



SHIRLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SHIRLEY PRE-SCHOOL

GOVERNOR SCHOOL VISITS POLICY

This is a Non-Statutory Policy

Date of Adoption	3rd November 2020
Date of Last Review	14th February 2019
Date of Next Review	October 2021
Committee	Standards Committee

Introduction

The Governing Body of a school has a statutory responsibility to establish and monitor its school's policies and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum. Governors have a duty to hold the school to account based on its performance, by providing support and challenge to improve or maintain high standards.

One of most effective ways in which a Governor can monitor school improvement, and confirm information that is presented to the Governing Body in reports, is to visit during the school day and see it at work, talking to staff and pupils and finding out what happens in the school and the classrooms.

If school and classroom visits are done well they will add immeasurably to Governors' understanding of the school, its staff and its pupils.

The governors and staff of Shirley Community Primary School recognise the above points and believe that governors should visit school in a structured way.

The process for these visits is set out in this policy.

Before the visit

The Governing Body in conjunction with the Headteacher and staff will agree an annual programme of visits during the summer term for the following academic year. These visits will fit in with the priorities in the school's Improvement Plan.

Regular visits for Safeguarding, Data, English, Maths and Headteacher's Appraisal also take place.

This programme will identify

- Who will make the visit
- The specific purpose of the visit
- The areas which need to be included in a report to the Governing Body
- Period and dates the visit is to be made in

This programme will be set at the beginning of the academic year, based on the priorities from the school's Improvement Plan. Governors, Senior Leaders and other key staff will agree dates for visits prior to the visit taking place. All dates for the year will be set by October half term at latest.

Governors will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the visit is made
- Making the arrangements for the visit in advance with the Headteacher and appropriate staff

The school will be responsible for:

- Providing appropriate paper work
- Making the arrangements for the visit with the appropriate governor.

Aims of the visit

The aims of the visit will be to explore latest developments in relation to the school's Improvement Plan and to identify and discuss any barriers which are inhibiting improvement and which are relevant to the Governing Body's responsibilities. In general terms other areas which may be covered are:

- The ethos and atmosphere of the school
- The character of the curriculum and its implementation
- The application of policies and procedures
- Staff and pupil voice to find out the impact of actions in school
- The motivation, behaviour, attainment and wellbeing of pupils
- The adequacy and availability of resources
- The condition and suitability of the premises, including Health and Safety
- School integration with the local community

In addition the visits will help promote and develop Governor relationships/reputation with staff, as well as giving governors a better understanding of what the school is achieving and thereby making them more confident in carrying out their role effectively.

During the visit

Governors should

- observe the schools rules for visitors, which includes signing in and out of the governors' visits book and wearing a governor's badge
- be sensitive to any unforeseen issues that may arise during their visit and be prepared to shorten their stay if necessary
- remember that the role is not of Inspector, but of observer and of 'critical friend'
- not cause any disruption or interruption to the normal running of the school or classroom
- be punctual

Staff should

- use the opportunity to develop relations and engage with Governors, as well understanding it as part of the wider process of school accountability
- inform Governors via a selection of means such as: documentation, conversations, presentation, pupil interviews, learning walks or whatever means is agreed prior to the visit

After the visit

Governors should

- respect rules of confidentiality at all times
- be aware of the need to safeguard children
- thank relevant school staff
- discuss the visit with the relevant staff/Headteacher
- complete a report of the visit, check for technical accuracy with relevant staff and send to the Chair of Governors and Headteacher to forward to school staff for comment.
(School will then agree content with governors)
- finalise report and shared with relevant staff and governors committee

Covid-19 and Governor Visits - Virtual Monitoring

It may not be possible to arrange and manage Governor visits whilst control measures are in place that restrict the number of people visiting the school site to a minimum. These logistical challenges can be overcome to an extent by school staff and Governors working together to implement a virtual monitoring programme. This would incorporate, for example, on-line meetings between Governors allocated specific areas of responsibility (e.g. safeguarding) and relevant members of staff in those areas as set out in Appendix C. Whilst the monitoring is taking place virtually, the approach is the same as for carrying out visits in person.

Unless agreed otherwise virtual meetings should take place using the 'Zoom' videoconferencing platform. The linked member of staff specified in Appendix C is responsible for creating the meeting using the school's 'Zoom' account, for ensuring appropriate levels of security are set and for communicating the joining instructions for the meeting to the relevant Governor(s)

All Governor in-person visits to the school must be planned and undertaken in accordance with the school's Covid-19 risk assessments and related policies.

Ground Rules and Protocols

	Always	Never
Before the visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree the purpose of the visit with key staff and Headteacher linked to the Improvement Plan - Liaise with the Clerk to the GB who will help to facilitate the visit as requested. - Ensure staff are fully briefed as to the purpose, time and expectation of the visit - Discuss the context of the lesson observed/class visiting - Agree level of confidentiality - Escalate any safeguarding concerns to the Headteacher or other Designated Senior Staff for Child Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn up unannounced for a focused, formal visit - Expect to go into a classroom or part of the school without prior arrangement
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be prepared, organised and punctual - Report to the school office and sign in - Fulfill the agreed purpose of the visit - Observe school/class guidelines <i>(NB - If a governor is going to spend time in a classroom this will be discussed with the staff supporting the visit and/or the class teacher so that both are clear how long the governor is coming for, what they are going to look at and what they are going to do)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interrupt a lesson or talk to the teacher while he/she is teaching - Walk in with a clipboard and take notes - Judge the quality of teaching or make wider judgements about the school
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thank the member(s) of staff and pupils - Debrief with the Headteacher or other identified governor and staff - Report back to the GB on the visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leave without a word of thanks - Discuss observations with other members of staff, parents or individual governors, unless something urgent needs reporting to the Headteacher or a Designated Safeguarding Lead

Appendix A

Shirley Community Primary School - Governor Visit Monitoring Report

Date	
Name/s of Governors	
Names of lead staff	
School Priority	
Action from Improvement Plan/Action Plan to be monitored	
Summary of Visit	
Agreed Actions/next steps	
Any issues arising for the GB	
Feedback to GB (Date of meeting)	

Appendix B

Pre and post-Visit Checklist for the School and Governor

School	Governor
Is the focus of the visit a governor responsibility or a priority identified in our Improvement Plan?	Is this a formal appointment made with the Headteacher of key member of staff, which aligns with key governor responsibilities or IP priorities?
Do we know why the governor is visiting and the specific purpose of the visit?	Do I know the specific purpose of the visit?
Have we drawn up a timetable for the visit? Is the appropriate documentation emailed in advance or ready and available?	Have I arranged my time so that I can be sure to be punctual and give enough time to value input?
Do individual governors or staff know that they are going to be visited?	Have I thought about how I will approach the teacher in the classroom? Have I thought about what I actually do during the lesson/school visit?
Have other key governors or staff been informed?	How will I give feedback to the Headteacher/SLT/staff and the Governing Body?
Have the staff and the visiting governors been reminded of the protocols for governor visits?	Have I remembered that what I see or hear or might find out is confidential and not for sharing with other governors or parents in general?
Visit outcomes shared with leaders, staff and Governing Body. Improvements recognised and celebrated; areas for development identified and incorporated into planning and next visit focus.	
Review undertaken against Ofsted priorities and Improvement Plan draws on visit reporting for evidence of improvement in the short and longer term. All Governors clear of successes against priorities and of development areas and actions in place to address them.	

Appendix C



SCPS – Governor Visits 2020-21

(Staff/Governor email addresses to be used – copying in clerk@shirley.cambs.sch.uk)

<i>Focus of Visit</i>	<i>Governor/s</i>	<i>Member/s of staff</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>(Confirmed Date)</i>
<i>Keeping in Touch Data Visit (with LA)</i>	Ian Glover	John Cattermole Diane Mitchell Suzanne Wernham Phase Leaders LA Advisor	October	22.10.2020
<i>HT Appraisal</i>	Mark Broadbent Mark Lewis Andy Atkins	John Cattermole		
<i>English</i>	Mark Lewis	Colette Choi		
<i>Maths</i>	Ian Glover	John Jones		
<i>Curriculum</i>	Rhiannon Evans-Ali	Diane Mitchell John Cattermole		
<i>GDPR</i>	Mark Broadbent Ian Glover	Marie-Anne Crawley		
<i>EYFS</i>	Jenn Abecina	Faiza Khokhar Liz Pickering		
<i>Data</i>	Mark Lewis Ian Glover	Diane Mitchell		
<i>Pupil Premium</i>	Louisa Meynell	Diane Mitchell		
<i>Inclusion:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAC • Equality and Diversity • SEND 	Iman Ibn Tahaikt Louisa Meynell Dario Ummarino	Suzanne Wernham		
<i>Safeguarding/Child Protection</i>	Marie-Anne Crawley Rhiannon Evans-Ali	John Cattermole Tasha Reay/Fiona Willis Deputies		
<i>Health and Safety / COVID arrangements</i>	Jenn Abecina	John Cattermole Deputies Jo Bouttell		