



# North Walsall Primary Academy

## Governor Visits Policy

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Every Local Governing Body (LGB) has a statutory responsibility to establish and monitor its academy's policies and evaluate the effectiveness of the academy and its curriculum. Well planned and effective governor visits are an essential tool in doing this and ensuring that all governors have a good understanding of the academy as expected by Ofsted.
- 1.2 We appreciate that individual Governors have differing amounts of time to commit to an exercise such as a classroom visit. However, we would recommend that each Governor (including staff and support staff governors) aim to make a class visit once per term.
- 1.3 Ofsted will assume that Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the academy; however, Governors are not inspectors and are not required to make judgements regarding the professional expertise of staff. Instead they are required to:
  - Appreciate and understand the work of the teaching and support staff and how pupils are learning
  - Be aware of the response of pupils to their work
  - Be aware of resource issues
  - Be able to ask appropriate questions and hold discussions with staff

## 2 Before a visit (at least one week prior to visit)

- 2.1 We would recommend that prior to a visit Governors:
  - Clarify the purpose of the visit and agree it with the Principal and Head of Department before the visit
  - Ascertain from the Senior Leadership Team if there are specific lines of enquiry to follow
  - Consider issues that have been discussed at recent Local Governing Body meetings and how you can observe these issues on your visit
  - Agree a time for the visit, suitable for both the member of staff and Governor involved
  - Agree how you will be introduced to pupils and be involved in the lesson or activity you are observing
  - Review the action points in the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)
  - Read any appropriate policies or curriculum guidance

## 3 During the visit

- 3.1 We would recommend that during the visit Governors:
  - Are prepared and punctual
  - Report to the reception and sign in
  - Fulfil the agreed purpose of the visit
  - Observe academy/class guidelines
  - Observe discreetly
  - Become involved with the pupils' activities when invited, but don't intervene
  - Never comment on the teacher's conduct of the lesson or individual pupils

- Take note of discussion points
- Do not use the visit to raise personal issues.

## 4 Following the visit

4.1 We would recommend that following the visit Governors:

- Thank the member/s of staff and pupils
- Discuss observations as soon as possible after the visit
- Provide oral feedback to the Principal and Head of Department
- Complete the Governor Visit Form (appendix 1) with the member of staff present and forward a copy to the Principal and Clerk (for distribution at the next LGB meeting)
- Never include comments about individual pupils; if you have concerns, discuss them privately with the member of staff.

## 5 Things to observe when visiting a classroom

5.1 Things to observe when visiting a classroom include:

- Relationship between staff and pupils
- Relationships between pupils
- Variety of teaching styles
- Availability and role of any support staff
- Behaviour and attitude of pupils – are the attentive, motivated, listening, questioning, responding?
- Enjoyment and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils
- How the pupils are grouped
- How different abilities are catered for
- Pupils' work
- Displays
- Ethos – the atmosphere and values that are evident (are high expectations, encouragement, praise, equality of opportunity apparent?)
- Use of space and working conditions
- Quality and quantity of equipment and resources.

### Appendix 1 – Governor Visits Form

Name of Academy:	
Name of Governor:	
Date:	
Were you asked to sign in?	
Were you provided with a visitor badge?	
Were you shown the Safeguarding Procedure?	
Department visited:	
Focus of Visit:	
Summary of Activities:	
Positive observations:	
Observations of areas to improve:	
Areas to follow up on next visit:	
Additional Comments:	

Sign:.....  
(Governor)