

# Governor Visits Policy



Policy developed by Mr Grogan (Headteacher) and Mrs L Bashford (School Governor) based on Wigan LA Model Policy: June 2022

Policy approved by Governors: July 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Taylor".

Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mr M Grogan".

Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: July 2022

***'Never settle for less than your best'***

## GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY

### Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

### Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

### Our Mission Statement

St. George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral, and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

***For consistency the word 'governor' and 'governing board' is used throughout, this can be substituted for 'trustee' and 'trust board'.***

### Context

A key role of the Governing Board is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Visiting is the best way to learn how it functions. It gives the board first-hand knowledge and helps to inform strategic decision making. It demonstrates the Governors' role in strategic management by helping to hold the school or academy to account and evaluating its progress. The Annual Programme of Visits is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar. This will be planned at the start of the Academic Year and shared with all staff. (appendix 1)

It is vital that everyone is clear about the purpose of the visits they are making to avoid any confusion.

#### **The purpose of a visit is to:**

1. Improve governor knowledge
2. See the school at work and observe a range of attitudes, behavior and achievements
3. Understand the environment in which teachers teach and to recognise different teaching styles
4. Get to know the staff and demonstrate a commitment to the school
5. Work in partnership with the staff
6. Listen to lessons and to see the environment in which they learn
7. Monitor priorities and policies in action
8. Gain first-hand information to inform decision making
9. Find out more about resource needs
10. Recognise and celebrate success
11. Assist the board in fulfilling its statutory duties

#### **It helps staff to:**

1. Understand better the roles and responsibilities of governors
2. Get to know the governors
3. Share the knowledge about learning and teaching to help governors understand
4. Highlight the need for certain resources
5. Demonstrate to governors the approaches taken to address priorities

#### **Governor visits are not about:**

1. Inspecting lessons to make judgements about professional expertise of the staff. The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team make judgments about teaching and learning through observation and feedback with staff.
2. Making professional judgements about any aspect of education

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3. Checking progress of your own child
4. Pursuing a personal agenda
5. Monopolising staff time
6. Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas
7. Turning up un-announced
8. Providing professional and/or negative feedback to staff
9. Making promises to children and staff

### Visit Guidelines

#### **Before making a visit Governors will:**

1. Contact the Headteacher and agree a date, time and focus of the visit
2. Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
3. Prepare for the visit using appendix 2
4. Communicate which classes you will visit and and/or which members of staff you would like to speak to
5. Ensure staff are aware of the visit\*

*\*It should be the responsibility of the Headteacher to inform any member/s of staff who may be involved in the visit.*

#### **On the day of the visit Governors will:**

1. Arrive on time
2. Follow all your schools security procedures
3. Make yourself aware of the Fire Drill and any health and safety priorities
4. Be aware of safeguarding and confidentiality issues when interacting with staff, children and parents
5. Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher
6. Observe discreetly
7. Ask questions when it is appropriate; be courteous not critical
8. Avoid getting drawn in to any discussion on personal or staff grievances
9. Avoid distracting staff from their primary role by asking too many questions
10. Remember it is a visit, not an inspection
11. Not lose sight of the purpose of your visit
12. Listen to staff and pupils
13. Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
14. Enjoy the visit

#### **After the visit Governors will:**

1. Thank staff and children for supporting you in your role as a Governor
2. Agree with the Headteacher when you will report on your visit to the Governing Board
3. Complete a brief written report using appendix 3 – where possible individuals should not be identified
4. Report to Governing Board

#### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality should be adhered to at all times. Observations and comments may be shared with teachers concerned and the Head teacher, but not with other staff or with other parents/carers.

### Commitment

Individual Governors have differing amounts of time to commit to visits. It is important however, that all Governors should try to make visits at some time. A Governor should aim to make a visit at least once a year.

This policy should be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

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**Suggestions about what to observe on your visit:**

- Relationships between staff and children
- Relationships between children
- Availability and role of support staff
- Attitude of children – are they attentive, motivated, listening, questioning, responding?
- Attitudes of parents if around
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and children
- How different abilities are catered for
- Displays
- Ethos – atmosphere and values that are evident (are expectations high, is there encouragement, praise, challenge and equality of opportunities)
- Use of space and working conditions
- Quality and quantity of resources

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. Governors will remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Head Teacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the Governing Board. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then visits will be enjoyable for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the Governing Board which will contribute to effective school improvement.

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# St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery

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## Planning my visit to school

Name:	
What is the purpose of my visit?	
Which members of staff will I meet/talk to?	
What to see (linked to the purpose)	
Questions I would like to ask	

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## Visit Reporting Form

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date of visit:</b>
<b>Purpose of visit</b>	
<b>How does this visit relate to the priorities of the school?</b>	
<b>Observations and Comments</b> <i>(what you saw; who you communicated with; what you learned; what you want to clarified; how long your visit lasted)</i>	
<b>Impact and Evaluation of Visit</b>	
<b>Any other comments</b>	

Signed (Governor): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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