



STRIVE - THRIVE - ACHIEVE

Governor Monitoring Policy

Approved by:	Governors	Date: 27th November 2024
Last reviewed on:	27th November 2024	
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Contents

Policy aims

This policy aims to ensure that all governors understand:

- the purpose of monitoring visits
- the expectations for carrying out visits including preparation, expected conduct and reporting back to the governing board

Purpose of visits

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows governors to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in the life, work and achievements of a school
- experience the culture and ethos of the school

Monitoring visits should focus on:

- strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board
- the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)

Frequency of visits

The frequency of governance visits should be in accordance with the schedule established by the governing board and agreed with school leaders and relevant staff. Visits should be scheduled to allow governors to see relevant activities and strategic milestones.

Arranging and preparing for visits

Visits should be arranged through the headteacher, with adequate notice, and agreed with the relevant members of staff.

Due regard should be given to:

- how the visit fits with the schedule of board and committee meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion
- how to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life
- the workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits

Governors are encouraged to prepare for their visit. This may include:

- reading and familiarising yourself with the governing board's protocol for visits and the expected conduct
- reading and familiarising yourself with the school's policy for visitors (this is different from the governor visits policy) that includes relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions
- reading the background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information
- clarifying the purpose of the visit with the head teacher and or relevant member of staff
- confirming the visit schedule and activities

Conduct on visits

When visiting the school in a governing capacity, you should:

- arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures (such as signing in and producing identification)

- adopt a friendly approach that puts everyone at ease
- be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this
- if you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching)
- ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit
- acknowledge the staff and pupils you meet

Governors are also expected to behave in line with the governing board's code of conduct, being aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.

Expectations following a visit

A report should be completed as soon as possible after each visit. A draft will be shared with the headteacher, and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next governing board meeting (this may be the full governing board or a committee, as appropriate).

Appendix 1 – Governor Visit Report Format:

Name:		Date of visit:	
Focus of visit (link to strategy and school development plan)			
Summary of activities e.g. talking to staff and pupils, looking at specific resources, having lunch etc			
What have I learned as a result of my visit? (relate this back to focus of visit)			
Aspects I would like clarified / questions that I have:			

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Actions for the governing board to consider:

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Any other comments / ideas for future visits:

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Signed:

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Appendix 3: Link Governor Responsibilities and Relevant Staff Link

As part of the Headteachers report. A standing item of discussion on the agenda is Governors Link Visits. Those visits that have been conducted are discussed and reviewed at the Full Management Committee. Link Governors are provided with the key contact in school to arrange their visit and ensure an equal distribution of visits throughout the year.

The role of the link governor is to provide a link between the governing board and the school. When link governors visit the school and report back to the governing board they help to deepen all governors' understanding of how the school operates, how the strategic objectives are being pursued, how financial resources are being used and what extra support the school may need to meet its objectives. They provide an additional source of evidence upon which governing decisions can be made which should enable the governing board to better challenge information presented by the school and also better support the school to meet its strategic objectives. Governing boards that have established effective link roles will have an improved understanding of how the school works, its strengths and weaknesses and will improve their effectiveness in addressing school improvement issues. It is important to make sure that staff members understand the purpose of a link governor visit. Link governors are there to monitor not to inspect.

WHY DO WE HAVE LINK GOVERNORS?

- They allow governors to see first-hand the resources used in school, and their impact, so that they can make informed decisions about future budget allocations
- They allow governors to monitor and evaluate regularly the progress of the School Improvement Plan
- They are a means to build up relationships, based on mutual trust and respect
- They contribute to informing the school's self-evaluation process

WHAT IS THEIR ROLE IN PRACTICE?

- Establishing regular contact with staff in school with responsibility for the governor's 'link' area
- Making visits to school with a clear focus which have been agreed with the Headteacher/subject leader beforehand
- Talking to staff about the condition and availability of subject resources
- Being aware of how effectively the school caters for all learners, for example SEND pupils
- Attending relevant training
- Exploring specific aspects within the link area to gain deeper understanding of relevant issues
- Hearing from pupils about their experience and opinions in regard to the link area
- Carrying out learning walks which may be general or focused on a particular aspect
- Being involved with establishing/monitoring/evaluating relevant policies within their chosen link area • Being informed of any local and/or national issues impacting upon the link area
- Considering how information about the link area is communicated to parents, in particular on the school website

WHEN PREPARING TO VISIT THE SCHOOL WHAT SHOULD GOVERNORS ASK THEMSELVES?

- What is the purpose of the visit? What has prompted my decision to visit? Is the reason specific or general? What are my/other people's expectations?
- How shall I carry out my visit? What particular areas of the school am I interested in? What particular activities of the school am I interested in? What particular age group(s) am I interested in? What questions should I ask? Who should I ask? Are there any questions that can be answered by observation? What strategies could a visiting governor adopt in order not to get in the way and yet get a whole picture of what is going on?
- Is there any follow up required? Have I recorded my experiences and prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting? Have I provided a draft of this report to the Headteacher and subject lead for comment beforehand? What do I need to do to build on this report the next time I visit?

Key:	Must	Should	Could
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Link Governor Roles	Governor Responsible (name)	Staff Link (name)
Safeguarding	Sophie Brigstocke	Kim Mower
Health and Safety	John Hart & Keith Isaac	Claire Barrett
SEND	Vikki Langford	Sarah McKinley
Pupil Premium	Kate Biddlestone	Daniel Furniss
Careers	Mandy Bowers	Chris Smith
School Development Plan	Vikki Langford	Chris Nichols
School Development Plan (Personal Development)	Kate Biddlestone	Lucy Burns
School Development Plan (Finance)	Ian McPherson	Chris Nichols
School Development Plan (Teaching and Learning)	Vikki Langford	Dan Furniss
Mental Health & Wellbeing	Sophie Brigstocke	Sarah McKinley
Primary	Sarah Blakeman	Dominic Horsley
Behaviour and Attendance	Ailish Bumpus	Kim Mower
PE and Sports Premium	Kate Biddlestone	Daniel Furniss
PRU	Ian McPherson	Jacki Blake

Appendix 4: Link Governor Online Training Opportunities

These are available via nga learning link: <https://nga.vc-enable.co.uk/Register>

<p>Governance Visits to School This 10-minute module will enable you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ make the best use of visits to school▪ ensure they are well planned▪ ensure they are focussed on school or trust priorities.	<p>Monitoring and Evaluation This 55-minute module will help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ identify and understand the governing board's role in school improvement▪ focus on the monitoring and evaluation stages of the school improvement process▪ discuss the school strategy, the purpose and content of the headteacher's (or other executive leader's) report and governance visits to school.
<p>Essential Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees This one-hour introductory module uses scenarios, sample questions and templates to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ what those governing need to know about and do to fulfil their safeguarding role▪ policies, procedures, principles and practices in all types of school▪ how to contribute effectively to safeguarding in your school or trust.	<p>Health and Safety This 55-minute module will give you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ an overview of your legal duties in relation to health and safety▪ practical guidance around the role of governing boards in managing health and safety in schools▪ an understanding of where to obtain further information on a number of topics.
<p>The Governance of SEND This 55-minute module will help you understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ how to carry out your duties as the governor responsible for special educational needs and disabilities in your school▪ how to access factual information to enable you to support your school in achieving high expectations and good outcomes for all pupils, including those with SEND.	<p>Pupil Premium This 50-minute module will help governors and trustees fulfil their strategic role in the effective and efficient management of the school's use of the Pupil Premium Grant to raise the attainment of Free School Meals Children, Looked After Children and children of serving members of HM Forces.</p>
<p>Early Years Education This one-hour module will help you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ understand the history of Early Years provision▪ know the current provision of Early Years education▪ be aware of your responsibilities as a governor in a school providing Early Years education▪ have access to a wide range of further information on Early Years provision.	<p>Managing Staff Workload and Wellbeing – The Governance Role In addition to meeting employer's legal obligations, effective management of workload and wellbeing is essential for maintaining positive morale and productivity and critical to recruiting and retaining quality staff. Exploring the sorts of issues many schools and trusts are facing, this 15-minute module suggests practical approaches governing boards can take to get workload and wellbeing management under control.</p>
<p>Arts, Cultural and Creativity – Improving your school/trust and its Curriculum This 45-minute module focuses on six key areas where schools can use arts and cultural education to improve outcomes through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a broad and balanced curriculum▪ school community and parental engagement▪ health and wellbeing▪ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development▪ social mobility▪ developing life skills and employability skills.	<p>Environmental Sustainability – The Governance Role This 30-minute bitesize module will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ guide you through the background of environmental sustainability in schools and why it matters▪ enable you to determine some practical next steps for your board▪ provide you with a helpful strategy document and some key questions to ask your board and leaders.

Appendix 5: Additional guidance for Link Governors

There is additional guidance on [oneAdvanced](#) for the following Link Governors (under Resources > Danesgate FMC > Link Governor Information

- Relationship and sex educations
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Curriculum
- Careers
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- SEND