



St Anne's School and Sixth Form College

Governor Visits Policy

This policy was originally published in Summer 2017, reviewed September 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been drafted in discussion with all governors of the School and approved, it reflects the Governor Codes of Conduct approved by the Board of Governors' in May 2018.

Governing Bodies have a responsibility to monitor and promote the effectiveness of the School and its curriculum. Visiting the classrooms is one way in which this can be achieved. At St Anne's we recognise that Governors are an important and integral part of the School community

We welcome and encourage Governors into the School to be involved in all aspects of the School and Residence through formal or informal visits.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

We recognise that governors are most effective when they are fully involved in the Schools self-evaluation and use the knowledge gained to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Visiting and observing classes at work and being familiar with practices and policies of the School and Residence is a crucial part of that process.

Governors have no automatic right as individuals to visit the School but working closely with staff in support of the School, its pupils, staff and parents structured visits are helpful for all concerned. All understand that governors do not have an inspectorate role and the management of the School and its curriculum is through the Senior Leadership Team.

All visits by governors to the School will be recorded in the Governor's Visits book. The following guidance has been approved by governors, the Senior Leadership Team and staff.

Governor visits in line with their special responsibilities will be a substantive agenda item at all full meetings of the Board of Governors where written or verbal reports will be received and recorded in the minutes circulated and published on the website.

If visits result in concerns being raised about safeguarding action will already have been taken in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy but discussions on these will be recorded in Part B the confidential part of the meeting as will matters relating to members of staff.

Additionally visits by governors may be discussed in the various committees of the Board of Governors.

Visits by governors to the Residence can be unannounced at any time of the day or night in accordance with Standard 20 of the National Standards for Residential Special Schools. These will be recorded on the standard form (Appendix 3) and included in the report by the Child Care Manager at every meeting of the Board.

3. FORMAL VISITS - SCHOOL

- Governors with a curriculum responsibility will liaise with the appropriate Teaching and Learning Responsibility teacher within the Middle Leadership Team to arrange the visit.
- The reason for the visit will be discussed with the teacher.
- The visit will be informative, constructive and sensitive to staff and pupils in the class.
- Professional judgements will not be made about teaching and learning.
- Governors must appreciate the need for confidentiality and have a thorough understanding of the Safeguarding Policy.

4. VISITS - RESIDENCE

Visits by governors to the Residence can be announced or unannounced at any time of the day or night in accordance with Standard 20 of the National Standards for Residential Special Schools. The visits conducted by governors are in addition to the Independent Visitor brought in and the Children's Participation and Rights Visitor.

All visits are recorded;

- Governors (announced or unannounced visits) – see Appendix 3, blank copies are available in the Residence office and can be left for typing upon completion.
- Independent Visitor – the IV produces their own report.
- Children's Participation and Rights Visitor – they complete their own form.

Governors reports can include details of activities, health and safety matters, comments on décor / areas, staff seen and spoken too, young people seen and spoken too.

All reports are available for viewing by all visitors to the Residence.

5. OBJECTIVES – SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE

- To understand the vision of the School, its context, achievements and areas for development.
- To assess and understand all aspects of the Safeguarding Policy.
- To foster good relations with all staff, pupils and young people, parents and carers.
- To gain knowledge that will help Governors make more effective decisions.
- To gain or increase knowledge of the challenges of teaching in an additional needs School and obtain a greater understanding of the complex and profound needs of the children and young people.

- To monitor curriculum areas in relation to the School development plan.
- To monitor social care practice within the Residence.

6. FREQUENCY – SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE

- Each Governor should aim to make at least one formal visit per School term in addition to less formal visits

7. REPORTING – SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE

After the visit the governor will complete a Governor visits form:

- Appendix 2 for School
- Appendix 3 for Residence

This report will be shared with:

- The head teacher – School and Residence
- The SLT - School
- The class teacher – School
- Child Care Manager – Residence
- The relevant Committee
- The full Governing Body

8. VISITING GUIDELINES – SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE

- All visits will be conducted in accordance with the protocol for Governor Visits
- School - agree in advance with the teacher your role in the classroom (observer, participation, involvement with pupils, etc)
- Remember you are there in a supportive role; complete a visit form afterwards Appendix 2 (Governor visits form).
- If you see something you don't understand or need clarification on, this should be discussed afterwards with the class teacher if at all possible.

Appendix 1 Protocol for Governor Visits - School

Preparing for a visit

- Check the agreed policy for governors' visits.
- Clarify the purpose of the visit.
- Is it linked to the School Development Plan / teaching?
- Discuss with the head teacher / SLT and staff the focus of the visit in advance and make sure that the date chosen is suitable.
- Be clear beforehand exactly what you are focusing on and the expected outcomes.
- Discuss with the head teacher / SLT if any supporting information is available – Ofsted report, School Development plan, medium term plans

During the Visit

- Remember you are making the visit on behalf of the Governing Body; it is not appropriate to make judgements or promises on behalf of the Governing Body.
- Be punctual and keep to the agreed timetable but be flexible.
- Get involved with the pupils if the teacher has agreed that this would be appropriate.
- Remember it is a visit not an inspection.
- Observe discreetly. Remember that excessive note taking can be disconcerting and may make your visit look like an inspection.
- Don't distract the teacher during the lesson from his/her work but be prepared to talk and show interest.
- Be courteous, friendly not critical. interact, don't interrupt.
- Remember why you are there. Don't lose sight of the purpose of your visit.
- Listen to staff and pupils.

After

- Discuss what you have observed with the teacher and use the opportunity to clarify any issue you are unclear about.
- Thank the teacher and class team for supporting you in your role as a governor.
- Be open, honest, positive.
- Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind.
- Discuss your observations with the head teacher / SLT
- Be prepared to take the comments of others on board.
- Agree with the head teacher how and when you will report on your visit to the governing body.

Reporting your visit

- Complete a report of Governor Visit (Appendix 2)
- Circulate your draft report to the head and any staff involved for them to check the accuracy and clarity.
- Circulate the agreed report at the next appropriate committee/governing body meeting in addition to verbal reporting in accordance with the agenda.

Appendix 2: Governor visit form – School

Governor Curriculum Visit

Date:

Curriculum Area

TLR Holder

Governor

Lesson

Lower/Upper/Sixth Form

Year group

Area	Comments
Attitudes	
Enjoyment	
Engagement	
Resources	
Additional Comments (Optional)	

Governor Signature:

Date:

TLR Holder Signature :

Date:

Appendix 3: Governor visit form – Residence

Governor visits to the Residence

Name of Governor:

Date of Visit:

Area of responsibility:

Purpose of Visit:

Staff seen on visit (name staff):

Young people seen on visit: YES / NO

Governor's comments (what was going on, what was looked at):

Actions (if any):

Signed: Governor

Date

Comment by Kay O'Neill (Child Care Manager):
