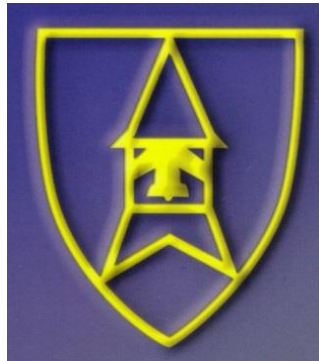




Swinderby All Saints Primary School

Governor Visits Policy

Approved by:

Governing Body

Date: October 2024

Governor Visits Policy

Aims

This policy aims to set out the procedures and best practice which all governors are expected to follow when visiting Swinderby All Saints Church of England Primary including how they are expected to report back on that visit to fellow governors.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that all governors understand their role and purpose so school visits are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

Guidance and Scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the [maintained schools governance guide](#).

Governors are observers

Boards must know their schools in order to maintain robust accountability. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors will:

- Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school improvement plan
- Observe how those procedures are working in practice
- Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

Governors are not inspectors

Governors:

- Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- Will not manage the school or interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school

For those governors who wish to spend time in a classroom, they will make their purpose in doing so clear.

Programme of Visits

Governors will agree at the start of each academic year a programme of visits to be conducted during that year. Governors are expected to adhere to this agreed programme unless otherwise agreed by the governing body of its committee.

Governors will carry out regular school visits in order to meet the board's statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness.

There are 3 types of visits:

- **Formal monitoring visits**, where governors discuss the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member
- **Learning walks**, where governors will go around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area and are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils

- **Compliance Visits**, where governors focus on area such as safeguarding and health and safety with a focus on compliance to regulatory or legal frameworks.

The nature and timing of monitoring in a given area will be confirmed with the headteacher and lead member of staff at the start of the year.

Before a Visit

Governors will:

- **Notify the headteacher** before scheduling a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware just as a matter of courtesy
- **Schedule an appointment with relevant members of staff** in order to avoid any friction and make sure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are most productive when conducted during a school day. If meetings are not possible during the day the governors will need to be mindful that this work maybe outside the members of staff's usual hours of work.
- **Clarify the purpose of the visit in advance** with the headteacher and/or relevant member of staff
- **Send questions/areas to be discussed in advance** to the staff member so everyone can feel properly prepared
- **Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures**

During the Visit

Governors should know how to conduct themselves appropriately during visits in order to minimise disruption for staff and pupils and to receive the maximum benefit from the time spent at the school.

Governors will:

- Be on time for the visit
- Wear a visitor's lanyard at all times
- Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are to be avoided unless specifically agreed with the headteacher for a specific purpose
- Remain as observers; they are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them
- Make sure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so
- Check with teachers before speaking to pupils
- Pass on any concerns the staff raise to the relevant people
- Be friendly but professional and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils

Governors will not:

- Pass comment on classroom practice or any specific incidents that happen, judge teaching methods, assess the quality of teaching, or comment on the extent of learning
- Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school
- Behave in a manner than would make staff feel that they are there to inspect
- Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the chair of governors or headteacher after the visit

After the Visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the report form:

Appendix A (Monitoring Visit Meeting)

Appendix B (Learning Walk)

Appendix C (Monitoring Compliance Meeting]

In completing the report, governors will:

- Use neutral language at all times
- Remain observational, and describe only what they see/saw
- Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit, and its strategic role
- Once complete, governors will submit their reports to the following people, in the following order:
 - The relevant staff member, both as a courtesy and to check for accuracy
 - The headteacher, as a courtesy
 - The chair of the governing board or the relevant committee, as agreed
 - The Clerk for circulation

Appendix 1

Swinderby All Saints CofE Primary School Governor Monitoring Visit Meeting



Part 1: Plan The Visit	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit.	<i>To discuss the school's new strategy to improve attainment of Key Stage (KS) 2 boys.</i>
Relevant school objective or priority This might be taken from the SIP objectives or the school's overarching vision.	<i>Percentage of pupils achieving 'greater depth' in writing improves at KS2.</i>
Questions to ask Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit. Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.	<i>What is the process for supporting pupils who need extra help?</i> <i>Have teachers had any training to help them put this into practice?</i> <i>Search the guidance available on the OneDrive or <u>GovernorHub Knowledge</u> for questions specific to the purpose of your visit.</i>

Part 2: In The Meeting
What is the school doing within this area of focus? <i>Tips:</i> • Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where' • Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with • Remember you are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer • When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils

How do you know the school's actions are having an impact?

Remember:

- *Include specific evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area*
- *Where a positive impact has not been made yet, note down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress*
- *Add any further evidence you would like to see to help you make a better assessment of the impact*

What successes stood out and why?

Achieving our vision and aims

How does what you have done today, and what we are currently doing in school, help us move towards our vision and values?

- ❖ Truthfulness
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Forgiveness
- ❖ Respect

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors

Appendix 2

Swinderby All Saints CofE Primary School Governor Learning Walk



Part 1: Plan The Walk	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus <i>Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit.</i>	<i>To see the implementation of the new strategy to improve attainment of Key Stage (KS) 2 boys.</i>
Relevant school objective or priority <i>This might be taken from the SIP objectives or the school's overarching vision.</i>	<i>Percentage of pupils achieving 'greater depth' in writing improves at KS2.</i>
Questions to ask <i>Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit.</i> <i>Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.</i>	<i>Ask staff: what do you do if you think a student needs further support?</i> <i>Ask pupils: if you need help with something, what do you do?</i> <i>Search the guidance available on the OneDrive or GovernorHub Knowledge for questions specific to the purpose of your visit. For example, you can search for 'safeguarding questions.' Read our article on questions to ask pupils for pupil questions.</i>

Part 2: On The Walk
General notes from discussions with staff Tips: • Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who', 'where' and 'can you show me ...' • Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with • Remember you are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them • When writing the report, use neutral language and don't name individual teachers

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General notes from discussions with pupils

Remember:

- *Do not ask pupils for their views on a specific teacher*
- *Do not record pupils' names*

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General notes on the school environment and overall atmosphere

Note:

- *Whether the governors' vision of the school is replicated on the ground*
- *Any issues with the school site you see, e.g. broken equipment or lack of resources*

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What successes stood out on the learning walk and why?

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Achieving our vision and aims

How does what you have done today, and what we are currently doing in school, help us move towards our vision and values?

- ❖ Truthfulness
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Forgiveness
- ❖ Respect

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Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors

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Appendix 3

Swinderby All Saints CofE Primary School Governor Monitoring Compliance Meeting



Part 1: Plan The Visit	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus <i>Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit.</i>	<i>To see the implementation of the new health and safety action plan</i>
Questions to ask <i>Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit.</i> <i>Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.</i>	<i>Ask staff: what do you do if you think a student needs further support?</i> <i>Ask pupils: if you need help with something, what do you do?</i> <i>Search the guidance available on the OneDrive or <u>GovernorHub Knowledge</u> for questions specific to the purpose of your visit.</i>

Part 2: In The Meeting
What is the school doing within this area.
How do you know the school's actions are having an impact?

Further discussion and actions planned or needed?

What successes stood out on the learning walk and why?

Achieving our vision and aims

How does what you have done today, and what we are currently doing in school, help us move towards our vision and values?

- ❖ Truthfulness
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Forgiveness
- ❖ Respect

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors