



Title: **Governors' Visiting Policy**

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INTRODUCTION

1. Every Governing Body has a statutory responsibility to establish and monitor its school's policies and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum. Governors are also held to account for their own school's performance. The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) assumes that Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of their school, and will test that assumption during a school inspection.

One of the best and most effective ways in which a Governors can get to know about their school is to visit during the school day and see it at work. They offer constructive support to school improvement in the following ways:

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

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

- understand how the school works;
- know how well the school is performing;
- have a clear view of the school's priorities;
- be well informed about the impact of developments;
- ask pertinent and relevant questions of senior managers to check that everything is being done to ensure that all students at the school receive a good education;
- support the staff by ensuring that they have the necessary resources, training and encouragement to work effectively; and
- develop a friendly, helpful and supportive relationship with the Executive Headteacher and other staff.

3. School visits are one of the ways that Governors can build this essential knowledge and understanding about the school and carry out their responsibilities for general oversight of the school and for monitoring and evaluating the school's development. An effective partnership between Governors and staff based on mutual understanding benefits the whole school community.

THE ROLE OF THE VISITING GOVERNOR

4. The Governing Body is a corporate body and every Governor visits the school as a representative of that body, not as an individual.
5. 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

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senior staff. The Governing Body has responsibility for the general oversight and strategic direction of the school; it is not concerned with the day-to-day management and organisation, which is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher.

AIMS OF GOVERNORS' VISITS

6. 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 school,
 - b) to enable staff and students to get to know Governors,
 - c) to demonstrate Governors' interest in the school and to encourage the Executive Headteacher and staff in their work,
 - d) to enable Governors more effectively to carry out their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the school's development,
 - e) to enable Governors to be better informed advocates, able to speak up for the school from personal knowledge,
 - f) to carry out their responsibilities as members of decision-making panels,
 - g) to celebrate the school's achievements.

FOCUS OF GOVERNORS' VISITS

7. The focus of the majority of Governors' visits will be to gather knowledge, understanding and information that will enable them to monitor and evaluate progress on the School Improvement Plan more effectively.
8. Other visits may focus on other aspects of the life, work and context of the school, e.g. extra-curricular activities, premises, health and safety, school meals, pastoral care of students, links with parents, assemblies, school events, facilities for staff, etc.

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT

9. Governors should give the Executive Headteacher a minimum of one week's notice of their intention to make a visit to the school. Times when staff are particularly busy should be avoided, e.g. the 1st week of term, or the period leading up to and during an OFSTED inspection.
10. The visit should have a clear purpose, time of arrival and duration agreed with the Executive Headteacher. The itinerary for visit will also be agreed in advance with the Executive Headteacher.
11. Governors should always reply to special invitations to attend school functions.

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PROCEDURES FOR THE VISIT

12. Governors should always check in and out with the Executive Headteacher or Headteacher. They will be given a school visitor name badge, which should be worn throughout the visit.
13. Governors should stick to the agreed itinerary for the visit except where changes are agreed with the Executive Headteacher.
14. St Paul's Way Trust School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all stakeholders to share this commitment. All staff and Governors are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE VISIT

15. As soon as there is an appropriate opportunity, the class teacher should introduce himself/herself and the other adults in the room to the Governor.
16. The class teacher should indicate where the Governor is to sit or stand in the room.
17. If there is an appropriate opportunity, the class teacher should introduce some of the students and the good work they have done to the Governor so that the Governor can praise them.
18. 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 Headteacher or Headteacher.

AFTER THE VISIT

19. Following each visit that they make, Governors will complete a short written report. A pro forma for this report is appended to this policy. Copies should be given to the Executive Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

20. All new Governors and staff 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.

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REPORT OF GOVERNOR'S VISIT

Governor's name	
Date of visit	
Focus of visit	
What did you do during the visit?	
What did you learn from this visit?	
Evaluation of visit: Were your objectives for the visit met? If not, why not? Points, to take forward for discussion at the Governing Body meeting:	
Signed:	Date:
Received and discussed with the Executive Headteacher:	
Received by the Governing Body:	

Adopted by HR Sub-committee:

Signature of Chair _____ **Date** _____
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