

GOVERNOR VISIT POLICY

Version	Review Date	Update
1.0	August 2017	Policy adapted from Trafford Governor Services Model Policy
2.0	September 2019	Reviewed by the CEO for TB ratification
3.0	October 2021	Updated in line with Local Governing Committee Terms of Reference

Policy Owner	Trust Governance Manager
Policy Reviewer(s)	Trust Governance Manager, Governance Professionals
Policy Approver(s)	Operations Director
Policy Type	Trust
Distribution List	Headteachers Governance Professionals Local Governing Committees
Display on Website	Trust
Display on Intranet	Yes
Related Document(s)	Governor Visit Report Governor Visit Register
Policy Effective From	November 2021

Review Frequency	Every two years
Next Review	July 2023

1. Aims

- 1.1. The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make focused visits to the 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. Their findings should help school leaders and the Local Governing Committee (LGC) make well-informed judgments about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the School Improvement Plan. This process will enable the LGC to recognise and celebrate the efforts and successes of pupils and staff and to identify further areas for development.
- 1.2. Visits are not about making judgments 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.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. **Governors** are responsible for:
 - Familiarising themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.
 - Meeting their target of at least **one** visit per academic year.
 - Communicating the purpose of their visit in advance to the relevant staff member(s) in school.
 - Submitting a completed Governor Visit Report to the LGC's Governance Professional within seven days of their visit taking place.
 - Reporting their observations to the Local Governing Committee / Subcommittee at the next full meeting.
- 2.2. The **headteacher** is responsible for:
 - Facilitating governor visits.
 - Discussing completed visits with governors, prior to a report being made to the LGC.
- 2.3. The **governance professional** is responsible for:
 - Arranging the practicalities of the governor visit and liaising with key staff in school.
 - Reminding governors to submit a completed Governor Visit Report after the visit.
 - Updating and maintaining the Governor Visit Register and presenting at each LGC meeting.



3. Focus

- 3.1. The focus of a visit should be; aligned to a [Link Governor Role Descriptor](#), an element of the curriculum, a specific aspect of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) or of the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) or an area agreed in advance with the Headteacher and Chair of the Local Governing Committee.
- 3.2. There are at least four Link Governor Roles within each Local Governing Committee and as a minimum, one school visit per academic year should be undertaken in respect of these areas:
 - Safeguarding
 - SEND
 - Pupil Premium
 - Premises and Environment

4. Format

- 4.1. The Local Governing Committee will, with the help of the Headteacher and staff, organise a schedule of visits 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 LGC on the areas of the curriculum, policies and school improvement plan priorities and targets to be covered each term. Governors who are appointed as Link Governors to certain areas, are required to undertake a school visit as part of their remit.
- 4.2. Individual governors or pairs of governors will then, with the guidance of the LGC, identify an aspect of the school's work to focus on. The choice of focus will be informed by the Terms of Reference for the LGC or a subcommittee. The aim will be for them to explore an aspect of the school in some detail, increasing their confidence and knowledge and generating evidence to help the LGC to evaluate the school's performance.
- 4.3. 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 and Governance Professional 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. Governors will discuss the proposed agenda with the staff involved and will prepare by reading relevant documentation/guidance.
- 4.4. At the end of each visit, the governor(s) will discuss what they have observed with the accompanying staff involved and clarify any points they are uncertain about. They will jointly agree key points to report to the LGC. Before leaving the school the governor(s) will aim to discuss their observations with the Headteacher, if that has been agreed, and agree how and when they will report to the full LGC. *[See Appendix A for Governor Visit Report proforma.]*
- 4.5. Teachers and support staff will at all times be courteous and considerate to the governors, recognising the contribution made by the LGC to the school. They will make practical suggestions on the focus for governors' visits so as to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the evidence that could be shared with governors.
- 4.6. Questions will be invited from governors, while being sensitive to issues of confidentiality. While staff should take every care to make anonymous any information or examples of work, it may be possible for governors to identify individuals in discussions of progress and attainment of children in vulnerable or underperforming groups. Governors will be fully mindful of and committed to absolute confidentiality in such circumstances.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 5.1. Governor visits will be an agenda item at each LGC meeting and completed Governor Visit Reports will be made available to all governors in advance of each meeting. At the final meeting of each academic year the Chair will report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus. This report and minutes of meetings when reports of visits were discussed will enable the LGC to judge the extent to which the information gathered informed their understanding of the school's performance. This will also generate data for the SEF.



Appendix A - Governor Visit Report Proforma

Governor Name:	Date of Visit:
Governor Role:	Duration of Visit:
Local Governing Committee:	
Lead Staff Member(s):	
Focus of visit (to be agreed in advance): <i>(Replace text below with specific detail)</i> <i>Visit should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing committee / subcommittee</i>• <i>the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?</i>• <i>seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding, SEND, curriculum etc)</i>• <i>An area of the School Improvement Plan or Self-Evaluation Form, where relevant</i>	
Summary of activities completed: <i>For example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Met with staff with leadership responsibility for specific areas, such as safeguarding or SEND</i>• <i>Spoke to staff and pupils about their understanding of a specific area e.g. how to report a safeguarding concern</i>• <i>Experienced a lesson being taught (as part of getting to know the school, rather than making judgements about quality of teaching)</i>• <i>Saw examples of pupil work</i>• <i>Undertook a learning walk around the school to see the main student support areas and facilities</i>	
What have I learned as a result of my visit? <i>Relate this back to focus of your visit.</i>	
Any outstanding discussion points: <i>Any aspects which remain unclear or require further clarification, to include suggestions for items to be covered in future visits within this area</i>	
Any other comments:	



Signed (Governor):

Signed (Headteacher / SLT):

Completed Governor Visit Reports should ideally be submitted to the Governance Professional (Clerk) within seven days of the visit taking place. This will then be shared with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher, prior to circulation to the Local Governing Committee as part of the paperwork for the next meeting.