



Studham Church of England Village School

Policy for Governor Monitoring Visits

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors' visits to school.

The governing body has a strategic role in the planning and management of the school and a responsibility for monitoring and evaluating its progress and performance.

By visiting the school, governors can build good working relationships with staff and understand the context of policies and planning. Visits also help governors to assess whether the School's ethos and vision, policies, and strategic plans are borne out in practice on a day-to-day basis. Ofsted and SIAMS assume that governors know the strengths and weaknesses of a school and will test that assumption during inspection.

Visits will also help the governors to assess the progress being made towards targets and priorities in the School Development Plan. Their decisions about these targets and priorities will be more effective if they have seen the school in action.

It is also important that the school community gets to know the governors.

Visits are not about making judgments on the quality of teaching; that is the Headteacher's responsibility. Nor are they about checking on the progress of individual children or pursuing personal agendas. A parent should not normally visit a class in which a child of theirs is a pupil.

Format of Visits

A schedule of visits will be agreed in the Autumn term by the governing body (advised by the standing committee chairs) and the head teacher.

It is the responsibility of each individual governor to make a half-day visit to the school at least once a year.

The aim is for maths, literacy and science to be the subject of a visit annually (one each term). Foundation subjects will each be the subject of a visit every 2 years.

Christian character will be monitored bi-annually but not necessarily by a classroom visit. All governors should consider when they visit the school whether and how the School's Christian character is demonstrated in the classroom and in the school more widely; and address this in their reports of their visits.

Visits might be:

- general visits, to get to know the school
- linked to objectives and targets set out in planning documents
- linked to areas of the school development plan
- connected to a specific governor role – Health & Safety, SEND, Pupil Premium, Safeguarding, Early Years etc.
- a learning walk or pupil shadowing
- related to a specific curriculum area
- related to a specific key stage
- to see how a particular policy is implemented

Protocols for visits

In advance:

- Arrange times and schedule with the head teacher and member(s) of staff at least 2 weeks before the visit, at a mutually convenient time
- A lesson/visit plan should be provided
- Read relevant policies/documents beforehand
- Read the School Visits Report and what observations need to be made
- Discuss the focus of the visit with appropriate staff beforehand

On the day:

- Arrive on time
- Check with staff where you should sit and whether you should participate in the lesson at all
- If agreed, talk to and ask questions of the children – where appropriate and previously agreed
- Avoid talking to the teacher when he/she is involved with the children
- Thank the teacher/staff and children when leaving the classroom

Courtesies and Good Practice during the Visit

- Smile! Friendly but professional manner
- Be courteous and considerate to all staff
- Note down any key points relating to the focus of your visit but try not to write notes continuously
- Observe the boundaries of the visit – do not enter other classrooms or the staff room unless invited
- Do not make judgments on the effectiveness of the teaching
- Always remember the focus for the visit and do not get drawn into inappropriate issues
- Take care not to add to the work load of the staff
- Thank members of staff and children for their time
- It is important not to pursue personal agendas or issues with your own or known children during a governor school visit

After the Visit

- If appropriate share your experiences and findings with the member of staff and/or the head teacher orally. You should make clear what you intend to share with the other governors
- Always respect confidentiality
- Write up a Visit Report as soon as possible
- Within 2 weeks of the visit, share your Report with the head teacher and through him member(s) of staff.
- The Report can provide a good base for discussion and provides a formal record for Ofsted/SIAMS of governor visits
- Amend your Report if necessary taking any comments into account
- Share your Report with the appropriate committee chair

Monitoring and Reviewing

The head teacher and standing committee chairs will monitor and review the schedule programme of visits report to the governing body annually. Information gained from governor visits will be recorded and shared with the relevant committee and, where staff agree with the full governing body. On occasion a confidential report may be made to the headteacher and relevant chair(s) either orally or in a separate note.

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years, or sooner if required.

October 2017

Studham CofE Village School Governor Visit Report

Name:	Date:
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Focus of Visit

Reference to specific governor role (eg/SEND), curriculum/school development plan/Ofsted/SIAMS/policy

Relevant policy (ies) document(s)

Including Governor Visits to School Policy, School's Christian character, School Development Plan priorities

Any key issues arising for the Governing body?

eg The way resources are allocated, the way the school communicates, progress in implementing a key policy

Reflections – evaluating the visit in relation to the key issues

October 2017

eg What did you see? What did you learn? What would you like clarified?)

Main points to report back to governors

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Governor)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Head teacher)