



The Diocese of Ely

**ACT** Multi Academy Trust  
**Agapé, Courage**  
**Thankfulness**



**GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY**

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

<b>Name of Policy/Procedure</b>	
<b>Author</b>	B.Smith
<b>Version</b>	3.0
<b>Applicable to</b>	St Michael's Church School
<b>Approved by:</b>	LGB
<b>Approved on:</b>	March 7th 2025
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Bi Annual
<b>Date of next review</b>	March 2027
<b>Website Publication yes/no</b>	Yes

## Review Schedule

<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>J Ashley</b>	<b>Original Governor Visit Policy</b>	<b>Nov 2015</b>	<b>Nov 2018</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>B Smith</b>	<b>Amended Policy to match visits during school day</b>	<b>Nov 2018</b>	<b>Nov 2021</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>B Smith</b>	<b>Updated and Amended</b>	<b>Dec 2021</b>	<b>Dec 2024</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>B Smith</b>	<b>Updated using model for academies from The Key</b>	<b>Feb 2025</b>	<b>Feb 2027</b>



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### 1 Introduction

1.1 This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all governors to follow when making visits to the school.

This policy sets out the procedure which all governors are expected to follow when visiting St.Michael's and how they are expected to report back on that visit to the governing board.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that all governors understand their role and purpose so school visits are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

The purpose of governor visits is to:

- Know and understand the school well so that governing body decisions are well informed
- Monitor the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) targets (progress/impact)
- See evidence of pupils' work
- Understand the impact of Pupil Premium funding, if relevant
- Observe our Visions and Values around the school
- Discuss planning and policies with subject leaders
- Inform and update the LGB.

### 1.2 Governors are observers

Boards must know their schools in order to maintain robust accountability. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors will:

1. Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school improvement plan
2. Observe how those procedures are working in practice
3. Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

### 1.3 Governors are not inspectors

Governors:

4. Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
5. Will not manage the school or interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school



For those governors who wish to spend time in a classroom, they will make their purpose in doing so clear.

1.4 A Governor Visit Schedule for the school year will be produced.

<b>Governor/Subject Leader Visit programme</b>			
Autumn 2	English	Computing	PSHE
Spring 1	Maths	ART/DT	MFL
Spring 2	Science		Geography
Summer 1	Music	RE	
Summer 2	EYFS	PE	History

1.5 New governors should arrange with the Headteacher a school visit, as part of their governor induction. This first visit helps governors to familiarise themselves with the school and staff.

1.6 All visits, other than new governor visits, will have a clear focus linked to the AIP and relevant policies. Governors may also visit the school and inform governors on other curriculum events such as school trips, class assemblies, parents' information evenings and special events.

1.7 Governors will carry out regular school visits in order to meet the board's statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness.

There are 2 types of visits:

6. **Formal monitoring visits**, where governors discuss the progress of the school

in a particular area with the relevant staff member

7. **Learning walks**, where governors will go around the school with the relevant

staff member to get a feel for a particular area and are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils

## 2.0 Variations to visit schedule

### 2.1 Governor's for health and safety, special educational needs, and safeguarding

These governors will attend:

8. A termly 1:1 monitoring visit with corresponding staff leads

9. Ad-hoc meetings as required or requested on issues specific to their areas of responsibility

### 2.2 Subject lead governors



Subject lead governors will attend:

10. A monitoring visit with the subject lead according to the schedule
11. A learning walk in a different term from the monitoring visit

### **2.3 All governors**

All governors will:

12. Carry out at least 1 learning walk in the year
13. Attend at least 1 school Collective Worship in the year
14. Attend at least 1 monitoring visit in the year

### **3. Before a visit**

Governors will:

- 3.1 Consult the Governor visit schedule as to when their visit should take place.
- 3.2 Read the relevant sections of the School Development Plan (SDP) which informs governors as to what is to be monitored/observed and why.
- 3.3 Governors should review previous Governor visit reports which will be available on Governor Hub.
- 3.4 Notify the Headteacher and the chair when scheduling a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware just as a matter of courtesy
- 3.5 Schedule an appointment with relevant members of staff in order to avoid any friction and make sure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are most productive when conducted during a school day
- 3.6 Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time
- 3.7 Clarify the purpose of the visit in advance with the chair, the headteacher and/or relevant member of staff
- 3.8 Send questions in advance to the staff member so everyone can feel properly prepared
- 3.9 Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures



#### 4. During a visit

Governors should know how to conduct themselves appropriately during visits in order to minimise disruption for staff and pupils and to receive the maximum benefit from the time spent at the school.

##### **Governors will:**

- 4.1 Be on time and meet with the Headteacher ahead of the visit
- 4.2 Always wear a visitor's badge
- 4.3 Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are to be avoided unless specifically agreed with the headteacher for a specific purpose
- 4.4 Remain as observers; they are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them
- 4.5 Make sure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so
- 4.6 Check with teachers before speaking to pupils
- 4.7 Be sensitive to the needs of all pupils
- 4.8 Pass on any concerns the staff raise to the relevant people
- 4.9 Be friendly but professional and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils

##### **Governors will not:**

- 5.0 Pass comment on classroom practice or any specific incidents that happen, judge teaching methods, assess the quality of teaching, or comment on the extent of learning
- 5.1 Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school
- 5.2 Behave in a manner than would make staff feel that they are there to inspect, e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard
- 5.3 Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the chair of governors or headteacher after the visit

#### 6. After a visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the form attached as Appendix A (monitoring visit) or Appendix B (learning walk), as appropriate. In completing the report, governors will:

- 6.1 Use neutral language at all times
- 6.2 Remain observational, and describe only what they see/saw
- 6.3 Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit, and its strategic role

Once complete, governors will submit their reports to the following people, in the following order:

- 6.4 A more experienced governor for feedback – if they've been in place for less than 1 year.



- 6.5 When complete, the report should be sent to the subject leader and Headteacher for review and approval
- 6.6 Once approved the report should be forwarded to the clerk in PDF format and then reviewed by the FGB at their next meeting.
- 6.7 The Governor visit report should then be uploaded to the appropriate location on the Governor Hub.

## 7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher and the Chair of the governing body.
- 7.2 When reviewing the success of the policy, the Headteacher and Chair of the governing body will take the following into consideration:
- Has every governor visited their subject area at least **twice** during the academic year?
  - Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
  - What worked well?
  - What did not work well?
  - Have there been any unexpected benefits?
  - How can practice be improved?
- 7.3 Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all governors.
- 7.4 All governors are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.



## Appendix A Governor visit Flow Chart



Arrange visit with subject leader as per the Governor visit schedule

Visit and then complete report within 7 days of visit

Send report electronically to Headteacher, Chair and Clerk

Clerk/Chair to include on next FGB agenda. Governor will report on visit highlights at next FGB meeting.



## **Appendix B Suggested questions for visit if it includes discussion with pupils.**

Advice on what to ask pupils at a Governor visit is available from The Key.

Questions will typically differ depending on the subject. See below for examples:

- What are you learning about today?
- Do you like [subject] ?
- Tell me what you most like doing in...?
- Is there anything you don't like doing in ...?
- Do you know how you can improve/what is your next target?
- Do you receive feedback on your work?
- Does the work feel challenging/tricky/easy?
- Who helps you if you get stuck?



## Appendix C: Template report for a monitoring visit

Formal monitoring visits are where you discuss the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member. Use this form as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: plan the visit	
<b>Name and role of governor(s)</b>	
<b>Name and role of staff member(s)</b>	
<b>Date and time of visit</b>	
<b>Agreed focus</b> Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.	To discuss the school's new strategy to improve attainment of Key Stage (KS) 2 boys.
<b>Relevant school objective or priority</b> This might be taken from the academy improvement plan objectives or the school's overarching vision.	Percentage of pupils achieving 'greater depth' in writing improves at KS2.
<b>Questions to ask</b> Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit. Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.	What is the process for supporting pupils who need extra help? Have teachers had any training to help them put this into practice?  Search <a href="#">GovernorHub Knowledge</a> for questions specific to the purpose of your visit. For example, you can search for ' <a href="#">safeguarding questions</a> .'

Part 2: in the meeting
<b>What is the school doing within this area of focus?</b>  <i>Tips:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where'</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with</li> <li>• Remember you are <b>not</b> there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer</li> <li>• When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils</li> </ul>



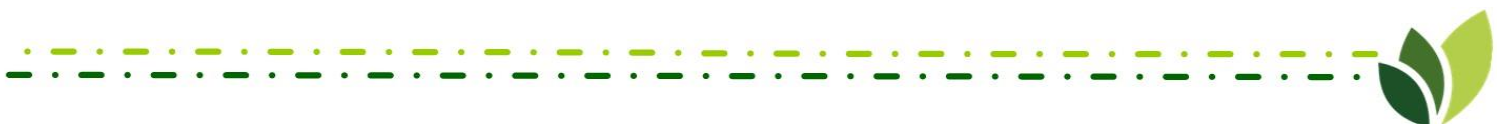
**How do you know the school's actions are having an impact?**

*Remember:*

- *Include specific evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area*
- *Where a positive impact has not been made yet, note down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress*
- *Add any further evidence you would like to see to help you make a better assessment of the impact*

**What successes stood out and why?**

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors



## Template report for a learning walk

Learning walks are where you will go around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area. You are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils. Use this as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: plan the walk	
<b>Name and role of governor(s)</b>	
<b>Name and role of staff member(s)</b>	
<b>Date and time of visit</b>	
<b>Agreed focus</b> <i>Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.</i>	To see the implementation of the new strategy to improve attainment of Key Stage (KS) 2 boys.
<b>Relevant school objective or priority</b> <i>This might be taken from the school improvement plan (SIP) objectives or the school's overarching vision.</i>	Percentage of pupils achieving 'greater depth' in writing improves at KS2.
<b>Questions to ask</b> <i>Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit.</i> <i>Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.</i>	Ask staff: what do you do if you think a student needs further support? Ask pupils: if you need help with something, what do you do?  Search <a href="#">GovernorHub Knowledge</a> for questions for staff that are specific to the purpose of your visit. For example, you can search for <a href="#">'safeguarding questions.'</a> Read our article on <a href="#">questions to ask pupils</a> for pupil questions.

Part 2: on the walk
<b>General notes from discussions with staff</b> <i>Tips:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who', 'where' and 'can you show me ...'</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with</li> <li>• Remember you are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them</li> <li>• When writing the report, use neutral language and don't name individual teachers</li> </ul>



**General notes from discussions with pupils**

*Remember:*

- *Do not ask pupils for their views on a specific teacher*
- *Do not record pupils' names*

**General notes on the school environment and overall atmosphere**

*Note:*

- *Whether the governors' vision of the school is replicated on the ground*
- *Any issues with the school site you see, e.g. broken equipment or lack of resources*

**What successes stood out on the learning walk and why?**

**Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors**

