



Governing Body Visit Policy

Policy Adopted	February 2021
Renewal date	February 2022

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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, Heamoor School aims to embed effective procedures concerning governor monitoring visits. Each governor is expected to make at least **one** visit during the academic year, demonstrating the governing body’s role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice.

Governor visits inform understanding, allow opportunities to speak to pupils and teachers, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the School Development Plan 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 headteacher.
- Acknowledge that they represent the full governing body.

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

1.1. 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

2.1. **Governors** are responsible for:

- Meeting their target of **one** visit per academic year.
- Understanding the needs of staff members through discussions with at least **one** staff member per academic year.
- Reporting their observations to the full governing body.

2.2. The **headteacher** is responsible for:

- Facilitating governor visits.
- Discussing completed visits with governors, prior to a report being made to the full governing body.

2.3. Governors are linked to one of two areas of school life as below:

Curriculum	Leadership and Management
Carol Breakwell	Les Hall
Sharon Brolley	Geoff Brighton
Jeff Davis (Chair of Governors)	

3. Annual schedule

3.1. The annual schedule of visits is agreed at the beginning of the academic year at a full governing body meeting.

4. Etiquette

4.1. Governor visits are **not** a form of inspection, and governors should not make judgements concerning teaching in any official capacity.

4.2. Governors should avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.

4.3. Governors should avoid the pursuance of personal agendas.

- 4.4. Governors must remain flexible and understand that teaching staff must make pupils' education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.
- 4.5. Governors must never visit unannounced.
- 4.6. Visits are not an opportunity for governors to check on individual children or monopolise teachers' time.

5. Preparing for a visit

5.1. Before a visit, governors will:

- Arrange the visit with at least 2 weeks' notice.
- Agree the purpose of the visit with the hosting teacher.
- Request any documents where relevant.
- Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed with the hosting teacher.
- Agree their role within the lesson (where applicable).

6. During a visit

6.1. During a visit, governors will:

- Adhere to their agreed role.
- Not ask questions during the lesson.
- Adhere to confidentiality agreements.
- Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the pupils.

6.2. 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

7.1. After a visit governors will:

- Thank the teacher (and pupils if it was a class observation).
- Discuss the visit with the teacher at the teacher's convenience.
- Provide feedback regarding the visit to the full governing body.
- Complete the Governor Visit Proforma and share with the appropriate parties.

7.2. After a visit, governors will not:

- Leave without acknowledging the teacher (and pupils).

- Break confidentiality agreements.

8. Providing feedback

- 8.1. A time should be agreed between the governor and teacher, at the teacher's convenience, to discuss an observed lesson.
- 8.2. During the discussion, governors should adhere to the following framework:
 - Ask the teacher for their views on the lesson.
 - Present their own observations.
 - Provide positive feedback.
 - Raise any issues sensitively and agree next steps.
 - Ask further questions.
 - Thank the teacher for the opportunity
- 8.3. By the end of the discussion, both the governor and teacher should be clear as to what information will be shared with the headteacher and full governing body.
- 8.4. The **Governor Visit Proforma** should be completed by the governor as soon as possible after the visit.
- 8.5. Where the visit involved an observation; the headteacher and governor should discuss the observation prior to the distribution of the proforma.
- 8.6. A copy of the completed proforma should be provided to:
 - The headteacher
 - The subject leader
 - The teacher concerned
 - The clerk to governors
- 8.7. A copy of the report should be circulated at the next appropriate committee/governing body meeting.

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1. This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the headteacher and the chair of the governing body.
- 9.2. When reviewing the success of the policy, the headteacher and chair of the governing body will take the following into consideration:
 - *Has every governor visited at least **one** lesson during the academic year?*
 - *Has every governor made links with their allocated subject/class?*
 - *Has every governor met with the subject leader 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?*

9.3. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all governors.

9.4. All governors are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

Appendix a) Governor Visit Proforma

Name of governor:	
Date of visit:	
Purpose of visit:	
Class visited:	
Host Teacher:	
Summary of activities:	
Links to the School Development Plan:	
What I learned during my visit:	
Positive comments about the visit/observation:	
Aspects to clarify/questions I have:	

Issues for the governing body to consider:

Evidence observed concerning equal opportunities:

Ideas for future visits:

Comments:

Signed (governor):

Signed (headteacher):