



# FEDERATION OF SAVILE TOWN CE (C) & THORNHILL LEES CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOLS

## GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY 2024

*'At our school we celebrate our faith diversity and provide a safe environment where our children are happy to learn. We are kind, caring and respectful to others. We aim to inspire future generations of our school and community to become lifelong learners.'*

### **Introduction:**

The governing body of The Federation of Savile Town & Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery Schools aim to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the schools. The governors are expected to acquire this information in many different ways. For example scrutinising:

- Headteacher's reports
- Annual monitoring reports from our KLP's.
- Notes from Diocesan visits
- Perspective Lite reports
- Ofsted inspection reports
- SIAMS reports
- Data/ Pupil Progress Reports
- Reports from staff members in committee meetings
- Finance reports

First - hand knowledge of the effectiveness of the school can only be gained through governor visits. Regular planned visits provide insight and understanding and can help to strengthen the governing body's strategic and monitoring role.

### **The purpose of governors' visits:**

The visits are carried out for a variety of reasons:

- To develop understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement;
- To support the work of the school;
- To contribute to the governing body's monitoring role;
- To enable individual governors to ask informed and challenging questions at governing body meetings;
- To help governors understand the teaching and learning process;
- To monitor policies in practice;
- To demonstrate their interest in the school to staff and children;
- To give governors an enhanced sense of identity with our school and the people who work in it
- To support their work as 'critical friends'.

Visits can be formal or informal.

### **Formal visits:**

A formal visit to the schools can be carried out provided it is in connection with individual governor responsibilities. The visits must be arranged and agreed with the Headteacher and relevant members of staff in advance.

Formal visits should have a clear focus, linked where possible to the School Development Plans. Visits should add value to the school and the effectiveness of the governing body.

Governors are invited to visit the school as lay people. They are not inspectors, even where they have personal or professional expertise in a particular subject area. Governor visits provide but a snapshot of what is going on in school. Visits do not give a full and balanced picture of the reality. For this reason, it is always important that information gathered by individual governors during a visit is checked and, if necessary, revised in consultation with the Headteacher in the first instance.

Governor visits may focus upon different aspects of the school environment and of school life. For example:

- The classroom
- The playground
- The school environment
- Extra- curricular activities
- Meeting with staff
- Parents evenings
- Shadowing staff/ pupils

Governors are welcome to observe teaching in school but are unable to make quality judgements as this is the responsibility of the Headteacher. Governors are able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning through the school's performance management systems and the half termly Headteacher's reports.

Visits are occasions that provide opportunity to collect information to report back to the governing body or relevant committees on progress of key priorities related to the School Development Plan.

### **Written reports**

Governors' visits should be kept simple using the suggested pro-forma to record findings. These reports should be read by the relevant members of staff before being filed in the Governor's folder. Individuals should not be named within these reports but may be identifiable from post titles. They should not contain criticism but may raise strategic issues relevant to the governing body.

### **Informal visits**

When undertaking informal visits, governors attend school in a more personal capacity but always with the approval of the headteacher., These visits are seen as a valuable way of sharing in the life of the school and building up positive relationships. These visits complement formal visits but should not replace them.

## **Points to consider when carrying out governor visits**

### **Before a visit**

- Arrange a mutually convenient time for the visit within the headteacher/ appropriate member of staff.
- Agree an appropriate level of participation, especially when visiting a class at work.

### **During a visit**

- Be punctual
- Be focused on the purpose of the visit
- Listen, don't talk too much
- Observe discretely, taking minimal notes
- Ask questions but be aware of any potential to distract the teacher or children
- Be willing to get involved if invited to - but don't interfere!
- Don't make comments on the conduct of the lesson or the behaviour of the children
- Thank staff and children at the end of your visit
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### **After the visit**

- Discuss your observations, including any concerns with the headteacher
- Draft a short written report using the suggested pro-forma
- Share the draft report with the headteacher
- Arrange for the report to be shared, as appropriate with governors
- Reflect on the success of the visit
- Discuss any unresolved issues with the Chair of Governors
- Feedback any findings/ comments at relevant committee meetings (Self evaluation item on the agenda)
- Chair/ Vice - Chair of Governors will monitor types of observation carried out.

### **Review and Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed in line with the Monitoring Cycle.



**FEDERATION OF SAVILE TOWN CE (C) & THORNHILL LEES CE (VC) INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**  
**Governor Visit Pro-forma**

<b>Visiting Governor:</b>	
<b>Date of visit:</b>	
<b>Purpose of visit:</b>	
<b>Comments:</b>	

Signed:

(Headteacher)

Signed:

(Governor)