



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL  
*“Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community”*

## **Governors’ Visits Policy**

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Governors’ role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress.

The Governing Body is a corporate body and every Governor will visit the school as a representative member of that body, not as an individual. An effective partnership between Governors and staff, based on mutual understanding and respect, benefits the whole school community.

This policy will provide an agreed framework within which Governors will plan and carry out their school visits.

The Governors visiting programme is an integral part of the school’s yearly monitoring calendar.

Monitoring visits should focus on the progress made against the School Development Plan or one of the Governors’ statutory duties. At St. Thomas’ each Governor is linked to at least one area of the curriculum and/or has one specific responsibility. Visits range from two hours to the whole day. Each Governor should attend the school for a whole day visit once a year.

The following table outlines the minimum expectations for Governors. A visits timetable is drawn up at the beginning of each academic year, based on these minimum expectations, in order to assist Governors, staff and the Headteacher in planning for visits.

<b>Reason for visit</b>	<b>Regularity</b>
Core Curriculum monitoring visit	Two or three times a year
Curriculum monitoring visit	Once or twice a year
New Governor induction visits	One morning/One afternoon
Safeguarding	Termly
SEND	Termly
Health and Safety	Once a year
Worship	Once a year

In addition to the above meetings it is important that the Governing Body maintains a profile at school events e.g. Parents’ Evenings, the school fete, Eucharist’s, school plays and concerts. At least one Governor should be present at each event.

### **Visits enable Governors to:**

- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school
- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning
- Evaluate resources and discuss with staff further requirements
- Gain first hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking
- Work in partnership with the staff
- Witness the ethos of the school in practice

**Before making a visit** the Governor should:

- Contact the Headteacher and agree a date, time and focus for the visit.
- Book 5 minutes in the Headteacher's diary at the beginning and end of the visit.
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit e.g. how you will be introduced, where you will stand, if you can join in.
- Plan which classes will be visited and draw up a timetable for the visit with the Subject Leader.
- Check that the Subject Leader has made all staff aware of the visit and the expectations on them.
- **Prepare for the visit by reading the relevant area of the School Development Plan, the Policy and any available data.**

**On the day of the visit** the Governor should:

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable. (Arrange to be there before the start of a meeting rather than arrive in the middle of a lesson.)
- Adhere to the School's Child Protection Policy and safeguarding arrangements.
- Request a copy of the most up to date subject specific action plan from the Subject Leader to assist with monitoring
- Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher.
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering.
- Avoid overtly taking notes. Write down your thoughts as soon as you can afterwards.
- Be calm and enjoy the visit.

**After the visit** the Governor should:

- Remember to thank the teachers and children.
- Meet with the Headteacher to give a verbal report, and to raise any issues that arose.
- **Complete the Governor Visit Report** promptly. (The agreed format is in Appendix I below.)
- The completed form should be sent to the Headteacher within 1 week of the visit. After any alterations, the report can be sent to the relevant member of staff for any comments.
- The report **must** also be shared with the Governing Body at the next full Governing Body meeting. Circulate the written report at least 3 days before the meeting. Governors' visits is always an agenda item at a full Governing Body meeting, therefore, be prepared to update Governors verbally at the meeting on the key issues.
- The Visit Report should be kept with the minutes of the full Governing Body meeting.
- Governors must report without giving opinions and where possible individuals should not be able to be identified. It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily.

**The visit is not about:**

- Inspection
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- Checking on your own children
- Pursuing a personal agenda
- Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. It is important that Governors remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Headteacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full Governing Body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then Governor Visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the Governing Body, which will contribute to school improvement.

Approved by the Governing Body on: **18<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

Policy updated: **15<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

To be reviewed: Spring 2018



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Name:

Date:

Purpose of visit:

**Aims:**

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**Governor observations and comments:**

The visit lasted ...

I saw ...

**I learnt:**

- 

**To follow up at next visit:**

- 

**Links with the School Development Plan:** *(Ensure you request a copy of the most up to date subject specific action plan from the Subject Leader, if applicable)*

Progress made towards targets/agreed actions:

**Any key issues arising for the Governing Body to consider:**

**Action following Governing Body meeting:**

<b>Comments on Collective Worship (if attended):</b>
<b>Comments on playground climate walk (break/lunch):</b>