



Newtown C of E Primary School

Governor Visits To School Policy and Protocol

Ratification Date:	September 18	Signed:	Mrs Emma Howlett (HEADTEACHER) Mrs Janet Cane (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)
Reviewed	September 2025	Signed:	Mrs Emma Howlett (Headteacher) Mrs Glyn Wright (Headteacher)
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Next Review	September 2027		

School Vision

At Newtown C of E Primary School, our motto is enriched and sustained by our Christian values of **Love, Courage and Friendship**, rooted in the teachings of the Bible. We are guided by the call to *“love one another as I have loved you”* (John 13:34), *“be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”* (Joshua 1:9), and *“a friend loves at all times”* (Proverbs 17:17).

As a school at the heart of an evolving community, we warmly welcome children and families from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. We are enriched by the unique qualities each child brings and value the talents and perspectives that help us grow together.

We are an aspirational school serving our community. We seek to know, understand and celebrate every child, nurturing their individual strengths and talents. We prepare our children to become confident, responsible global citizens in an ever-changing world, guided by our core values of love, courage and friendship.

Through **Love**, we show kindness, compassion and generosity, building a community where everyone feels safe, welcomed and valued. Through **Courage**, we persevere, meet challenge with confidence, and stand up for what is right with honesty and grace. Through **Friendship**, we grow together — encouraging one another, celebrating each other's gifts, and looking to the future with hope and aspiration.

We live out these values by:

- Being a caring, welcoming and inclusive Christian community where staff, pupils, parents and governors work together in a safe and supportive environment, inspired by *“Above all, love each other deeply”* (1 Peter 4:8)
- Promoting the welfare and dignity of every child, safeguarding them from harm — including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying — in accordance with statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Department for Education)
- Providing a rich, engaging curriculum that equips children with the knowledge, skills and character to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens, reflecting Christian teachings and British Values

- Building strong, positive partnerships with parents, the church and the wider community, and encouraging participation in local, national and global initiatives
- Fostering our Learning Behaviours of Resilience, Focus, Independence, Self-Regulation, Respect and Boundaries, encouraging children to act with integrity, perseverance and kindness in all they do

At Newtown, we want every child to know they belong, are cherished, and are capable of great things. Through **Love, Courage and Friendship**, we grow minds, shape futures and journey together in hope.

1. Context

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

It has been agreed that governor visit should take place each term, which would focus on an aspect of the School Improvement Plan or one of the Governors' statutory duties. Each Governor is encouraged to make at least one visit a year during school time and governors will often monitor an area of the School Improvement Plan in pairs, in accordance with the agreed timetable.

2. 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

3. Before making a visit Governors will

- Contact the Headteacher and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
- Plan which classes will be visited
- Draw up a timetable for the visit with the Deputy Headteachers or subject-coordinator
- Deputy Headteacher and/or the subject coordinator ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

4. On the day of the visit the Governor will remember to:-

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the Deputy Headteacher/subject coordinator
- 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
- Be calm and enjoy the visit

5. After the visit the Governor will:-

- Remember to thank the teachers and children
- Complete the Governor Visit Proforma, reporting on the focus. The completed form should be given to the Headteacher and then, after any possible alterations, the form will be circulated to the governing body and staff
- 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 Governors' 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.

6. Policy Review

The policy should be reviewed every two years. The key questions should be:

- Has every Governor visited at least one lesson during the year?
- Has each Governor made links with the leader for their allocated school improvement area?
- Are our visits achieving the potential benefits identified in this policy?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can we make policy and practice even better?

School Visits – an Aide Memoire

What is the purpose of the visit?

What has prompted my decision to visit?

Who has prompted my decision to visit?

Is the reason specific or general?

What are my/other people's expectations?

How can my visit benefit the teacher?

How shall I carry it out?

What particular areas of the school am I interested in?

What particular activities am I interested in?

What particular age-group(s) am I interested in?

Are there any questions that can be answered by observation?
What questions should I ask?
Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

To what extent did I address the reason for my visit?
Which of my questions did I answer?
To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?
What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

Have I recorded my experiences?
Did I 'report back' to the head and staff?
Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting?
How can I build on this for the next visit?

Newtown Primary School		Governor Monitoring Record
Date:	Governor:	
Description of monitoring:		
Monitoring focus:		
Evidence gathered:		
Evaluation:		
Actions :		
Safeguarding element:		

Guidelines for Governors

Advice on conducting classroom visits

Rationale

The Governing Body at Newtown CE Primary School has a responsibility to keep in touch with what is happening in the classroom. Although their role is strategic, it is important that they have some understanding of the practicalities of the job. Meeting children, talking to staff and seeing lessons underway will help members of the Governing Body to understand some of the issues they are required to discuss and make decisions about with greater clarity.

Objectives

The Governing Body should aim to:

- Inform their decision-making by having visited at least one lesson during the year
- Be aware of the feelings of members of staff and the issues they face by having had a more lengthy discussion with at least one member of staff during the year
- Read and keep up-to-date with school newsletters and other documents that are sent out
- Keep up-to-date with their nominated class, introduce themselves and spend time discussing the school with some of the children from the class.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors are linked to a particular subject or area of responsibility.

In addition to this, we aim to link most Governors to a specific area of the School Improvement and Management Plans.

Classroom Visits

It is the responsibility of each Governor to introduce themselves to the teacher and class and make themselves available according to the demands of the timetable and school year.

The benefits of visiting classrooms

Closer links between Governors and teachers has potential benefits to both.

For governors these include:-

- More informed understanding of classroom life and practice.
- Opportunity to meet and chat with the children.
- Opportunity to meet class teachers and put faces to names.
- Seeing policies and schemes of work in action
- Finding out what resources are being used and what are needed.

For Teachers these include:-

- Opportunity to find out more about the role of the Governor.
- Having chance to illustrate the theory and policy in practice.
- Opportunity to draw attention to any issues or questions they wish to raise.
- Opportunity to reflect upon practice through discussion.

What to Avoid

It is important for all parties to note that governors' visits are not a form of inspection and do not involve governors making a judgement about teaching in any official capacity. That remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and other education professionals. Governors should avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present. It can cause discomfort for everyone! They should also be aware of 'pursuing personal agendas' and make sure they fulfil the code of conduct as it is outlined here. Please remember that members of staff are very busy people whose first priority must be the children. There may be times when arrangements have to be changed or alterations made. Please be sensitive to the circumstances and flexible in your expectations. No two days are ever the same. Keep an open mind about what you see. By all means ask questions (preferably at the end of

the lesson) but be sensitive to the extra demands of differentiation and inclusion that teachers now face.

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit. Agree purpose of visit Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed. Agree role within the lesson	Turn up unannounced
During	Keep to the role agreed Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over Please remember confidentiality Stick to the times and purpose agreed Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children.	Assume a different role Walk in with a clipboard Interrupt the teacher Distract the pupils from their task
After	Thank the teacher and the pupils Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience Feedback to the governing body	Leave without acknowledgement Break rules of confidentiality

Conducting the observations

Classroom observations will always be conducted with the appropriate staff member, ie the subject coordinator or a member of the management or leadership team.

After planning your visit, you might have agreed to-

- take part in a lesson acting as classroom helper during your visit
- do a formal observation-taking no immediate role other than talking to the children about what they are doing
- work with a small group
- meet with the manager/leader or coordinator to discuss particular issues or set the context
- observe - focussing on an agreed area/issue

Please remember that observations do not require judgement on the teacher.

It might also be useful to clarify some 'what ifs' beforehand. For example:-

What if I see children misbehaving when the teacher doesn't?

What if a pupil asks me how to do something?

What if I have a suggestion to make?

Providing Feedback

It is important that a time is agreed between yourself and the class teacher to discuss the lesson you have taken part in or observed and that this is done collectively with the appropriate manager. During this feedback you might refer to notes you have made. The structure might include:

1. Asking the teacher for any further clarification of the lesson or for their views on how it went.
2. Giving your own impressions on what you saw
3. Providing any positive comment.
4. Raising any issues that appeared to develop.
5. Any further questions you might have
6. A summary of the feedback you will be giving to the governing body.

At the end of the feedback both you and the teacher should be clear about what you will be sharing with the governing body- there should be no surprises!

The **Governors' visits Report and pro forma** should be completed as soon as possible after the visit. It should reflect the discussion you have had with the teacher. The report should be copied to:

- The Headteacher
- The subject leader
- The teacher concerned
- The clerk to the governors