

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Governor Visits to School Policy

Reviewed: October 2023

To be reviewed: September 2024

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Governor Visits to School Policy

‘Living, Loving and Learning as followers of Jesus Christ.’

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### Statement of intent

Through this policy, Holy Family Catholic Primary School aims to embed effective procedures concerning governor monitoring visits. Each governor is expected to make at least one visit during the academic year, demonstrating the governing board’s role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice.

Governor visits inform understanding of the school’s practices and procedures, allow opportunities to speak to pupils and teachers, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the SDP in action.

For staff, governor visits allow staff the chance to find out more about governors, provide an opportunity to draw attention to issues or questions they wish to raise, and provide an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss current practice.

Governors must:

- Respect school staff and pupils.
- Support the headteacher.
- Acknowledge that they represent the full governing board.

By following the agreed principles and procedures, governor visits will be pleasant, purposeful, and will significantly contribute towards school improvement.

## **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2014) 'The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013'

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

Governors will be responsible for:

- Meeting their target of one visit per academic year.
- Understanding the needs of staff members through discussions with at least one staff member per academic year.
- Reporting their observations to the full governing board during a full governing board meeting.
- Familiarising themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Facilitating governor visits.
- Discussing completed visits with governors, prior to a report being made to the full governing board.

A number of governors are linked to particular subjects or areas of the school's provision. These links are as follows:

| GOVERNOR ROLES 2023 - 2024:                                |                | REPORTS & VISITS TO SCHOOL:                        |                |                |                |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
|                                                            |                | SCHOOL CONTACT/<br>SUBJECT LEADER:                 | AUTUMN<br>2023 | SPRING<br>2024 | SUMMER<br>2024 | REPORT DUE TO<br>GOVERNORS: |
| Reading/Writing<br>Pupil Premium                           | Mrs M Blundell | Mrs S Keen<br>Miss M Hilton                        |                |                |                |                             |
| DT<br>History                                              | Mrs J Lloyd    | Mr P Davies<br>Miss R Crouch                       |                |                |                |                             |
| Inclusion, Safeguarding<br>SEND, Attendance<br>EYFS        | Mrs A Peet     | Miss A Loveless<br>Miss M Hilton                   |                |                |                |                             |
| RE, PSHEE<br>Pupil Health & Well-Being<br>SCR check        | Mrs A Pickup   | Mrs N Carey<br>Mr T Atkinson<br>Mrs L Watkins      |                |                |                |                             |
| STEM, Maths,<br>Curriculum Enrichment<br>Website           | Mr A Cannell   | Mr P Davies<br>Miss M Hilton                       |                |                |                |                             |
| RE<br>RE Life of the School                                | Fr Kevin       | Mrs N Carey                                        |                |                |                |                             |
| Geography<br>Art<br>Health & Safety                        | Mrs L Perry    | Mrs J Appleton<br>Miss A Loveless<br>Miss M Hilton |                |                |                |                             |
| STEM<br>Curriculum Enrichment<br>Staff Health & Well-Being | Mr C Houghton  | Mr P Davies<br>Mr T Atkinson                       |                |                |                |                             |

### **3. Expected behaviour**

#### **Preparing for a visit**

Governors will never visit the school unannounced – they will be expected to arrange visits at least one week prior to the date of the proposed visit with the headteacher. Governors will remain flexible and understand that the school must make pupils' education the priority, and that this may sometimes lead to the rearranging of visits.

Before a visit, governors will:

- Agree a clear, purposeful focus for the visit.
- Consider how the area of focus will be identified and observed during the visit.
- Discuss the context of the activities to be observed.
- Agree their role within the activities.
- Refer to their Governing Board Monitoring Plan to ensure the visit's focus is strategic and in line with the school's priorities for improvement.
- Read the documentation relevant to the focus of the visit, e.g. the school's Behaviour Policy, and prepare relevant questions, where appropriate.

#### **During a visit**

During a visit, governors will:

- Adhere to their agreed role at all times.
- Make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school.
- Where visiting activities involve lesson observations, not ask questions, interrupt the teacher or distract pupils during the lesson.
- Spend time in a classroom only when they have provided a clear reason for doing so.
- Adhere to confidentiality agreements.
- Adhere to the agreed times and purpose.
- Be sensitive to the needs of the pupils and the wider school community.
- Avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.

During a visit, governors will not:

- Make judgements concerning teaching or other areas of school provision in any official capacity.
- Pursue personal agendas during visits.
- Check on individual children or monopolise the time of staff.

#### **After a visit**

After a visit, governors will:

- Thank the staff, and pupils where appropriate, involved in the visiting activities.
- Discuss the visit with the staff involved in the visiting activity at their convenience.
- Provide feedback regarding the visit to the full governing board.

After a visit, governors will not:

- Break confidentiality agreements.

#### **4. Providing feedback**

A time will be agreed between the governor and staff, at the staff members convenience, to discuss what was observed during the visit.

During the discussion, governors will adhere to the following framework:

- Ask staff for their views on what happened during the visit
- Present governors' observations
- Provide positive feedback
- Raise any issues
- Ask further questions
- Thank staff for the opportunity

By the end of the discussion, both the governor and staff members will be clear as to what information will be shared with the headteacher and full governing board.

The Governor Visit Proforma (*appendix a*) will be completed as soon as possible after the visit.

The headteacher and governors will discuss the observations prior to the distribution of the proforma. A copy of the completed proforma will be provided to:

- The headteacher
- The subject leader
- The relevant staff members

A copy of the report will be circulated to all governors at the next appropriate committee or governing board meeting.

The governing board will ensure all board members have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions regarding the final report and the visit undertaken.

#### **5. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and the chair of the governing board.

When reviewing the success of the policy, the headteacher and chair of the governing board will take the following into consideration:

- Has every governor conducted at least one visit during the academic year?
- Has every governor made links with their allocated subject or area of provision?
- Has every governor met with the staff members they are linked to?
- 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?

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all governors, staff members and relevant stakeholders.

The next scheduled review date of this policy is September 2024.



## Governor Monitoring Report Template

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                  |                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Date of visit                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Name of Governor | Governor responsibility |
| Staff/area visited                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                  |                         |
| <b>Objective/purpose of the visit</b><br><br><i>Focus of visit - link to SIP, current school initiative</i>                                                                                                                  |                  |                         |
| <b>Agenda/discussion points</b><br><br><i>Summary of activities e.g. talking to staff &amp; pupils, looking at resources, looking at books etc.</i>                                                                          |                  |                         |
| <b>Outcomes of the visit</b><br><br><i>What did you see, what did you learn?</i><br><br><i>Include any evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area</i>                                  |                  |                         |
| <b>Any actions agreed during the meeting</b><br><br><i>Aspects I would like clarified / questions I have to follow up</i><br><br><i>Actions for the governing body to consider &amp; to be discussed at the next meeting</i> |                  |                         |
| <b>Date of review by headteacher and chair of governors</b><br><br><i>Any further action identified</i>                                                                                                                      |                  |                         |
| Signed/date                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Signature        | Date                    |

## School Visits – an Aide-Memoire

### What is the purpose of the visit?

What has prompted my decision to visit?  
Who has prompted my decision to visit?  
Is the reason specific or general?  
What are my/other people's expectations?  
How can my visit benefit the teacher?

### How shall I carry it out?

What particular areas of the school am I interested in?  
What particular activities am I interested in?  
What particular age-group(s) am I interested in?  
Are there any questions that can be answered by observation?  
What questions should I ask?  
Who should I ask?

### Did I achieve my aim?

To what extent did I address the reason for my visit?  
Which of my questions did I answer?  
To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?  
What difficulties did I meet and why?

### Is there any follow-up?

Have I recorded my experiences?  
Did I 'report back' to the head and staff?  
Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting?  
How can I build on this for the next visit?

|               | Always                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Never                                                                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Before</b> | Arrange details of visit.<br>Agree purpose of visit<br>Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed.<br>Agree role within the lesson                                                                                                                     | Turn up unannounced                                                                        |
| <b>During</b> | Keep to the role agreed<br>Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over<br>Please remember confidentiality<br>Stick to the times and purpose agreed<br>Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children. | Assume a different role<br>Walk in with a clipboard<br>Distract the pupils from their task |
| <b>After</b>  | Thank the teacher and the pupils<br>-Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience<br>-Feedback to the governing body                                                                                                                              | Leave without acknowledgement<br>Break rules of confidentiality                            |

**THINGS YOU MIGHT CONSIDER WHEN VISITING A CLASSROOM** – *(relate this to the focus of the visit and in your discussions with the Head Teacher or member of staff)*

- Relationship between staff and pupils.
- Relationships between pupils
- Variety of teaching styles
- Availability and role of support staff
- Behaviour and attitude of pupils — does this match the policy, are they attentive, encouraged, motivated, listening, questioning, responding, rewarded?
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils
- How the pupils are grouped?
- How different abilities are catered for?
- Children's work.
- Displays, is the school attractive?
- Ethos — the atmosphere and values that are evident (are high expectations, encouragement, praise, equality of opportunity apparent?)
- Environment and working conditions, what is the school like to work in? Is this a good place to work and play? What are the good points? What can be improved?
- Quality and quantity of equipment and resources