

# Governor Visits to School Policy



Wigan Council Policy adopted by St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery: September 2025

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*Jhona Taylor*

Chair of Governors

*M. Grogan*

Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: September 2025

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

## GOVERNOR VISIT TO SCHOOL 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.

### Aims

This policy sets out the procedure and standards of conduct that all Governors are expected to follow when visiting St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery and how they are expected to report back on that visit to the governing board.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that all Governors understand their role and purpose, so school visits are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

**Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish.**

### Context

A key role of the Governing Board is to monitor the progress and performance of the school.

Visiting school to carry out a 'monitoring visit', enables Governors to learn how it functions, gives first-hand knowledge and helps to inform strategic decision making. It demonstrates Governors' role in strategic management by helping to hold the school to account and evaluating its progress.

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

1. See a specific aspect of how the school operates in practice, maybe to observe a range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements.
2. Check progress is being made towards the school's strategic objectives, monitoring priorities and seeing policies in action.
3. Gain first-hand information to inform decision making.
4. Assist the board in fulfilling its statutory duties.
5. Understand the environment in which teachers teach, see lessons and see the environment in which pupils learn.
6. Get to know the staff and demonstrate a commitment to the school.
7. Work in partnership with the staff.
8. Find out more about resource needs.
9. Recognise and celebrate success.

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

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

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

1. Inspecting lessons or assessing the teaching and learning.
2. Interfering in the day-to-day running of the school.
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 unannounced.
8. Providing professional and/or negative feedback to staff.
9. Making promises to children or staff.

### **Schools Visits**

These visits must be pre-arranged, and if you wish to spend time in a classroom, the school needs to be very clear about why you are there. This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the [maintained schools governance guide](#) (section 3.3.3).

- **Occasional visits, for example a learning walk, enable Governors to:**
  - o fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school.
  - o see whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans.
  - o see how their policies and improvement plans are working in practice.
- **Focused visits, for example a meeting with a staff member, should be:**
  - o in line with school improvement priorities.
  - o for an identified purpose linked to the governing body's responsibilities, such as safeguarding.
  - o pre-arranged with the Headteacher.

### **Visits Programme**

The Annual Programme of Visits is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar and allows the board to meet their statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness. It is recommended this is planned at the start of the academic year and shared with all staff. (**Appendix 1**).

### **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 school's security procedures.
3. Make yourself aware of the fire drill and any other health and safety priorities.
4. Be aware of safeguarding and confidentiality issues when interacting with staff, children and parents/carers.
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.

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10. Remember it is a visit, not an inspection.
11. Not lose sight of the purpose of your visit.
12. Listen to staff and children.

**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 the governing board.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality should be adhered to at all times. Observations and comments may be shared with school staff concerned and the Headteacher, but not with other staff or with 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 time for a school visit at least once over the academic year.

This policy should be reviewed annually by the governing board.

**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

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**Appendix 1: Annual Programme of Visits to School**

School improvement objective focus of visit	Specific area of focus of the visit	Staff member name/ role to see	Governor name and role carrying out visit	Intended impact of visit	Tick when completed

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**Appendix 2:** Planning my visit to School

Name	School
Specific area of focus of the visit	
Which members of staff will I meet/talk to?	
What to see (linked to area of focus)	
Questions I would like to ask	

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**Appendix 3: Visits Reporting Form**

<b>Name of Governor:</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time of Visit:</b>
<b>Specific area of focus of the visit</b>	
<b>How does this link to school improvement objective</b>	
<b>Observations and Comments (what you saw; who you communicated with; what you learned; what you want to clarified; impact of school's actions, how long your visit lasted)</b>	
<b>Impact and Evaluation of Visit</b>	
<b>Any other comments</b>	

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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