# GOVERNOR VISIT POLICY

## Statement of intent

"Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, the board can see for themselves whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice." – DfE (2017) 'Governance handbook', p.25

Through this policy, Spurcroft Primary School aims to embed effective procedures concerning governor monitoring visits. Each governor is expected to make at least one visit each long term demonstrating the governing board's role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice, in line with the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP).

Governor visits inform understanding, allow opportunities to speak to pupils and teachers, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the Strategic Plan/Raising Attainment Plan (RAP) in action.

For teaching staff, governor visits allow teaching staff the chance to find out more about governors, provide an opportunity to draw attention to issues or questions they wish to raise, and provide opportunity to reflect upon and discuss current practice.

Governors must:

- Remember to respect school staff and pupils.
- Support the head teacher.
- Acknowledge that they represent the full governing board.

By following the agreed principles and procedures, governor visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will significantly contribute towards school improvement.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2017) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2014) 'The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013'

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

Governors are responsible for:

- Meeting their target of one visit per long term.
- Aligning their visit to the appropriate area of the RAP, strategic or statutory requirement, undertaking monitoring of this area through discussions with their link member of staff, learning walks, book scrutiny or any other monitoring activity which the governor and link staff member agree is appropriate.
- Reporting their observations to the full governing board.
- Informing the Chair of Governors if problems arise with the visit process.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring link staff are able to meet with governors once per long term.

The link member of staff is responsible for:

- Being available to meet their link governor once per long term at the appropriate time.
- Being sufficiently prepared to discuss the areas to be covered during the meeting (see below), including having the resources required available, including school data, books, financial tools etc.
- Informing the Head teacher if problems arise with the visit process.

## 3. Annual schedule

- Governors who have a role in school data (EYFS, KS1, LKS2, UKS2, SEND, Disadvantaged) must meet with link staff the week after the data collection point. These dates are available in the calendar on The Governor Hub
- Other link governors should schedule their long termly visits as appropriate based on their link responsibilities and the activities taking place within school.

- The Finance Governor may be required to meet more regularly with the School Business Manager at budget submission time (April/May/June).

- The Safeguarding Governor must monitor the Single Central Record (SCR) at least once per long term.

- Health and Safety Governor must conduct an annual H&S walkround with the link staff member.

- Governors may conduct link visits more than once per long term if required, provided this does not interrupt the link member of staff delivering their job role responsibilities. Generally, link visits in excess of once every short term are not encouraged.

## 4. Etiquette

- Governor visits are **not** a form of inspection, and governors should not make judgements concerning teaching in any official capacity.
- Governors should avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.
- Governors should not pursue personal agendas.
- Governors must remain as flexible as possible and understand that teaching staff must make pupils' education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.
- Equally, school staff must respect that governors are volunteers and that at times, their flexibility may be limited due to their other responsibilities.
- Governors must never visit the school or individual class rooms unannounced.
- Visits are not an opportunity for governors to check on individual children or monopolise teachers' time.

## 5. Preparing for a visit

Before a visit, governors will:

- Arrange the visit within good time.
- Agree the purpose of the visit – data governors can refer to the example agenda on The Hub.

- If observing a lesson, discuss the context of the lesson to be observed and agree their role within the lesson.
- If staff require guidance on link visits they should refer to the Headteacher.
- If governors require guidance on link visits, they should refer to:
- Governors with a data role: the Lead Data Governor
- All other governors: Chair of Governors

## 6. During a visit

During a visit, governors will:

- Adhere to their agreed role.
- Adhere to confidentially requirements.
- Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the pupils.

During a visit, governors will not:

- Assume a role different to that which has been agreed.
- Interrupt the teacher.
- Distract pupils.

## 7. After a visit

After a visit, governors will:

- Thank the teacher and pupils.
- Discuss the visit with the teacher at the teacher's and governors' convenience.
- Provide feedback regarding the visit to the full governing board within Governing Board or committee meetings.

After a visit, governors will not:

- Leave without acknowledging the teacher and pupils.
- Break confidentiality agreements.

## 8. Providing feedback

- Visits should be planned so that there is time for feedback after the monitoring activities have taken place.
- During the discussion, governors should adhere to the following framework:
    - Present your observations
    - Provide positive feedback
    - Raise any issues
    - Ask further questions
- By the end of the discussion, both the governor and link member of staff should be clear as to what information will be shared with the full governing board.
- The Governor Visit Proforma should be completed as soon as possible after the visit. The proformas are held on the Governor Hub. Governors who have a clear link to the RAP should complete the RAP visit form. Governors who have a role in statutory compliance should complete the non-RAP visit form.
- The proforma should be sent to the link member of staff before wider distribution as described below.
- A copy of the completed proforma should be uploaded to the Governor Hub in the Governor Visits folder within 2 weeks of the visit taking place (not including school holidays).
- There will be an opportunity to discuss governor visits at all FGB and Committee meetings.

## 9. Monitoring and review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and the chair of the governing board.
- When reviewing the success of the policy, the headteacher and chair of the governing board will take the following into consideration:
    - Has every governor visited at least once every long term?

- Has every governor met with the link member of staff they are linked to?
- Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
- Are governors and link staff comfortable with the regularity, structure and format of link visits?
- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can practice be improved?

- Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all governors and link staff
- All governors are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.