

Governors' visits to school policy

Fairstead Community Primary & Nursery School



Approved by:	FGB	Date: March 2021
Last reviewed on:	March 2021	
Next review due by:	See Policy Log	

Governors need to see the school working to develop their understanding of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibility for its conduct.

Undertaking visits demonstrates the governors' role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress. The governors' visiting programme is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar. Each governor is encouraged to make at least one visit a year during school time and, ideally, governors will monitor an area of the School Improvement and Development Plan or the individual area for which they are responsible, e.g. SEND, LAC, safeguarding, pupil premium, data, health and safety, etc.

All monitoring visits should follow this protocol and use the approved monitoring visit form (Appendix 1)

Visits enable governors to:

- Monitor progress of priorities in the School Improvement and Development Plan.
- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements.
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school.
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school.
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning.
- Evaluate resources and discuss further requirements with staff.
- Gain first-hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking.
- Understand if Implementation of Policies, matches the Policy Intent
- Work in partnership with the staff.

Visits should be arranged in advance with the Headteacher; individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish.

All governors' monitoring is carried out on behalf of the whole governing board and so it is also essential that outcomes are shared.

Before a visit

- Clarify the purpose of the visit. Is it linked to the School Improvement and Development Plan? How does this determine the itinerary?
- Agree an agenda and a suitable date and time with the Headteacher (and, if possible, staff involved).
- Clarify exactly what you are observing. How do they want you to integrate into the lesson? How will you be introduced and what your role in the classroom will be?
- Prepare questions in advance with the Headteacher.

- Agree supporting information, e.g. Ofsted report, performance data.

During a visit

- Remember it is a visit, not an inspection – observe discreetly, remember that note-taking can be disconcerting.
- Be punctual – keep to the agreed timetable but be flexible.
- Interact, don't interrupt. Don't distract the teacher from their work but be prepared to talk and get involved with the children if this has been agreed to be appropriate.
- Be courteous and friendly, not critical – listen to staff – show interest and be enthusiastic.
- Remember why you are there. Don't be sidetracked and lose sight of the purpose of your visit.
- Talk to staff and pupils – make sure you get the evidence and information you need to inform your report. You may need to speak to a specific member of staff (i.e. a subject leader) or you may need to get views from staff and pupils to enable you to complete your monitoring.

After a visit

- Thank the teacher for supporting you in your role as a governor. Arrange to share feedback as agreed previously.
- Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind. Check that they reflect the purpose of the visit.
- Discuss your observations with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about. For example, did your presence have any impact on the atmosphere in the classroom? If so, how? Be open, honest, and positive.
- Draft your report and share with the head. Be prepared to amend it if other factors come to light. Share with those observed. Aim to achieve a report that is agreed by those involved.
- Recording evidence – whether you are visiting the school or discussing matters in meetings, it is essential that evidence of how you are progressing and implementing the SIDP is recorded, in minutes of meetings, visits made, interventions and impact.

It is important to note that governors are **not** inspectors and it is **not** their role to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning.

They are also **not** school managers and should make sure they do **not** interfere in the day-to-day running of the school.

Both are the role of the Headteacher.

Appendix - 1



Fairstead Primary School Governor Monitoring Visit

Governor name:	
Member of staff:	
Date of agreed visit:	
Purpose of the visit (School Development Plan/ Governor Plan) eg. subject area or theme:	
How does the visit relate to a priority in the School Development Plan?	
Summary of visit: Staff met with: Classes visited: Students talked to: Resources seen (eg. student books, displays, subject plans/priorities)	
What have I learned as a result of my visit?	What were the strengths identified during the visit?

Areas for further development:	Any key issues arising for the Governing Body (eg, resources, progress in implementing a key policy, communication)
Next Steps	

Submitted to Full Governing Body on: _____

Date of next visit: _____