

Model Policy for Governor Visits to Schools

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

"Living and Learning in Faith"



Name of school:

Date policy adopted:

Date for review:

Signed:

Signed:

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

19th November 2024

November 2026

(Chair on behalf of governing board)

(Headteacher on behalf of the school)

Context

Planned visits to school is an essential part of the governor and trustee role, these visits enhance the strategic decision making of the governing board and help support the working relationships between staff and governors. This model policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent approach to support these visits which will provide a greater level of information and in-depth knowledge at committee and full governing board meetings.

Governors should be prepared to sign into school on every visit, complying with DBS requirements and school policies on Safeguarding, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and personal IT devices such as mobile phones, laptops, and tablets.

Governors and trustees are also expected to behave in line with the governing board's code of conduct at all times and respect the need to maintain confidentiality.

Purpose

The type of visits as described in this policy are different to those which governors may undertake for such reasons as attending school-specific events, meetings or helping in school. Governor visits should have a strategic focus in line with the School Development Plan, to develop their knowledge of the school and deepen their understanding of the impact of their decisions on the provision. Visits should be linked to the priorities in the Governing Board or School Development plan.

Monitoring visits should focus on:

- strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board.
- can you see evidence of the progress being reported?
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)

The key questions for governors to consider in committees or board meetings will be informed by such visits and through subsequent discussions with school leaders.

Consistency of approach

Clarification of a key focus with a clear purpose is crucial and some basic principles should be considered in the context of the visit.

- How does it link with the School Development Plan?
- What are the key issues for action in this area?
- Do they have the support/resources needed to carry it out? If not, how can governors help?
- What may be seen in relation to impact at this point?
- What needs to be done next?

The Governing Board is committed to adopting a consistent approach to support these visits by:

- Determining that the visit is part of an agreed programme to support strategic decision making
- Clear identification of what the outcomes for the visit are
- Adoption of an agreed proforma for completion by governors (Appendix 1)
- An agreed governor visits schedule
- Agreement, understanding and engagement of staff in the purpose of the visit

Effective management

The Governing Board is committed to the effective management of visits through:

Clear guidelines of the expectations of staff and governors on who holds responsibility for what before/during/after the visit:

- Boards should agree a schedule of governor visits throughout the year which are based on the priorities within the school and/or board development plan. An example schedule is attached in appendix 2.
- Identification of designated member of staff to meet with the governor (Headteacher/Deputy/Head of Department/Subject leader)
- Opportunity for Q & A session – during or after the scheduled visit has taken place.
- Information sharing – governor's completed proforma to be shared with staff member
- Responsible person for dissemination of information
- Completed proformas to be sent to the Governor Support Officer for uploading to GovernorHub and shared with papers for the relevant board meeting.
- If you take notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and be prepared to share them if required.
- Ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit. Share any prepared in advance to allow staff to prepare or plan for the visit.

Equality and Fairness

Governors should take care to note that their visit is always only a 'snapshot' of the school at a particular point in time.

The Governing Board is committed to an equitable and fair approach to these visits through:

- Reinforcement of clarity of purpose
- Governors are not inspectors (even though they may be qualified to act as one in other contexts) and therefore they should not make written observations/comments about the quality of the teaching and learning which is beyond their remit.
- Any concerns following the visit are raised with the Headteacher verbally.
- Identification of individual staff or pupils by name is not permitted on any visit proforma as these reports must be made available for public inspection upon request.

Additional guidance

Governors may also find this NGA document useful-'*Knowing your school: School visits, holding your school to account*' which is available at <https://www.nga.org.uk/knowledge-centre/school-visits-guidance/>

Name:	Link governor role:
Date of visit:	Class or subject leader met with:
What was the purpose of this visit?	
Which priorities does this link to in the school development or governing board development plan?	
What were the key points from this visit?	
What have you learnt from the visit that you believe will make a useful contribution to the school or governing board development plan?	
How do you feel this visit has helped you to develop your role as a governor?	
Are there any further points you wish to bring to the board's attention?	

Governor visits schedule 2024/2025

[illegible]