



BISHOP LONSDALE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Governor Visit Policy

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Statement of intent

Through this policy, Bishop Lonsdale 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:

- Remember to respect school staff and pupils.
- Support the School Leadership.
- 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

1.1. 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'

1.2. [New] The policy operates in accordance with the relevant school documents, including, but not limited to:

- Governing Board Monitoring Plan
- Governor Visit Proforma

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. Governors are 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.

2.2. The head of school is responsible for:

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

3. Etiquette

- 3.1. Governor visits are not a form of inspection, and governors will not make judgements concerning teaching or other areas of school provision in any official capacity.
- 3.2. Governors will avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present.
- 3.3. Governors will not pursue personal agendas during visits.
- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. Governors will never visit the school unannounced.
- 3.6. Visits are not an opportunity for governors to check on individual children or monopolise the time of staff.

4. Preparing for a visit

- 4.1. Governors will arrange visits at least one week prior to the date of the proposed visit.
- 4.2. 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 Behavioural Policy, and prepare relevant questions, where appropriate.

5. During a visit

5.1. 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.

6. After a visit

6.1. 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.

6.2. After a visit, governors will not:

- Break confidentiality agreements.

7. Providing feedback

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

7.2. 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
- 7.3. The Governor Visit Proforma will be completed as soon as possible after the visit.
- 7.4. A copy of the completed proforma will be provided to:
- The head of school
 - The subject leader
 - The relevant staff members
 - The clerk to governors
- 7.5. A copy of the report will be circulated to all governors before the next appropriate committee or governing board meeting.
- 7.6. The governing board will ensure all board members have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions regarding the final report and the visit undertaken.

8. Monitoring and review

- 8.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the head of school and the chair of the governing board.
- 8.2. When reviewing the success of the policy, the head of school 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?
 - How can practice be improved?
- 8.3. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all governors, staff members and relevant stakeholders.