

**BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE**

*“Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish,*

*and Christ is made known to all”*

# Governor Monitoring Visits – Model Policy Context

Governing Bodies have an important strategic and monitoring role, which includes holding the Senior Leadership in the school to account for the progress and performance of the school. They should avoid routine involvement in operational matters.

Governor visits are not the only way that monitoring by the Governing Body is undertaken but it plays an important part. Meeting children, talking to staff and seeing policies in action will help Governors monitor progress and make Governing Body decisions with greater clarity.

Planned and focused school visits enable Governors to:

* see the school at work
* build partnerships with staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school
* gain first-hand information to assist with policy and decision making

# Focus for Governor Visits

Visits to the school by individual Governors may happen for a variety of reasons. For example, it is good practice for the Safeguarding Link Governor to have a termly meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Chair should meet regularly with the Headteacher. It is also important that Governors visit the school for celebrations and liturgies.

However, Governors should not be routinely involved in the day-to-day activity of the school and it is important that most Governor visits primarily focus on aspects of the school development plan to monitor progress against school development priorities. Every Governor should make at least one visit to the school a year to monitor an area of the school development plan and see the school in action.

It is good practice for new Governors to do a joint visit with an experienced Governor or member of SLT when making their first visit.

# Protocol for Governor Visits

When Governors are visiting the school it is important that that they remember they are representing the Governing Body. Governors/Trustees do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. It is essential to pre-arrange all visits with the appropriate person.

**Governors Should:**

* Check and review the ‘Governor School Visits’ policy
* Contact the Headteacher and Chair to notify them of the visit and agree a date and time
* Agree a clear focus for the visit in advance, send any questions in advance or things you wish to observe to the staff member so you both feel prepared
* Follow school procedures including health and safety and safeguarding requirements
* Maintain strict confidentiality regarding the visit and share information only with the Governing Body and the school
* Remember that Governors are not school inspectors; Governors are not there to make judgements on individual teachers
* Make sure Governors complete a ‘Governor Visit’ report, reporting on the focus. If possible, the completed report should be shared with the Headteacher before the Governor leaves. It should also be shared and discussed with the Governing Body.

**Writing the Governor Visit Report**

***Do:***

* Use neutral language at all times
* Remain observational and describe only what you see
* Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit and its strategic role
* Send the report to an experienced Governor for feedback, if you're new to the role
* Send reports to the relevant staff member to check for accuracy and as a courtesy

***Don't:***

* Make qualitative judgements, particularly about any incidents you witness when observing teaching and learning practice
* Name any individual teachers or pupils
* Get distracted and talk about other issues that aren't related to the focus of the visit

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**Governor Visit Report**

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| --- | --- |
| Name of School |  |
| Name and role of Governor |  |
| Name and role of staff member(s) |  |
| Date and time of visit |  |
| Agreed focus of visit |
| Key priorities or objectives being monitored |
| Sources of information*E.g. talking to children, looking at resources, meeting with member of staff, audit of Single Central Record, attending Mass and assemblies* |
| What I have learned as a result of my visit |

|  |
| --- |
| What is the school doing within this area of focus |
| Aspects I would like clarified/questions I would like to ask (share questions with member/s of staff) |
| Questions / clarifications to follow up with the Headteacher / Chair of Governors |
| Key points to take forward for discussion by the Governing Body |
| Governor signature |