

Hunton & Arrathorne
Community Primary School
Governor Visits Policy



Date: Sep 2023	Headteacher: Mr S Donaldson
Review Date: Sep 2025	Chair of Governors: Mrs A Peacock

Introduction

This policy applies to the monitoring visits made by governors and sets out the specific principles, responsibilities and actions that governors have agreed in order to fulfil the requirements of informing the governing body of the work of the school.

This policy does not apply to visits made for other purposes. Whilst providing governors with valuable experience of the school during working days or through discussions with staff at any time, general visits do not fulfil the specific role of monitoring. Governors are welcome to comment on their experiences from any visit provided they are consistent with the principles set out in this policy, and should therefore consider reviewing this policy before reporting on outcomes of visits at a governors’ meeting.

This policy applies to monitoring activities both in school and outside, and can cover one or more governors working with one or more members of staff.

Policy



The aims of governors' monitoring visits are:

- To reinforce good relationships between governors and teachers.
- To help fulfil the statutory obligations of the governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness with specific links to visit with regard to their link area.
- To allow governors to view performance data in the context of an understanding of what happens in the classroom.
- To recognise and celebrate success.
- To be constantly vigilant of the welfare of all members of the school community.
- To get to know the children of the school.
- To see policies and scheme of work in action.
- To achieve an understanding of what resources are needed.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of policies in action.

The aims of the monitoring visits are not about:

- Making judgements about the quality of teaching.
- Checking on progress of own children.
- Pursuing personal agendas. ^{FF} Monopolising teachers' time.
- Arriving with inflexible, preconceived ideas on outcomes.

Governors monitoring visits must have a purpose, and an outcome in written record form to be shared with those involved and once agreed in that forum, to be shared with all governors on a confidential basis. Given the governing body's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2004, consideration should be given to whether the written outcome can be released unedited to appropriate third parties, and work under the assumption that the report will be disclosed on request. This assumption applies unless the full governing body acts to make the report confidential and agrees a form for release. In such circumstances, the balance between the rights to privacy of individuals is considered against a right of access of information.

The key objective of a monitoring visit is to share the knowledge gained from the visit with all governors.



Roles

The governing body believes that the corporate responsibility it holds should be discharged fairly amongst all governors. Governors with specific monitoring roles, or linked curriculum areas, are agreed by the governing body each Autumn term. The Chair of each committee is responsible for ensuring that all agreed monitoring visits actually take place and a report formulated.

Format of Visits

Visits should be arranged in good time and always take place with a member of staff.

The format of monitoring visits varies according to purpose. Examples are listed for guidance.

1. Consultancy- This could be where a governor meets with a subject leader to ask questions and note answers. This provides an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of issues covered.
2. Subject Visits- These are particularly relevant to the named English, Maths, SEND governors.
3. Year Group Visits- It would be particularly useful for a visit to be made in order to focus on issues to do with progress of pupils towards the key stage SATs. Other class visits could also greatly enhance the governors' understanding of the curriculum in operation, especially perhaps if a class was followed up through the school by the same 'governor' friend.
4. Specific Purpose Visits - A visit could be made for a particular purpose when discussion at a governors meeting shows that there is a need for a follow up.
5. Open Visits – An opportunity to see the school in action at various times of the day.



6. Helping at events or educational visits
7. Listening to pupils read
8. Parental consultation evenings

Process

What a governor should do before conducting a monitoring visit:

1. Acquaint themselves with the environment they can expect to be in during the visit, where appropriate research previous visit reports to establish a history of similar monitoring outcomes.
2. Agree with a group (or individual) that will be monitored what the purpose of the visit will be and agree a convenient time and duration.
3. For class visits, ask the teacher to explain the context at the outset, i.e. what are the learning objectives, any specific challenges or outcomes anticipated, and how the teacher would like you to engage with the children.
4. For curriculum visits to see teaching in practice, obtain a copy of the relevant policy document.
5. For any other visit, ensure preparatory papers are reviewed before attending. It may prove difficult to obtain copies on the day.

What a governor should do during a monitoring visit:

1. Avoid sitting on the periphery of activities in a manner similar to inspectors.
2. Join in activities if invited to do so by the responsible person.
3. Be friendly to children and take an interest in their work. Ask them what they are doing and why?



4. Make positive comments if appropriate to children who are engaged in their work.
5. Refrain from making any negative comments to children.
6. Be vigilant and aware of the wellbeing of staff and pupils.

What a governor should do after a monitoring visit:

1. Thank the staff for allowing you conduct the visit. If a class visit, make sure to comment on enjoyable aspects of the lesson.
2. With the staff that have been involved, review the purpose of the visit (set previously) to enable agreement on how the visit should be recorded. If matters arise outside the originally agreed purpose, note them as issues for a future monitoring exercise or governor follow up.
3. Complete a monitoring report pro-forma and issue a copy to each individual involved before circulation to governors, enabling comments to be collected by an agreed cut-off date. Consider confidentiality issues. Electronic copy is preferred.
4. Send agreed monitoring form (by email if possible) to the Chair of the appropriate committee for distribution before the next meeting.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in September 2025

