

**St Nicholas CE VA Primary School
Governors' Visits to School Policy
Adopted: November 2012
Review Date: June 2015**

Vision Statement

‘At St Nicholas we nurture everyone *to be the best we can be*, in a caring and inclusive Christian environment.’

UNCRC Article 29: All children have the right to learning that allows you to become the best that you can be.’

Context

Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. However, they need to be able to visit from time to time to develop their understanding of the school. These visits enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school. Governors should arrange their visits with the Headteacher, who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. The governing body should plan visits to cover a wide range of school work and each visit should have a clear purpose. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Headteacher.

A Guide to the Law for School Governors (September 2008).

Purpose of the Visit

Visits are undertaken to:-

- Improve governing body knowledge of the school and the people that work in it
- Assist the governing body in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan
- Assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as inclusion
- Assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties
- Assist the governing body in making informed decisions

Governors should not pursue any personal agendas or arrive with inflexible preconceived ideas. Governors are not to make any judgements about pupil's work, behaviour, any teacher's classroom practice or issues relating to the day to day running of the school. Those are the responsibility of the headteacher.

Before the Visit

Visits should be undertaken only as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the governing body or one of its committees and with approval of the headteacher.

The headteacher should be kept informed of, and agree, the subsequent details of the planned visit. If the visit is to involve any member of staff, then that member of staff must be fully involved in the planning through the appropriate member of the leadership group.

The governor(s) making the visit should make themselves fully acquainted with health and safety procedures, including fire safety, prior to making the visit/

During the Visit

In adhering with safeguarding Governors will at all times report to reception upon arrival and follow the procedure for visitors in order to provide a good example for other visitors.

If visiting a classroom, the governor must arrive at the time planned to avoid disrupting the learning process, and follow the agreed purpose of the visit. Governors must be aware that some teachers may feel nervous or stressful about having a visitor in the classroom. At the end of the visit thank everyone concerned including the children.

Governors should be aware of their behaviour and avoid any implication that they are inspecting.

Following the Visit

After visiting the school the governor(s) should:

- Give some time and thought to reflection
- Thank all staff visited
- Complete the agreed visit report, outlining the purpose and results of the visit and share with relevant staff.
- A copy should be given to Headteacher
- Consider what went well and what did not go well with respect to your involvement in the visit
- Consider what you would do differently in a future visit

Following completion of the agreed monitoring programme the governor should report back to the governing body or committee as appropriate.

Related documentation

Appendix 1 – Governors Monitoring Forms

Appendix 2 – Protocol for visits

Appendix 1 – Notes for governor report

Before the visit, prepare notes covering these points

- **Purpose of the visit.** The purpose as previously agreed with the governing body and the Headteacher.
- **Links with the School Development Plan.** How does the visit relate to a priority in the SDP?
- **Comments on the focus of the visit**

Appendix 2 – Protocol for Visits

Governors visit their school to enhance their understanding of the school's work and to help fulfil their responsibilities of monitoring and evaluating the school.

We have an agreed schedule of governors' visits to the school, reflecting the priorities in the school development plan and the specific interests and responsibilities of governors, and we keep a file of visit reports.

	ALWAYS	NEVER
BEFORE	Agree purpose of visit Agree how much time (a timetable is a good idea) Agree when you will discuss the visit with the headteacher Consider practicalities (dress, parking, time of arrival, who to report to, how to make notes, breaks and lunch) Find out how each teacher wants you to contribute (or not)	Turn up unannounced.
DURING	Introduce yourself to staff and pupils Note and praise the positive Ask questions to increase understanding Remain focused on the purpose of the visit	Walk in with clipboard Arrive with preconceived ideas Interrupt the teacher Make professional judgements about staff expertise (governors are not inspectors) Pursue your own personal agenda/focus on the progress of your own child Monopolise the children's or the staff's time
AFTER	Thank the teacher and pupils Discuss visit with the teacher Write a thank you note or verbally say thank you to teachers and pupils Complete visit report - using agreed proforma Raise any concerns sensitively with the	Leave without a word

Reviewed June 2014

Next Review June 2016

	Headteacher	
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