



Comberton Primary School

Governor Presence in School Policy

Date policy last reviewed: Sep 2023

Signed by:

Deena Frost Headteacher Date: Sep 2023

Stephen Deakin Chair of governors Date: Sep 2023

Policy for Governors' Presence in School

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Introduction

The governing body has a crucial role to play in the life of our school. Many statutory responsibilities lie with the governing body, and the effectiveness of governors in carrying out their responsibilities is a central part of the overall effectiveness of leadership and management.

Their key roles are to oversee the strategic development of the school, through the school development plan. This involves monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness, and offering support and challenge to the school. However, governors do not involve themselves in the day to day management of the school.

Governors are volunteers and many will have full time jobs of their own and may be unavailable during the school day. Nevertheless, in order for governors to properly fulfil their role, it is essential that they understand and experience the life of the school.

Aims and objectives

We aim for governors to be able to fully carry out their responsibilities outlined in the introduction above. To this end, the school welcomes the governing body's active involvement in its life.

Governors are encouraged to visit the school during the working day, with the aim of:

- being able to advise the whole governing body on aspects of the fulfilment of its statutory role;
- meeting with the Head teacher, senior staff, external advisers or local authority officers;
- improving governor understanding of the ethos of the school and the curriculum;
- observing school policies in action;
- carrying out specific responsibilities on behalf of the governing body, e.g. health and safety checks;
- observing, in order to become familiar with classroom practice;
- developing governor links with staff, new staff, pupils and parents/carers;
- attending school functions;
- carrying out specified monitoring responsibilities in relation to the school improvement plan;
- monitoring whether the budget decisions of the governing body are enabling the school to provide value for money;
- gaining an enhanced level of understanding of aspects of the school's work so that the governing body is sufficiently well informed for its decision-making and policy development;
- assisting the Head teacher in staffing organisation, job descriptions, person specifications and selection interviews;
- ascertaining the need for particular resources.

The role of a governor on a school visit does not include making qualitative judgements on professional, educational matters, for example, the quality of teaching in individual lessons.

Timetable of visits

We hope that all governors will be able to visit the school during the working day at least once a year, to observe the school in session, in addition to any other incidental visits. We offer all new governors an introductory visit as soon as possible after their appointment.

We recognise that pre-planning is essential if the governor's visit is to be worthwhile, and that professional courtesies are to be observed. Visits will always be discussed and arranged through the Head teacher. Staff will always be notified of the purpose of the visit in advance, if it is intended that governors will visit classrooms or observe learning activities.

Visits to classrooms

The school welcomes governors' presence in lessons, often as part of Learning Walks. The school will prepare for such visits by providing visiting governors with information about the purpose of the visit and suggestions for the role a governor might play, for example, a sample list of questions that pupils might be asked during their independent work.

Governors should prepare for visits by familiarising themselves with relevant documentation (e.g. Governing body policies; curriculum guidelines; School Development Plan.) The visit should always begin and end with a meeting with the Head or senior member of staff as appropriate. The concluding meeting should include oral feedback on what the governor has learnt. At this meeting governors can raise any concerns or ask "critical friend" questions.

The governing body agrees that any report, written or oral, made to the governing body following classroom visits, will have been discussed with the Head teacher beforehand. The governing body recognises that no teacher or other member of staff should be identifiable through the report, and that no qualitative judgement about a professional matter, for example, the quality of teaching in individual lessons, will be made.

The governing body recognises that any information about any individually named pupil's attainment or progress should not form part of the visit or be communicated in any subsequent report.

Governors recognise that no comment about the lesson, its content or the pupils should be made within the hearing of any pupil.

Activities away from classrooms

Individual governors are encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of the work of the school through links to specific subjects. Subject leaders will be given the opportunity to discuss subject policies, strengths and areas for development within the subjects, including overall standards, and action plans for school improvement. Governors, for their part, are encouraged to report the main points to either the Raising Standards committee or Full Governing Body.

Governors are encouraged to attend all events at which parents/carers are present. They should wear an identification badge and be available to parents. Any feedback received from parents should be discussed with the Head teacher and, if appropriate, reported to the governing body in such a way that no parent or carer can be identified.

Governors are welcome to attend and play a full part in identified staff professional development (e.g. Safeguarding Training) and will be given information on any training organised. Governors planning to attend should inform the Head teacher beforehand.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be discussed with staff and reviewed by the governing body every two years, or sooner if necessary. Date of next review will be September 2025.



Template form for recording a governor's school visit

NAME	DATE
<p>Purpose of visit <i>(Previously agreed by the governing body with the headteacher)</i></p>	
<p>Links with the school development plan <i>(How does the visit relate to a priority in the school development plan?)</i></p>	
<p>Observations and comments by the governor <i>(e.g. what you saw; what you learned; what you would like clarified; how long the visit lasted)</i></p>	
<p>Any key issues arising for the governing body <i>(e.g. the way resources are allocated; the way the school communicates; progress in implementing a key policy)</i></p>	
<p>Action following governing body meeting <i>(Record any action agreed by the governing body with regard to this visit)</i></p>	