




CASTLEFIELD SCHOOL

GOVERNOR VISITS

Signed (HT): 

Date agreed: July 2019

Signed (Chair of GB): 

Review date: July 2023

Introduction:

Governing Bodies have three core functions

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent

Governors draw on a range of evidence to in order to carry out the functions and one source of information is their own visits to the school

This protocol applies to school visits made for the purpose of governance and not to visits to the school made in other capacities e.g. as a parent or member of staff.

For the purpose of clarity, Castlefield School defines a Governor visit as any prearranged visit to the school to either

- Conduct learning walks/fact finding/monitoring of policy v practice
- Hold meetings with staff
- Attend celebratory events (e.g. assemblies)
- Attend information events for parents (e.g. workshops/target setting days)

Purpose:

All school visits will:

- Have a clear focus, where possible linked to strategic priorities, which is previously agreed by the headteacher
- Be arranged with adequate notice through the headteacher
- Be of value to the governing board which is demonstrable to outside agencies eg Ofsted or the LA

It is not the role of governors to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits and individuals will make every effort to avoid this impression.

Conduct:

Governors will comply with the school and governing board's codes of conduct and the standards of presentation expected of staff. They will be mindful that they are representing the board through their words and actions (see Annex A for Do's and Don'ts)

Follow-up:

Governors will have the opportunity to discuss the visit, including any concerns, with the headteacher immediately or soon after the visit.

Governors should complete a Governor Visit Report (see Annex B) following each visit. A draft will be shared with the headteacher and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next governing board or relevant committee meeting as appropriate.

It should also be uploaded to Governor Hub: Documents-Governor Evidence-Governor Reports

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality should be adhered to in relation to visits. Comments should be limited to the headteacher. Individual children or staff (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) should not be identified in school visit reports.

Annex A:

Governor Visits: Do's and Don'ts

	Do	Don't
Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agree the visit focus in advance as part of a schedule at a governing board meeting, including identifying a clear purpose. (It can be useful to think of the governing board as 'commissioning' the visit and delegating responsibility for carrying it out to individual governor(s).) ✓ Arrange a mutually convenient time, avoiding sensitive times such as exam or assessment periods. ✓ Discuss the visit with the headteacher and ensure that any member of staff who will be involved in the visit understands the arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Turn up unannounced. ☒ Approach staff directly without the approval of the headteacher
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Present yourself in a way which matches the professionalism expected of school staff. ✓ Report to reception and follow procedures for visitors – even those familiar with the school should do this. ✓ Keep to the role agreed; only talk to students if invited to do so by the teacher ✓ Be flexible if something urgent crops up which means the arranged tasks cannot take place – always keep in mind that the education of the students is of overriding importance. ✓ Be courteous and professional, including thanking staff before leaving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Turn up in shorts, immodest shirt, flip flops ☒ Give the impression that you are inspecting, for example by using a clipboard or making notes while visiting a classroom. ☒ Assume a different role to that agreed; parents and education professionals, in particular, should be mindful not to stray into these roles. ☒ Express personal opinions if pressed on a controversial issue – individuals should keep in mind that they are representing the governing board as a whole. ☒ Make assumptions – always ask for explanations of anything not understood at an appropriate time when it will not interrupt pupils' learning (this may be in conversation with the class teacher after the lesson or with the headteacher at the end of the visit). ☒ Check on the progress of individual children, including your own. ☒ Walk around the school unaccompanied or put yourself in situations where you are likely to be unaccompanied with pupils.
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Share any concerns with the headteacher. ✓ Complete a short visit report on an agreed form; a draft should be shared with the headteacher, then taking their comments into account a final written report should be prepared and given to the governing board / committee before the next meeting. ✓ Ensure that school visits are an agenda item at the governing board meeting and that any findings are discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Make comments regarding a teacher's conduct of the lesson or individual students (unless this is a concern being raised to the headteacher). ☒ Identify individual students in your report, even in a positive light. ☒ Gossip about your visit – what you have seen should be treated with the same level of confidentiality as any other GB business.



Annex B:
Governor Visits Report

Name of visiting Governor	
Date of visit	

Purpose and focus of visit – where relevant refer to relevant SDP priority, policy etc.
Summary of observations and activities
What have I learned as a result of my visit? (relate to the purpose / focus of the visit)
Aspects I would like clarified / any questions
Any issues/questions for the board to consider
Any other comments