



Long Lane Primary School

Governors' School Visit Policy

Date	Description
April 2025	Agreed by Full Governing Board

Review Schedule	2 years
Next Review	April 2027

Aims

Governing Boards have a statutory responsibility to promote high standards at their school, and must monitor and evaluate its effectiveness in this respect. Through visiting our School, governors can get to know it better. The Governing Board is a corporate board and every governor will visit the school as a representative member of that board, not as an individual. An effective partnership between governors, staff and parents is based on mutual understanding and benefits the whole school community. This policy will provide an agreed framework within which governors will plan and carry out their school visits.

Responsibility

This policy is the responsibility of the governors and has been produced using West Berkshire guidelines and through consultation with governors and staff. It will be implemented by all governors.

Purpose of Governor Visits

Visits are undertaken to:

- Improve Governing Board knowledge of the school and the people that work in it.
- Assist the Governing Board in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan and school policies
- Assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as inclusion or safeguarding.
- Assist the Governing Board in fulfilling its statutory duties.
- Assist the Governing Board in making informed decisions based on respectful challenge.
- To enable the Governing Board to identify how resources are being used
- To experience and explore the culture and ethos of the school

Guidance and Procedures

All governors and staff should familiarise themselves with the attached document entitled "*Governors' Visit to School Guidance and Procedures.*"

Governors' School Visit Guidance and Procedures

Visit programme

The programme of visits will be organised as follows.

- All governors should arrange at least two informal visits to the school during the school academic year i.e., sports day, learning showcases, curriculum evenings, welcome time, or any other school events.
- Each governor should attempt to visit the year group they are affiliated to (once per year) during their initial term of office (3 years).

- There should be arrangements for governing body members to take part in (at least 3 per year) formal focused visits that are accompanied by a report and discussion/feedback to the SLT and governing body. *This will be evidenced in the minutes of governors' meetings.*
- Formal visits will focus on strategic priorities the implementation of key policies, the evaluation of progress and the assurance that the needs of pupils are being met.
- New governors may choose to be accompanied by more experienced governors if required on their visit. Liaising with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors.
- No limit on visit time but at least 30 minutes is recommended to achieve objectives.
- The Chair of Governors will meet regularly with the Head teacher in order to set targets, agree focus for the school and receive regular updates of progress regarding the SDP and SEF.

Content of visits

- The focus for visits will be determined in accordance with the Governor Development Plan.
- Focus forms need to be completed for each governor visit and need to be returned to the Clerk to Governors as soon as possible after the visit. These will then be circulated to the governing board to be discussed at the next relevant meeting.
- During discussions about formal visits (at governors' meetings) governors will ensure there is sufficient challenge to support the next steps of school development
- Views of the pupils will be sought through individual conversations and meetings with a variety of pupils (pupil voice)
- Protocol for parent governors visiting their children's class will be agreed before visiting, after consultation with class teacher and head teacher.
- Governors will be made aware that all samples of children's work viewed should remain confidential. Any comments must be channelled through the head teacher.
- Visits are confidential to pupils, staff and governors and must not be discussed outside of the school.

Reporting

- Informal oral/email feedback and discussion with class teacher on the day.
- Pre and post visit discussion with the head teacher if needed.
- Information on the visit will be reported to governors at meetings and filed in the governor visits folder.

Planning the visit

- Visits should be undertaken only as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the governing board or one of its committees and with the approval of the Head Teacher.

- Agree a mutually convenient time to visit with the head teacher and class teacher, avoiding stressful or busy periods in the school calendar.
- The Head Teacher should be kept informed of, and agree, the subsequent details of the planned visit.
- If the visit is to involve any member of staff, then that member of staff must be fully involved in the planning through the appropriate member of the leadership group.
- Clarify the purpose of the visit and agree this with the head teacher and relevant staff. Agree together how best to approach the identified focus to make effective use of everyone's time.
- Agree how you will be introduced to the pupils and the extent to which you will be involved in any activity or lesson.
- Agree a convenient time to discuss your governing visit with the class or subject teacher. This will also be your opportunity to clarify any issues you are unclear about.
- Ensure that you are aware of the core principles underlying the governor visits at your school and abide by them.
- The governor making the visit should make themselves fully acquainted with health & safety procedures including fire safety and safeguarding prior to making the visit. *A leaflet is available for visitors that summarises these arrangements in the school reception.*
- If your focus is Free School Meals or SEND, you will be advised on the day of the pupils that are in the class that you are visiting. This is confidential and should not be discussed outside of the classroom.

During the visit

- Remember this is a visit, not an inspection. Governors are visiting to learn more about the school and to gather information to inform decision making by the governing board. It is not the governor's role to judge the quality of the teaching. Monitoring staff performance and the quality of teaching and learning is the job of the Head Teacher.
- Be aware of, and adhere to the school's Child Protection policies and procedures.
- Be aware of, and adhere to the school's 'Charters'
- Be punctual, sign in and wear your ID badges.
- Smile and listen. Try to relax and enjoy yourself. Get involved with the pupils.
- Think carefully about what you say and do. Remember that a visit by a governor can be stressful for staff. Be courteous, tactful, positive, and interested. Avoid criticism e.g. Never make a comment on the teacher's conduct of the lesson or on individual pupils during the lesson.
- Remember to thank the staff and pupils for having you.

Following the visit

- If you have seen something that worries you, you will normally discuss this first with the head teacher. Any safeguarding concerns or low-level concerns should be reported directly to the DSL according to the school's policy and procedures.
- Discuss your visit with the Head Teacher and agree a draft of any written report with the Head Teacher and with staff, as appropriate. Be prepared to take the comments of others on board before you circulate your report to governors and the clerk.
- Send a note to thank the relevant staff. Be open and honest; recognise and celebrate achievement.
- Reflect upon your visit. Your views will inform the review of the policy and procedures.

Monitoring, evaluation, and review of this policy

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at termly governing board meetings. This policy will be reviewed annually in September by the full governing board.

Relevant Policies and Documentation

- Governor Development Plan
- Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Governor's meeting minutes
- Governors' Visit to School Guidance and Procedures
- Governors code of conduct