



STOKES WOOD
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governor Visits Policy

Version	V1.0
Status	Approved
Owner	Head Teacher –
Review Date	
Reference	-POL 24

Contents

Introduction	3
Aim	3
Visits	3
Guidelines for Planning & Conducting a Monitoring Visit to School	4
Monitoring & Evaluation	5
Appendix One - Pro-Forma for Planning a Governors Monitoring Visit	6
Appendix Two - Governors Visit Form & Training Report Form	7
Glossary	9
Version Control	10

Governor Visits Policy

Introduction

The governing body Stokes Wood Primary School has a strategic role and is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school. To contribute to the governing body's monitoring role governors will conduct formal school visits following the guidelines laid out in this policy.

Aim

This policy aims to provide a framework for governor visits, which will allow governors to fulfil their role without disrupting the work of the school and in a manner that will support both staff and learners.

Through our programme of visits we aim to:

- To contribute to the governing body's monitoring role
- To develop governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the priorities for development
- To see evidence of the progress being made in the school, and evaluate this within the governing body
- To build and enhance positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents
- To support the school's work

Visits

All governors will be expected to visit the school at least once per academic year.

A schedule of visits will be agreed annually by the governing body and in consultation with the Head Teacher. Focuses and individuals will be identified. The date and timing of specific visits will be arranged by the governor concerned, in consultation with the Head Teacher and other staff involved.

Visits will have a clear pre-agreed focus linked to a curriculum subject, a school policy, an aspect of the School Development Plan, the induction of a new governor or some other specific area of the management of the school. The Head Teacher will guide the governing body on the areas of the curriculum; policies and school improvement plan priorities and targets to be covered each term.

All new governors are offered an introductory visit to get to know the school and staff as part of their induction programme.

Governors are welcome to informally visit the school (with prior notice to the Head Teacher) during the school day, taking into account the needs of all concerned and the appropriate timing of visits.

Visits to talk to the Head Teacher or curriculum co-ordinator can also be made by appointment.

Specific invitations are sent for some occasions.

Guidelines for Planning and Conducting a Monitoring Visit to School

Prior to the visit

Governors conducting a visit should be clear on the purpose of their visit and try to prepare questions for staff in advance. The Head Teacher will be able to guide governors on this.

They should discuss with the Head Teacher the agenda well in advance and should confirm that the date chosen is suitable for the purpose identified. Governors will, under normal circumstances, visit the school by appointment with the Head Teacher or other member of staff as agreed.

Governors will gather and read in advance any relevant information. The Head Teacher will advise governors about any sources of supporting information that is available.

Governors should use the 'Pro-forma for planning a governors monitoring visit' (appendix 1) to assist with planning the visit and to guide governors' visits.

It will be the Governor's responsibility to contact the link teacher for a pre-visit discussion. This is a useful opportunity to establish how they want governors to integrate into the lesson.

During the visit

Governors will arrive on time and observe the school policy for visitors. Governor will stay focussed on the purpose of the visit and will keep to the agreed timetable but be flexible.

The teacher will welcome the governor and introduce them to the class.

Governors will observe, make notes discreetly and get involved with the children if the teacher has agreed that this would be appropriate.

Governors will not distract the teacher from his/her work, questions to the staff concerned should not interfere with teaching but be noted until an appropriate time for discussion.

After the visit

At the end of each visit, the governor(s) will discuss what they have observed with the teacher and Head Teacher and clarify any points they are uncertain about. The focus of the visit should be central to the observation or the dialogue. They will consider with the teacher whether they achieved the purpose of the visit.

Governors will write up a report (appendix 2) and circulate a draft to the head and any staff involved with the aim of achieving a report that is agreed by those involved. A written report should not name individuals and, like others for the governing body, will usually be open for public inspection after the governing body has considered it.

Once the report is agreed the governor will arrange for it to be circulated to the governing body prior to the next meeting for inclusion as an agenda item.

Feedback on the visit should also be presented to the relevant committee/working party as appropriate.

Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the visit by considering the following questions:

- Were the objectives of the visit fulfilled?
- Was everyone involved properly prepared?
- Did you see what you wanted to see?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Were there areas you would like to know more about?
- What effect has the visit had on you, the school and the governing body?

Monitoring & Evaluation

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at the termly meeting of the governing body. At the final meeting of each academic year the link governor will report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus.

This policy will be monitored through feedback from governors and staff reported to the governing body or a committee.

A review of the governing body's policy will be conducted on an annual basis.

Appendix One - Pro-forma for Planning a Governors Monitoring Visit

What is the purpose of the visit?	• What has prompted my decision to visit? • What aspect of the school development plan does my visit relate to? • How can my visit benefit the school?
How shall I carry it out?	• Who do I need to contact in advance? • What particular areas of the school am I interested in? • What particular activities am I interested in? • What particular age-groups am I interested in? • What questions should I ask? • Who should I ask?
Did I achieve my aim?	• To what extent did I address the reason for my visit? • Which of my questions did I answer? • What difficulties did I meet and why?
Is there any follow-up?	• Have I recorded my experiences? • Did I 'report back'? • Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting? • How can I build on this for the next visit?

Appendix Two - Governors Visit Form & Training Report Form

Preparing for a visit

Governors will never visit the school unannounced – they will be expected to arrange visits at least one week prior to the date of the proposed visit with the headteacher. Governors will remain flexible and understand that the school must make pupils' education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.

Before a visit, governors will:

- **Agree a clear, purposeful focus for the visit.**
- **Consider how the area of focus will be identified and observed during the visit.**
- **Discuss the context of the activities to be observed.**
- **Agree their role within the activities.**
- **Refer to their Governing Board Monitoring Plan to ensure the visit's focus is strategic**

and in line with the school's priorities for improvement.

- **Read the documentation relevant to the focus of the visit, e.g. the school's Behaviour**

Policy, and prepare relevant questions, where appropriate.

During a visit

During a visit, governors will:

- **Adhere to their agreed role at all times.**
- **Make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school.**
- **Where visiting activities involve lesson observations, not ask questions, interrupt the**

teacher or distract pupils during the lesson.

- **Spend time in a classroom only when they have provided a clear reason for doing so.**
- **Adhere to confidentially agreements.**
- **Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.**

- **Be sensitive to the needs of the pupils and the wider school community.**
- **Avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.**

During a visit, governors will not:

- **Make judgements concerning teaching or other areas of school provision in any official capacity.**
- **Pursue personal agendas during visits.**
- **Check on individual children or monopolise the time of staff.**

After a visit

After a visit, governors will:

- **Thank the staff, and pupils where appropriate, involved in the visiting activities.**
- **Discuss the visit with the staff involved in the visiting activity at their convenience.**
- **Provide feedback regarding the visit to the full governing board.**

After a visit, governors will not:

- **Break confidentiality agreements.**

5. Providing feedback

A time will be agreed between the governor and staff, at the staff members convenience, to discuss what was observed during the visit.

During the discussion, governors will adhere to the following framework:

- **Ask staff for their views on what happened during the visit**
- **Present governors' observations**
- **Provide positive feedback**
- **Raise any issues**
- **Ask further questions**
- **Thank staff for the opportunity**

By the end of the discussion, both the governor and staff members will

be clear as to what information will be shared with the headteacher and full governing board.

The Governor Visit Proforma will be completed as soon as possible after the visit.

The headteacher and governors will discuss the observations prior to the distribution of the proforma. A copy of the completed proforma will be provided to:

- The headteacher
- The subject leader
- The relevant staff members
- The clerk to governors

A copy of the report will be circulated to all governors at the next appropriate committee or governing board meeting.

The governing board will ensure all board members have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions regarding the final report and the visit undertaken.

6. 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 conducted at least three visits during the academic year?
- Has every governor made links with their allocated subject or area of provision?
- Has every governor met with the staff members they are linked to?
- Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can practice be improved?

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all governors, staff members and relevant stakeholders.

The next scheduled review date of this policy is annually June

Governor Monitoring Visits Report Form

Name of Governor

Visit Date

Staff Visited

Visit Focus

Link to the School Development Plan and/or Governor Monitoring Plan

Routine Priorities

The following priorities need to be considered during each visit:

☐ Assess pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and discipline ☐ Monitor whether the Trust and school visions are adhered to ☐ Observe the culture within the school

☐ Evaluate staff wellbeing

☐ Consider any pupil feedback ☐ Review any parent feedback

Questions for Staff

Link to the School Development Plan and/or Governor Monitoring Plan

Questions for Pupils

Link to the School Development Plan and/or Governor Monitoring Plan

Additional Questions

Governor's Report

Detail:

☐ Observations

☐ SDP/Policies reviewed

☐ Topics discussed

☐ Duration of visit

☐ Learning points

☐ Clarification points

☐ Concerns or issues raised ☐ Any other points to note

Key Issues for Governing Body

E.g. how resources are allocated, progress in implementing policies,
evidence of the governing body's impact on pupils' achievement.

Glossary

Term	Explanation
School	Refers to

Version Control

Change record

Date	Version	Status	Author	Change
	0.1	Draft		First Draft
	1.0	Approved		Approved by Head Teacher & Governing Body

Approval

Name	Position	Date