



Penarth Group School  
Positively Growing Success

# Governor Visit Policy

Date reviewed	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
Date of next review	March 2020
Date approved by Governors	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2019

## 1. Penarth Group School Statement of Intent

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the strategic direction of the school and initially for holding the Headteacher to account for improving the school in accordance with any requirements of the Proprietor, and in compliance with Penarth Group. The Governing Body is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the school and holding the Headteacher to account for improving the school. Governors and Penarth Group will be held to account for the school's performance.

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) and Department for Education (DfE) assume that Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and will test that assumption during a school inspection. The intent of this policy is to facilitate Governors getting to know about their school and to better understand the environment in which teachers teach, students learn and staff work. There is an expectation that all Governors will visit the school for purposes other than attendance at scheduled meetings.

## 2. Our Aims

Our aims are to increase Governors' first-hand knowledge of the school and therefore better inform strategic decisions and planning. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for governors to make focused visits to school in order to have the opportunity to observe policies and plans being implemented. The findings of these visits should help the whole governing body make well-informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the School Development Plan (SDP)

## 3. Objectives

- To establish and develop effective working relationships with staff and students.
- To have a greater understanding of students' needs.
- To monitor the implementation of the School Development Plan.
- To see policies and schemes of learning in practice
- To show support and encouragement to staff/students and to recognise and celebrate success across the school.
- To demonstrate the Governing Body is actively contributing to school's self-evaluation processes.
- To enable staff to have a better understanding of the role of Governors in supporting the work of the school.

## 4. Implementation Guidance

- On visits to Penarth Group School the Governors are there to observe and gain insight into the work of the school. They are not to make judgements on the quality of teaching and learning.
- All visits must be planned and have a clear purpose. The date, timing and focus must be agreed at least one week in advance and include what will be observed and to whom it would be useful to talk.
- Visits must be agreed with the Headteacher beforehand.
- As far as is possible, the visit should not create additional workload for staff. *See also appendix 2.*
- Governors must adhere to all safeguarding protocols when participating in a visit.
- Governors will be subject to safeguarding vetting checks required by law and will be included in the School's Central Record.
- A risk assessment will be completed by the school for any governor for whom checks are awaited.
- Governors must respect confidentiality arising from any aspect of the visit, in line with other Penarth Group School Policies (particularly Data Protection and Safeguarding).
- Governors should express their gratitude, and any positive feedback to staff and students as soon as possible, and provide informal verbal feedback to the Headteacher (or appropriate member of staff) at the conclusion of the visit.
- Governors should provide a written report (see appendix 1) to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and the Proprietor within ten working days of the visit. This will also be copied to the Clerk to the Governing Body for inclusion in governing body papers with the approval of the Chair of Governors.
- Any action points arising from the visit will be discussed and agreed by appropriate parties.

- If on a visit to school, Governors see something which worries them they should bring this to the attention of the Headteacher in the first instance. If the concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **It is the responsibility of;**

- The Governing Body to take a role in monitoring and reviewing the implementation of this policy.
- The Principal to ensure that all students, teaching and support staff are aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Governors to act in a professional manner at all times when visiting the school and to follow the implementation guidelines.
- The school staff to act in a professional manner towards Governors and ensure their visit is effective and worthwhile.

## **6. Equality**

Penarth Group School ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided. We do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their sex, race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins. The Governor Visits Policy acknowledges the school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## **7. Monitoring Evaluation and Review**

To be reviewed and amended by the Headteacher, or nominated representative, from the school.

The recommendations will be submitted to the Board of Governors for consideration and, where applicable, approval. The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

*This policy should be read in conjunction with;*

- *Child Protection and Safeguarding policies*
- *Teaching and Learning policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Data Protection Policy*

**Appendix 1**

**Governor Visit Report Form**

Governor Name:

Date of visit:

Time of visit:

Focus of visit:

Link to Penarth Group Schools' School Development Plan (SDP):

Summary of Activities carried out on the visit:

What have I learned as a result of my visit (*relate this back to the focus of the visit*):

Aspects I would like clarified / questions that I have:

Actions of the Governing Board to consider:

Any other comments for future visits:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Circulation:   Headteacher  
                  Chair of Governors  
                  Clerk to Governors*

## Appendix 2

### Governor School visits - Setting expectations for visits

Please refer to the Governor Visits Policy for more information

*While Ofsted's inspection handbook makes no explicit reference to Governors, Trustees or Governing Committee members visiting their schools, inspectors will be looking for evidence of how well Governing Boards know their school and learning from visits can form an important part of this.*

Every visit should have a clear, prearranged focus. This is important because it helps those Governing use their time, as well as that of school staff, productively.

The focus of the visit will generally relate to the Governing board's monitoring of the school strategy or to developing a rounded understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

In most cases, the visit should link to objectives and targets set out in the vision and strategy formulated by the Governing Board.

Visits should involve the member of staff responsible for the objective or target meeting with the member of the Governing board in order to provide background information and context, showing the initiative in action, and if possible, providing the opportunity for them to speak to pupils or staff members who are affected by it.

During any visit to the school it is important to remember that the role of those Governing is strategic, not operational.

Visits by members of the Governing Board should not be confused with inspections.

### Model visit Protocol

Governors can draw on a range of evidence in order to carry out their duties and one source of information is their own visits to their school. This protocol applies to school visits made for the purpose of Governance and not to visits to the school site that individual may make in other capacities e.g. as parents or members of staff.

All school visits will:

- Have a clear focus, linked to strategic priorities, agreed by the full Governing board.
- Be arranged with adequate notice through the Headteacher and relevant staff.
- Be of value to the Governing board which is demonstrable to outside agencies.

It is not the role of those Governing to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits and individuals will make every effort to avoid this impression.

**Conduct:** Those Governing will comply with the school and Governing board's codes of conduct and the standards of presentation expected of staff. They will be mindful that they are representing the whole Governing board through their words and actions.

**Follow Up:** Those Governing will have the opportunity to discuss the visit, including any concerns, with the Headteacher immediately or soon after the visit. The Governor Visit Report will be completed after each visit. A draft will be shared with the Headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next Governing Board Meeting.

**Confidentiality:** This should be adhered to regarding visits. Comments should be limited to the Headteacher or Senior Leader with who the visit was arranged but not with other staff or with parents. Individual children or staff members.