Newfield Primary School

Governor School Visits Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	**Date:**	1st October 2026
Last reviewed on:	New policy		
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1. Aims

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

Governors do not have an automatic right to enter Newfield Primary. When they do so, they are invited guests.

This policy sets out the procedure which all governors are expected to follow when visiting 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.

2. Guidance and scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the maintained schools governance guide.

2.1 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:

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

2.2 Governors are not inspectors

Governors:

- Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- 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.

3. Visits programme

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

Governors will carry out school visits according to the agreed Governor Monitoring Calendar which links with our statutory compliance and our monitoring of the progress of the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. Where possible governors will carry out one monitoring visit per term and attend school functions/events (e.g. sports day, school performances, assemblies) whenever they are free to do so. We recognise that governors often have work commitments which can make attending during the school day difficult.

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4. Before a visit

Governors will:

- Email the headteacher and copy in the co-chair (KB) to schedule a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware as a matter of courtesy
- Schedule an appointment with the relevant member(s) of staff, copy in the headteacher, in order to make sure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are most productive when conducted during the school day
- Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time
- Clarify the purpose of the visit in advance with the headteacher and relevant member of staff
- Send questions in advance to the staff member so everyone can feel properly prepared
- Be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's safeguarding policies and procedures

5. 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:

- Be on time
- Sign in and always wear a visitor's badge
- Use the agreed recording method for the visit (Appendix 1). Photographs and videos are not allowed.
- Remain as observers; we are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them
- Make sure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so
- Discuss with the Headteacher any protocols about speaking with pupils if this is part of the visit
- Pass on any concerns the staff raise to the headteacher
- Be friendly but professional and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils

Governors will not:

- 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
- Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school
- Behave in a manner that would make staff feel that they are there to inspect, e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard
- Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the headteacher or the co-chair (KB) of governors if the concern is about the headteacher or another governor after the visit

6. After a visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the form attached as Appendix 1. In completing the report, governors will:

- Have a look at Appendix 2 which helps you with what to include in your report (also on Governor Hub)
- Have a look at the example reports on Governor Hub to provide additional guidance
- Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit, and its strategic role
- Use neutral language and be succinct

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- Remain observational, and describe only what you saw

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

- The headteacher and relevant staff member(s), to check for accuracy and to approve
- Once the report has been agreed send a copy to the co-chair (KB) who will place it on Governor Hub under Governor Visits
- Feedback on your visit to the next Full Governing Body meeting or relevant committee – whichever is first.

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Appendix 1: Template report for a governor visit

A copy of this template is available on Governor Hub under Governor Visits

Newfield Primary School
Governor Visit Report

Name of Governor(s): **Link staff member(s):**	**Date of Visit:**
Focus of Visit: (link with SIP priorities and/or link role)	
Questions to ask: (based on SIP priorities – share with member of staff)	
Summary of activities during the visit:	
What have I/we learned as a result of the visit? (relate to the focus of visit, impact being made and successes)	
Aspects I/we would like to clarify or questions that I have:	
Discussion points for the Governing Body (if needed) and/or follow-up actions:	

All governor reports should be completed as soon after the visit as possible, shared with the relevant staff and copied to the Headteacher for an accuracy check and approval. Once approved send to Co-Chair of Governors KB who will add to Governor Hub. The visit will be reported, by the link governor, at the next FGB meeting or relevant committee, whichever is first.

Please contact the Co-Chair of Governors KB if you have any issues.

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Appendix 2: What to include in a visit report

A copy of this document is available on Governor Hub under Governor Visits

Newfield Primary School
Governor Visit Report
What to include

Name of Governor(s): **Link staff member(s):**	**Date of Visit:**

Focus of Visit: (link with SIP priorities or link role)

Visits should focus on:

- *strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board*
- *the evaluation of progress: are the things we are told about actually happening?*
- *seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)*
- *Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.*

Questions to ask: (based on SIP priorities – share with member of staff)

- *Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit*
- *Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where'*
- *Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.*
- *Search GovernorHub Knowledge or ask the AI assistant for questions specific to the purpose of your visit. For example, you can search for 'safeguarding questions.'*

Summary of activities during the visit:

What happened during the visit. For example:

- *meeting staff with leadership responsibility for specific areas, such as safeguarding, PPG, H+S or SEND*
- *talking to staff and pupils*
- *experiencing a lesson being taught (as part of getting to know the school, rather than making judgements about quality of teaching)*
- *seeing examples of pupil work*
- *talking with pupils about their learning*

What have I/we learned as a result of the visit? (relate to the focus of visit, impact being made and successes)

Relate this back to focus of your visit. For example:

- *Pupils are actively engaged and motivated during the lesson*
- *Pupils conduct themselves in a respectful manner*
- *Pupils could talk confidently about their learning*
- *include progress and impact of SIP actions taken so far.*
- *Where a positive impact hasn't been made yet, not down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress*

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Tips to help your visit:

- *Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with*
- *Remember you are **not** there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer*
- *When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils*

Aspects I/we would like to clarify or questions that I have:

This could include:

- *clarification questions you asked and the response*
- *clarification questions you wish to ask the Headteacher.*
- *Any further evidence you would like to see to help you make a better assessment of impact*

Discussion points for the Governing Body (if needed) and/or follow-up actions:

There could be a policy or resource issue that needs to be fed back to the FGB or other follow-up actions for the GB