

Respect

Kindness

Self-Worth/Perseverance

Forgiveness

Love



Governor Monitoring and Visits Policy

At Wittersham Church of England Primary School we believe that every child must be nurtured, valued and empowered to have the highest aspirations for their future and to reach their full potential through the provision of a stimulating, innovative and creative curriculum. We want our learning community to achieve high standards by equipping them with the skills to succeed and inspiring a lifelong love of learning.

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Revision History

Version	Date	By	Description
V01	October 2022	G. Hawkins	

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INTRODUCTION

“Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. But they need to be able to visit from time to time in order to develop their understanding of the school to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school. Governors should arrange their visits with the headteacher, who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. It is often useful to draw up a policy on governor’s visits to cover things such as giving notice, constructive feedback and handling concerns. The governing body should plan visits to cover a wide range of schoolwork and each visit should have a clear purpose. Visits by governors can be useful and informative. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the headteacher”.

(‘A Guide to the Law for School Governors’)

Purposes of a governor visit

The benefits to governors within their individual delegated monitoring roles:

- To assist the governing body, including the statutory delegated governor roles of safeguarding; health and safety; SEND; finance; to hold leaders to account within their delegated area of responsibility, collectively fulfilling its statutory duties and demonstrating accountability and constructive challenge in their delegated role in replacement of committees.
- To see the strategies in action as outlined in the school development plan
- To challenge, support and improve knowledge of the school, its staff, needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses within the governor delegated area of responsibility and collectively prevent overreliance of headteacher information.
- To hold the school leaders to account for the impact of specialist funding i.e. pupil premium, sports premium, Covid catch up.
- Financial probity by providing robust and effective governance to ensure the viability and efficiency of the organisation through effective business and financial planning and processes.
- To develop an understanding of issues facing the school and how

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they are dealt with on a day-to-day basis to inform collective strategic decision-making.

- To observe and monitor the impact of policies in action.

The benefits to governors

- Gaining an understanding of the broad full curriculum or a curriculum subject area as relevant.
- To see the use of resources and how the premises are utilised, understanding the environment for teachers and pupils.
- To recognise and celebrate success.
- To evidence the boards approved ethos, vision and values in action.
- To show themselves as part of the school and to gain stakeholder engagement with pupil, parents, staff or the wider community

The potential benefits to staff

- To ensure governors understand how school priority strategies are embedded in practice, understanding the reality of the classroom and environment.
- To enhance the continuous professional development of subject leads.
- To get to know and build positive relationships with governors.
- To understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities.
- To feel valued.
- To have an opportunity to reflect on the impact of policies and procedures through discussion
- To highlight the need for/impact of particular resources

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The potential benefits to parents

- To ensure governors understand the issues that parents may face
- To have mechanisms for enabling the board to listen, understand and respond to the voices of parents/carers, particularly to ensure transparency of decision-making.
- To get to know governors
- To understand better governor roles and responsibilities
- To give feedback about the school to the governors

What a visit is not about

- Visiting classrooms to observe a lesson, unless as part of an accompanied learning walk against a specific school development priority. This prevents any confusion on a class visit being confused as a form of inspection to make judgements about professional expertise of a teacher
- Undertaking a staff operational role
- Checking on progress or receiving information of individual children
- Pursuing a personal agenda
- An opportunity to tackle staff about specific issues not related to the delegated role

Protocols for visits

- Ensure the visit has a clear focus linked to the school development plan and/or area of governor responsibility.
- Governors individually understand the boards and their delegated area of responsibility, enabling preparation to ensure they provide the constructive challenge required.
- Governors to remember that during any visit their role is strategic not operational.
- Governors to ensure in preparation for their visit they have

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undertaken relevant training and read any relevant policy or supporting documentation.

- To liaise with the headteacher to schedule the meeting
- Staff should have the opportunity to explain the context of any lesson on the rare occasion that a governor visits a classroom
- Governors will not interrupt lessons by asking teachers questions
- Governors may talk to students during learning walk visits to lessons, about their understanding and learning journeys, but must not ask questions about the teacher's conduct of the lesson.
- Governors will ensure that they are familiar with the school's code of conduct as well as that of the board, with expectation that they follow the same behaviours to understand how they will be addressed and how to address others as well as appropriate dress code as outlined within both code of conducts.
- Governors will have a clear understanding that a breach of the governor monitoring visit policy will be dealt with as a breach of the board's code of conduct.
- Governors will formally write reports on their monitoring using the approved templates; ensuring that draft reports are sent to the Headteacher for factual accuracy comments prior to the final report being produced.

Delegated governor monitoring reports will be circulated in advance, via the clerk, for the board meeting to enable discussion, evaluation, triangulation and key questions to be raised; with minute evidence documented to show the impact of the monitoring.

HOW WE MONITOR THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER REPORTS TO THE FGB

The FGB meetings take place termly and the Headteacher provides written and verbal reports in alternate terms. The written reports are circulated to governors in advance of the meeting providing the opportunity for governors to send the head any questions they might have. The questions are then answered at the meeting and recorded in the minutes. This is to ensure that the governors are holding the headteacher to account.

VISITS TO MONITOR PROGRESS AGAINST THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Governors will accompany the Headteacher on a learning walk (Terms 2-6) in order to monitor progress against the SDP priorities. After the visit the governor will write up a report to send to the Headteacher to check for factual accuracy before it is circulated to all governors.

SEND & PUPIL PREMIUM

John Collins is the link governor for SEND and will meet with the SENCO to discuss SEN provision. Stephen Rogers will meet with the Headteacher to discuss allocation of the Pupil premium and its impact.

SAFEGUARDING

John Collins is the link governor and will meet with the Headteacher (3 times/year) to check safeguarding compliance and will report back to the FGB.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Stephen Rogers is the link governor and meets with the Headteacher (3 times/year) to complete the compliance checklist

SIAMS/CHRISTIAN DISTINCTIVENESS

SIAMS and the Christian distinctiveness of the school will be considered and reflected upon during each termly monitoring visit.

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EYFS

Kerry Dean is the link governor.

PUPIL & PARENT VOICE

As part of learning walks governors will talk to and question pupils. The Chair and one other governor undertake an annual Pupil Conference with members of the school council and report back the pupil responses to the FGB.

The Vice-Chair is responsible for organising and collating results from a questionnaire sent out biennially to all parents.

A pupil questionnaire is given to Year 6 pupils in advance of their move to secondary education. This provides useful feedback of their whole school experience.

Minutes of all FGB meetings are published on the school website (excluding confidential items).

WORK SAMPLING

As well as scrutinising pupil books on learning walks sample surveys will be carried out by the governors (including the chair) focussing on specific areas of the curriculum and school development plan.

PUPIL PROGRESS

Following the school's Pupil Progress tracking schedule the data is provided to governors for discussion at FGB meetings.

The Term 6 FGB discusses the outcomes of the statutory assessments.

MEETINGS WITH SUBJECT LEADERS

Governors will meet with a subject lead during termly link governor visits. They will monitor how the subject is implementing specific strands of the school development plan and demonstrating the school's vision and values. Subject leaders are advised of the questions they will be asked in advance of these meetings. During the meetings, Subject leads will share action plans and the progress made against key points. Governors will also observe specific lessons in action to support discussions with the Subject lead.

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POLICY REVIEW

Policies, both statutory and non-statutory are included in a Policy review schedule, which is regularly updated. Some policy reviews are either delegated to the Headteacher or to specific committees, and others to the FGB. Irrespective all reviews are updated according to their review dates and reported at FGB meetings. The updated schedule is then circulated with the minutes of the meeting

FINANCE MONITORING

Oliver Walker is Chair of the Finance Committee and Link Governor for Finance

The Finance committee carries this out and a budget monitoring report is distributed and discussed at each FGB meeting. The committee also monitors how both the pupil and sports premium monies are being used. Governors receive budget monitoring reports 6 times/year

HEADTEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The cycle runs from September to September. A panel of three governors supported by an External Advisor form the committee. Progress on objectives throughout the year is addressed through the SDP progress reports and the Headteacher reports to governors.