunity to be introduced to the staff and provides the governor with an opportunity to collect some of the school documents listed in their information checklist within the Welcome Pack.

Parents with children at the school should undertake this visit as they are undertaking a new role within the school and this visit would provide them with a broader perspective of the school. It will not be necessary to write a report after this visit, but the governor should inform the governor responsible for training that the visit has taken place.

Subsequent visits to the school

In advance of the visit, plan to ensure that you are clear about its purpose e.g:

- To gain background information and get to know the school, class or year group
- To develop relationships with the staff
- To monitor a specific age group, subject area or activity
- To look at school premises to find out what resources are needed
- To inform decision making
- To monitor how a particular policy or procedure is carried out
- To carry out Health and Safety reviews and monitor school practices.

Agree the plan with the headteacher, member of staff and the governing body or governing body committee and arrange a convenient time to visit.

4. Suggested things to look for in the classroom?

- How do the pupils react to the presence of the teacher, headteacher or yourself?
- How friendly and relaxed are the pupils?
- How interested are the pupils in their work?
- Do the pupils have an understanding of what they are doing?
- How well behaved and courteous are the pupils?
- In what ways does the school provide a varied and interesting environment?
- How are the needs of all the pupils being met equally?
- Do pupils work in a group or individually on a particular task?
- Are the same relative number of questions asked by girls and boys?

5. Written feedback report

This report helps to focus on what was actually learnt about the school and to pass this information on to the governing body. This report will form part of the governors monitoring role, therefore it should contain:

- Statements of fact on what was observed or what was not observed, positive and negative comments. It may raise areas of concern.
- It should contain information to assist decision-making and evaluation by the whole governing body e.g. when reviewing the impact of a particular policy. It may be appropriate to give some recommendations.
- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring the quality of teaching, so you do not make professional judgements when observing lessons.
- Reports should be no longer than a page; they should be informative, to the point and should not include any pupil names.
- The report should set out the objectives for the visit and indicate how well or otherwise they were met.
- Reports should be sent to the Chair of the Curriculum or Resources Committee so that they can be circulated with the agenda before the next meeting.

6. Minimum level of commitment

A commitment should be a half-day equivalent per term on behalf of the whole governing body, achievable by all.

7. Monitoring and review

The Curriculum Committee will monitor this policy to ensure a reasonable distribution of visits across the year and across subjects, classes, year groups and teachers. The Curriculum Committee will also plan a programme of visits and review this policy at the first meeting of the academic year.

8. Informal ways of getting to know the school

Governors are actively encouraged to participate in the life of the school and are always welcome to attend school/class assemblies, Christmas and Easter productions etc. the dates of which are published regularly in the school newsletter, but as a guide the general pattern is:

Monday: SEAL assembly led by staff
Tuesday: KS2 assembly led by Revs.Jane or Sandra
Wednesday: KS1 assembly led by Revs.Jane or Sandra
Class Assembly
Thursday: Singing assembly led John Ward
Friday: Star of the week – good news assembly led by staff

These visits are not included as part of this policy.

Appendix 1

The Do's and Don'ts of a governor visit:

DO	DON'T
Arrange details of visit well in advance	Turn up unannounced
Agree level of confidentiality	Interrupt the teacher
Agree purpose of visit	Leave without a word
Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed	Sign in and out of the visitor's book
Wear a visitor's badge	Make judgements on teaching
Be punctual	
Observe any class guidelines/rules	
Fulfil agreed purpose	
Thank the teacher and the pupils	
Discuss observations with the teacher	

St Saviour's CofE Primary School
Governor Class Visit

Please complete the objectives section in advance to ensure the staff are clear about the purpose of the visit.

Name of Governor:		
Date of Visit:		
Focus of visit:		
Staff Met:		
Observations	<p>How do the pupils react to the presence of the teacher, headteacher or yourself?</p> <p>How friendly and relaxed are the pupils?</p> <p>How interested are the pupils in their work?</p> <p>Do the pupils have an understanding of what they are doing?</p> <p>How well behaved and courteous are the pupils?</p> <p>In what ways does the school provide a varied and interesting environment?</p> <p>How are the needs of all the pupils being met equally?</p> <p>Do pupils work in a group or individually on a particular task?</p> <p>Are the same relative number of questions asked by girls and boys?</p>	

Questions	<p>Do you have targets for maths and English? What are they?</p> <p>Which subject or topic have you enjoyed the most this year?</p> <p>What do you like about St Saviour's school?</p> <p>What could we do to make it better?</p> <p>What extra curricular activities are you involved in? (KS2)</p> <p>What other activities would you like to see added?</p> <p>What do you like/dislike most about the school facilities/buildings?</p> <p>Do you feel safe in school?</p> <p>What things does your teacher do that helps you to learn?</p> <p>Are there any issues that you would like to raise that could help us improve your school?</p>	
Brief Notes:		
Positive comments:		

St Saviour's CofE Primary School
Governor Curriculum Visit

Name of Governor:		
Date of Visit:		
Subject Link:		
Staff Met:		
Issue	Possible questions	Notes
Action Plan	<p>What are the priorities/targets for action this year?</p> <p>How do you monitor progress in your subject/areas of responsibility?</p> <p>What new resources have you purchased/intend to purchase? Why? Do you have sufficient resources to teach the subject across the school effectively?</p> <p>Are there any factors that hinder progress being made?</p>	
Standards and Assessment	<p>How do you collect/store evidence in your subject across the school?</p> <p>Give an example of good practice in your subject area from any year group in the school.</p> <p>How do you assess pupil progress?</p>	
Staff Inset/Development	<p>What development training have you attended as a subject leader this term?</p> <p>Have you led any staff inset? Are there any needs you have identified that require inset?</p>	
Are there any issues you would like to raise with us?		

St Saviour's CofE Primary School
Governing Body Report on Governor's Visit

Please complete after the visit and send to Chair of L&D Committee

Name of Governor:		
Area of Responsibility:		
Date of Visit:		
Staff & Year Visited:		
Purpose of Visit:		
Observations on visit:		
Issues to be raised as a result of visit:		
Governor Signature:		
Date:		