



As a church school, our vision is for each child to love learning and to have hope, confidence, wisdom and respect for all.

*'Life in all its fullness'* (John 10:10)

## St Peter's Brafferton C of E (VA) Primary School

### Governor School Visits Policy

#### Purpose of Policy

- To ensure that all Governors adhere to effective safeguarding
- The governing body has responsibility for the direction, policies and standards of the school and is accountable for its conduct and performance.
- Visiting the school is an excellent way to observe how it operates on a day-to-day basis but all governor visits should be focussed and relate to the priorities in the School Development Plan. Governors should report back their findings on the monitoring form, thus helping the whole governing body to make more informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the School Development Plan (SDP) and informing strategic decision making.

The Headteacher, who has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, along with the Chair of Governors, will guide the governing body on the areas of the curriculum, policies and SDP to be covered/monitored each term, depending on the needs of the school.

#### Purpose of visit

- The focus of each visit should be informed by the yearly monitoring plan set up by the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors, which is underpinned by the eight Principles of Effective Governance and is reflective of the needs of the school set out in the SDP. It could also focus on areas, such as the management of the school's resources, the condition of the buildings, a particular year group or class in relation to progress and attainment.
- Each monitoring visit should have a Safeguarding focus and the monitoring form will reflect this.
- Governors should also use the subject Action Plans to guide them through their monitoring visits, this will ensure observation monitoring is not carried out

#### Potential benefits

##### to governors:

- To recognise and celebrate success of pupils and staff
- To build effective relationships with the staff and gain a better understanding of the context in which they work
- To get to know the students
- To monitor policies in action
- To inform decision making

- To help set the strategic direction of the school
- To identify and prioritise resource needs
- To support their role in holding the Head Teacher to account for the school performance and pupil outcomes.

#### to teachers:

- To ensure governors understand the reality of the classroom
- To get to know governors
- To understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
- To highlight the need for resources or support
- To help teachers reflect on and improve practice

#### **What a visit is not about**

- Making judgements on the quality of teaching or professional expertise of the teacher, this is the role of the Headteacher
- Checking on progress of individual children
- Pursuing personal interests and concerns
- Any operation functions of the school

#### **Protocols for visits.**

- Governor School Visits Policy
- Governors should, with the guidance of the yearly agreed monitoring plan, identify an area of focus of the schools SDP in which to carry out their monitoring visit and this focus will be guided by the termly agreed monitoring questions set up by the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors.
- Subject Action Plans should also be used during a monitoring visit, as this will help to maximise the effectiveness of the governing body's monitoring role and ensure that Governor monitoring is strategic and NOT operational.

#### **Planning the visit.**

When organising and conducting a visit, governors will be courteous and considerate, respecting the professional roles of the Headteacher and staff.

1. Governors should confirm in advance with the Teacher/Subject Leader being visited the date, timing and focus of each visit which has been negotiated and planned between the Governor and teacher **please see annex (i)** This can be done via email.
2. Governors will, if possible, prepare for the monitoring visit by reading relevant documentation/ guidance and discussion with the Chair of Governors (if needed) to ensure clarity and purpose of the visit.
3. Please give teachers plenty of notice for the timing of Governor monitoring visits.

#### **Documentation and reporting of findings of the visit.**

- At the end of each visit, the governor will discuss what they have observed with the teacher and clarify any points they are uncertain about.
- Comments should be limited to the focus of the visit.
- Governors visiting cannot make personal judgements or promises on behalf of the governing body.
- Governors will discuss their observations and discussions with the teacher and document these findings on the Governor monitoring form (**see annex ii**)
- Governors should email their completed monitoring form for signature from the teacher visited. The signed monitoring form should then be emailed to the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher and this should be printed off and placed in the Governor Monitoring Folder
- COMPLETE THE GOVERNOR MONITORING LOG IN THE GOVERNOR MONITORING FILE IN THE HT OFFICE.
- Monitoring visits/forms will be shared by the Governor with the FGB at the next available meeting, using a summarised format to ensure high levels of communication.

### **Confidentiality**

Governors are reminded that they are bound by a strict code of confidentiality.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of implementation and impact.**

- Governors' visits will be a standing order on the FGB agenda at every meeting.
- The Governing Body will evaluate at the end of the school year at the July FGB meeting, the extent to which visits have informed whole governing body understanding of the school's work and the impact on performance and pupil outcomes.

### **The governing body can then consider:**

- Are the visits achieving the potential benefits identified?
- What worked well?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can we make our practice even better?
- Does evidence demonstrate a commitment by staff to delivering high quality teaching?
- Are opportunities for learning being maximised and developed in line with children's needs, interests and abilities?
- Make changes to the policy and protocol that may be required in order to be fit for purpose.

**Monitored by: FGB**  
**Date Reviewed: June 2023**  
**Next review: June 2026**  
**Review Cycle 3 years**

## Annex (i)

### Formal Governor School Monitoring Visits - Good Practice

#### Preparing for a visit CHECKLIST

1. Check/read through the agreed policy for governors' visits
2. Clarify the purpose of the visit by adhering to the yearly monitoring plan and Subject Action Plan
3. Contact the relevant teacher/subject Leader to mutually agree on a date and time for the visit. Please do give teachers plenty of notice.
4. Copy the HT in this email so that she is aware of the visit and the date and time the teacher needs to be available.
5. Remember to wear lanyards at every visit and follow the sign in procedure.

#### During the Visit

- Ensure that Lanyards are worn at every school visit and the sign in procedure is followed.
- Revisit the next step actions from the previous visit, if relevant.
- Remember you are making the visit on behalf of the governing body, it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the governing body.
- Be punctual.
- Keep to the agreed timetable but be flexible.
- Decide with the teacher how you will be introduced and what your role in the classroom will be.
- Get involved with the children if the teacher has agreed that this would be appropriate.
- Remember it is a visit not an inspection.
- If you are observing a lesson in respect to pupil experience, observe discretely. Remember that excessive note taking can be disconcerting and may make your visit look like an inspection.
- Don't distract the teacher during the lesson from his/her work but be prepared to talk and show interest.
- Be courteous, friendly not critical.
- Interact, do not interrupt.
- Remember why you are there. Do not lose sight of the purpose of your visit.
- Listen to staff and pupils.
- Ensure anonymity/confidentiality when looking at pupil workbooks
- PLEASE REMEMBER TO FILL IN THE GOVERNOR MONITORING LOG IN THE GOVERNOR MONITORING FILE

#### After the visit and reporting the findings

1. Discuss what you have observed with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about. For example, did your presence have any impact on the atmosphere in the classroom? If so, how?
2. Refer to the purpose of the visit. Consider together whether it has been achieved.
3. Keep your discussions focused on the purpose of your visit.
4. Thank the teacher for supporting you in your role as a governor. Be open, honest, positive.
5. Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind.
6. Complete the monitoring form asap so that information is not forgotten.
7. Email the completed form to the teacher that you visited so the he/she can confirm the accuracy/clarity of the information and provide the teacher with time to comment and contribute to the form and ask them to sign the form please
8. Email the signed form to the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors. This promotes effective communication and enables the form to be printed and placed in the Governor Monitoring folder.
9. Reflect on your visit. How did it go? What would you do different next time? What will you do the same again next time? What didn't go well? What worked well? What did you learn?

#### Reporting your visit

1. Please use the Governor monitoring form to report on your visit (annex ii)

2. Email the form to the teacher involved in the visit for them to check the accuracy and clarity and to obtain the staff members signature. Be prepared to amend it.
3. After discussing the form with the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher, ensure the form is filed in the monitoring file
4. Please complete the monitoring log in the Head Teachers office.
5. Provide the FGB a summarised verbal report at the next FGB meeting.

**Annex (ii) GOVERNOR MONITORING MONITORING FORM**

NAME AND ROLE OF GOVERNOR	
DATE & TIME OF VISIT	DURATION
STAFF/CLASS/AREA VISITED	

**SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN/GOV MONITORING PLAN/SUBJECT ACTION PLAN FOCUS OF VISIT**  
Which key priorities of the school are relevant to this visit

a) ....

b)

Revision of actions from previous monitoring visit

**MONITORING FOCUS (INCLUDING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE WHERE POSSIBLE)**  
What did you see/monitor? (source of evidence)

Who did you talk to?

What impressed you? (strengths of the school)

What do you want to find out more about? (areas of improvement/clarification)

Safeguarding (Pupil Voice, premises, systems, parents)

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<b>ACTIONS</b> Discussion with: Head Teacher. Date:  Subject Lead/teacher visited. Date:  Chair of Governors. Date:  Agreed next steps and dates
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Signed and dated by Gov and staff involved with monitoring visit
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Feedback/report date to FGB
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