

# Bell Farm Primary School

## Governor visits and code of conduct policy



One of the most important responsibilities of governors is that of monitoring progress in the school. This can be achieved through the analysis of statistical data, reports from the headteacher and senior staff, and governors visiting the school to see progress in action.

### Statement of intent

Through this policy, Bell Farm Primary School aims to embed effective procedures concerning governor monitoring visits. Each governor is expected to make at least one visit during the academic year, demonstrating the governing board's role in the strategic management of the school by helping to evaluate and improve practice.

Governor visits inform understanding of the school's practices and procedures, allow opportunities to speak to pupils and teachers, enable the identification of resource needs, and allow governors to see the School Development Plan (SDP) in action.

For staff, governor visits allow staff the chance to find out more about governors, provide an opportunity to draw attention to issues or questions they wish to raise, and provide an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss current practice.

Governors must:

- Remember to respect school staff and pupils.
- Support the headteacher.
- Acknowledge that they represent the full governing board.

By following the agreed principles and procedures, governor visits will be pleasant, purposeful, and will significantly contribute towards school improvement.

### Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2014) 'The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013'

The policy operates in accordance with the relevant school documents, including, but not limited to:

- Governing Board Monitoring Plan
- Governor Visit Report Proforma

### Objectives

Visits are undertaken to:

- improve governing body knowledge of the school and the people that work in it
- assist the governing body in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan
- assist a governor to fulfil a specialist governor role such as inclusion
- assist the governing body in fulfilling its statutory duties
- assist the governing body in making informed decisions

## Governors with specific responsibilities

The responsibility for oversight of particular areas of school life – for example safeguarding, pupil premium, SEND – is agreed by all governors and included in the minutes. Governors should make at least two visits per term.

## Arrangements of visits

There is a schedule of governor visits, this reflects the priorities in the school development plan and the specific interests and responsibilities of governors.

- Visits are organised through contact with the appropriate member of staff. Please check with the headteacher if unsure who to contact.
- Timing of a visit is agreed between the governor and staff member, avoiding any very busy times and giving adequate notice.
- Notes and observations are agreed by the member of staff and governor.
- One governor writes the report using the Google form, selects "Send me a copy of my responses." but does NOT tick "Ready to send to school".
- If a second governor is involved, then the first forwards the report to that governor for review.
- Second governor edits, selects "Send me a copy of my responses." but does NOT tick "Ready to send to school".
- First (or second) governor forwards report to staff involved for review.
- Once staff are in agreement regarding accuracy, either governor can tick "Ready to send to school" and submit. The report then goes to the Head, chair and governor who first wrote it.
- Clerk can then upload report onto GovernorHub so all governors can read it or it can be included in meeting papers.
- Each report should identify if it needs to be reviewed at a governors' meeting.

	<b>ALWAYS</b>	<b>NEVER</b>
<b>BEFORE</b>	<p>Agree purpose of visit.            Agree timing of the visit.            Consider practicalities (dress, time of arrival, who to report to, breaks and lunch).            Try and find out what the teacher expects.</p>	<p>Turn up unannounced.</p>
<b>DURING</b>	<p>Arrive in plenty of time.            Follow the school's security policy.            Look relaxed and interested.            Smile and make eye contact when entering an office, class or group room.            Expect different noise levels for different activities. It is the quality of the noise that is important, not always the quantity.            Introduce yourself to staff and pupils.            Note and praise the positive.            Try not to sit in a class taking notes.            Ask questions to increase understanding.            Remain focused on the purpose of the visit.</p>	<p>Arrive with preconceived ideas.            Interrupt the teacher.            Talk to the children when a teacher is talking.            Make professional judgements about staff expertise (governors are not inspectors).            Pursue your own personal agenda/focus on the progress of your own child.            Monopolise the children's or the staff's time.</p>

<b>AFTER</b>	<p>Thank the teacher and pupils.          Discuss visit with the teacher.          Complete a report of visit and follow instructions under heading 'arrangements of visits'.</p> <p><b>If you have any concerns please raise them immediately with the Headteacher.</b></p>	Leave without a word.
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### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the headteacher and the chair of the governing board.

When reviewing the success of the policy, the headteacher and chair of the governing board will take the following into consideration:

- Has every governor conducted at least one visit during the academic year?
- Has every governor made links with their allocated subject or area of provision?
- Has every governor met with the staff members they are linked to?
- Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?
- How can practice be improved?

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all governors, staff members and relevant stakeholders.

<b>Status of Non-Statutory Policy</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy created	Feb 2005 revised April 2011 & June 2022
Policy reviewed	Mar 2022
Agreed by Staff	Mar 2022
Agreed by Governors	July 2022
Review	July 2024 (Every two years)