

# Governor Visit Policy

Agreed by FGB: July 2020

Review: July 2023

Signed by:





## Contents

1. Introduction – page 3
2. Conduct – page 3
3. Familiarisation Visits – page 3
4. Centre Events – page 3
5. Link Governor Engagement Visits – page 3
6. Guidance for classroom visits – page 4
7. Model Visit Report – page 4
8. Governor reflection – page 4



## 1. Introduction

In order for the Governing Board (GB) to carry out its core functions the governors need to draw on a range of information. One source of information is visiting the academy to gain first-hand experience and this policy focuses on physical visits. If this is not possible due to the Covid-19 risk assessment visits should be replaced by Teams calls wherever possible. Visits fall into 3 categories:

- Familiarisation visits where the governor is learning about the centre in general
- Attending centre events such as parents' evenings, fayres, assemblies, training days etc
- Link visits where the governor visit is focused on a particular strategic or statutory theme

Although visits are primarily arranged for the purposes of the GB they should also promote increased trust and transparency with stakeholders through governors being visibly on site. Governors are not to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits or become involved in operational detail. This policy sets out how visits will be arranged and reported on to the GB.

## 2. Conduct

Governors will comply with the GB Code of Conduct and the standards of behaviour and presentation expected of staff and be mindful that they are representing the whole GB through their words and actions. There may be additional rules for hospital and specialist sites. These should be confirmed in advance of the visit with your host. Comments and feedback should be limited to the host member of staff.

## 3. Familiarisation Visits

These visits will be scheduled across the academic year and across the academy by the Company Secretary on an annual basis. The aim of the visit is to give the governor an overview of the centre's operation and environment so that they are then able to fully participate in GB discussions and for a working relationship to be established between governors and the centre leaders. The visits will be suitable for a small group of governors and will be hosted by the centre leader, lasting no more than an hour. Any unanswered queries should be raised with the host/host's line manager in the first instance. It is not intended that a report will be made to the GB, but the visits will be referred to in the Governing Board Report.

## 4. Centre Events

The visibility of the GB, and access to governors by stakeholders is increased if governors attend centre events, though governors need to be clear that they don't act on operational matters or on an individual basis. Governor knowledge of the centre is also increased. The Company Secretary will use the school calendar to issue email calendar invites to the GB for events throughout the academic year. The Company Secretary will liaise with the centre leader to ensure they know who will be attending from the GB. Any queries should be raised with the centre leader in the first instance. It is not intended that a report will be made to the GB, but the visits will be referred to in the Governing Board Report.

## 5. Link Governor Engagement Visits

The link governor roles are described in the Link Governor Policy.

The Company Secretary, in conjunction with the Chair of the Board and Principal, will arrange a programme of visits. In line with the expectation of MATs, the aim is for every centre to be visited at least annually during the school day. The Company Secretary will make mutually agreed arrangements for the



visit between the governor and visit host. The governor spirit of the visit should be one of “appreciative enquiry and learning”. The visit should include an element of pupil voice and classroom visits and if possible, parent voice. Informal feedback will be given to the visit host at the time of the visit. The visit report should reflect what you have learned from the host (based around the core governance functions) and will be agreed with the host and Principal before the final version is distributed to the GB and summarised in the GB report.

6. Guidance for classroom visits

- The staff must be informed of your visit in advance by the visit host and know the scope of your visit
- Be aware that your presence will alter the classroom dynamic
- Don't make notes in the classroom
- Don't interrupt the learning; wait to be introduced
- Arrange in advance with the visit host how pupil voice will be arranged
- Prepare some questions that are relevant to the visit focus in advance for the pupils
- Don't get involved in operational matters
- If you are uncomfortable with something you have seen, discreetly talk to the visit host/centre leader outside of the situation
- Thank the staff and pupils for their time

7. Model Visit Report

Name:	Date:
Visit host:	Centre:
<u>Focus of visit</u>	
<u>Summary of activities</u>	
<u>What has the host identified as the strengths?</u>	
<u>What has the host identified as the challenges?</u>	
<u>What is being put in place for the challenges?</u>	
<u>What difference is expected?</u>	
<u>Actions for the GB to consider</u>	

8. Governor reflection

It is good practice to personally reflect whether the visit has achieved its aims.

- What have I learned?
- How will this help the GB to make better informed decisions?
- Have I achieved increased trust and transparency with stakeholders?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How could visit policy and practice be improved?