



# Governor Visiting Policy

*Children's House and Rachel Keeling Nursery School Federation*

Summer 2024

To be reviewed Summer 2026

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our Governors are key people in our schools. They give constructive support to school improvement in four ways:

- providing a strategic view
- acting as a critical friend
- ensuring accountability
- promoting the school's interests in the community and beyond

In order to carry out these responsibilities effectively Governors need to:

- understand how the schools work
- monitor & evaluate the school's development and targets relevant to the SDP
- know how well the school is performing
- have a clear view of the school's priorities
- understand the school's strengths and areas for development

School visits are one means for Governors to have a more enhanced understanding of the progress and strategic overview of each school. An effective partnership between Governors and staff based on mutual understanding benefits the whole school community.

## **THE ROLE OF THE VISITING GOVERNOR**

The Governing Body is a corporate body and every Governor visits our schools as a representative of that body, not as an individual.

The object of a Governor's visit is not to inspect but to learn so that they can more effectively carry out the role of a 'critical friend'. Governors should not make judgments about the quality of the professional work carried out by staff; this is the responsibility of the school's senior staff.

## **AIMS OF GOVERNORS' VISITS**

Governors' visits may have one or more of the following aims:

- a. To enable the Governors to have a wider understanding when making decisions about the schools.
- b. To get to know staff and children
- c. To enable Governors more effectively to carry out their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the school's development and targets relevant to the school's action plan.
- d. To enable Governors to be better informed advocates, able to speak up for the schools from personal knowledge.
- e. To carry out their responsibilities as members of decision-making panels.
- f. To ask pertinent and relevant questions of staff to check that everything is being done to ensure that all children at both schools are receiving a high quality education and making substantive progress.
- g. To celebrate the school's achievements.

## **FOCUS FOR GOVERNORS' VISITS**

- The focus of Governors' visits will be to gather knowledge, understanding and information that will enable them to monitor and evaluate progress on the School Development Plans more effectively.
- There will be at least one governor visit per half term.

## **MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT**

- Governors will liaise with the Executive Head Teacher or Deputy Heads and agree on the focus, date and time of the visit. Normally a visit should last between half an hour and an hour.
- The visit should have a clear purpose, time of arrival and duration agreed with the Headteacher.
- The Senior Leadership Team will inform all staff a week before the Governor's visit.
- Governors should always reply to special invitations to attend school functions.
- No more than two governors should visit the school at any one time except for exceptional circumstances as agreed with the Executive Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors.
- Monitoring visits may be held via video conference call or telephone call.

## **PROCEDURES FOR THE VISIT**

- Governors should always check in and out with the Executive Head Teacher, Deputy Head or Admin Team. They will be given a visitor badge, which should be worn throughout the visit.
- Each visit will start with a briefing for the Governor(s) by the member of staff they are meeting.
- At the end of the visit Governors will meet with the Executive Head Teacher or Deputy Head to discuss their impressions and to ask any questions they may have arising from their experiences and observations.

## **STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE VISIT**

- As soon as there is an appropriate opportunity, staff should introduce themselves to the governor; providing information of their name and role. Governors and staff know the children come first and we will not disrupt children's learning.
- If there is an appropriate opportunity, staff should highlight the effective learning taking place by the children to the Governor; so the Governor can appropriately praise the child(ren).
- Staff should ensure that Governors receive a respectful welcome during their visit. If there are any comments that staff wish to make about the visit these should be directed to the Executive Head Teacher or Deputy Head.

## **GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE VISIT**

- To be respectful at all times to children, staff and other visitors.
- Begin and end your visit in a positive way, finding a number of positive things to genuinely praise.
- Wait to be introduced before speaking directly to children as some may be shy when approached by an unknown adult.

- Be courteous and sensitive.
- Engage in discussions with children, but be mindful that some children may not respond, as they may be shy or reticent.
- Staffing matters are to be addressed by the Executive Head and Deputy Head Teacher exclusively and as such not by Governors.
- The findings of the visit are confidential and should only be discussed with the Executive Head Teacher and Governing Body.
- Don't get involved in investigating complaints – this is the Executive Head Teacher's responsibility and if a complaint is made to you directly, refer the parent/carer to the Executive Head Teacher or Deputy Head.
- Engage with children at their level.
- Engage in discussions with children and staff, but please do not disrupt the learning experiences.
- Always thank staff for welcoming you into the nursery before you leave.

#### **AFTER THE VISIT**

- Following each visit Governors will complete a short written report (see attached form). Copies should be given to the Executive Head Teacher and are available, filed in the Governor's Monitoring file.
- Governors will meet with the Executive Head Teacher to discuss and agree any actions.

#### **INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION**

- All new Governors will be given a copy of this policy when they begin their term of office or take up post. Staff will be consulted on their views before each review of the policy, and the Governing Body will take the results of this consultation into account when the policy is reviewed.

There are also times when Governors may be visiting the schools for Committee Meetings. Before and after these meetings Governors often spend time with children, families and staff. This is an essential time for Governors to see the school in action.

Name of Governor:

Date:

Purpose of visit:

Observations

Summary of strengths

Action Points