

**THE SIR BERNARD LOVELL SCHOOL**  
**GOVERNORS' VISITS TO SCHOOL POLICY**

**RATIONALE**

Governors' visits to school are an extremely important feature of the role of the Governing Body as they provide an opportunity for Governors to:-

- Get to know staff and pupils in the working environment and classroom setting
- See school improvement priorities in action
- Develop their understanding of issues facing the school
- Demonstrate with action, their role as a critical friend
- Celebrate the success of the children and school
- Fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school

**GUIDELINES**

1. Governors will develop a plan for visits throughout the school year and regularly feed back their observations at Governors' meetings.
2. All visits by Governors will be by prior arrangement through the Clerk, or by invitation.
3. Governors should make two curriculum visits per school year.
4. Governors will be linked to specific curriculum areas and other areas of school life. Visits will be arranged through members of the Leadership Group and will focus upon particular themes. Some visits will involve observations of parts of lessons and meetings with other staff from the area.
5. All visits will end with a short discussion with a member of the Leadership Group about what has been seen and the focus of a future visit.
6. All information gathered must be treated confidentially.
7. After that visit, Governors should complete a visit form outlining the purpose of the visit and what they have gained. They will also be asked to give verbal feedback to the Full Governing Body.
8. A detailed procedure for Governors' visits can be found in the Appendix 1 and further guidance in Appendix 2.

**CONCLUSION**

It is important to remember that the purpose of Governors' visits is not to assess the quality of teaching provision, nor to pursue any personal agendas that relate to the day to day management of the school, but rather to gain a real insight into the working of the school.

Adopted: ..... Date: .....  
Head

Adopted: ..... Date: .....  
Chair of Governors

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

## SCHOOL VISIT PROCEDURE

Schools are busy work places and Governors have no automatic right to visit the school. They do so by invitation or following a governing body decision. The visit must fit in with the school and the needs of the students and should inform the Governor so that he/she can do the job better. Normal health and safety and child protection procedures must be followed.

1. Try to visit 2 half days per year, as per the School Visit Plan co-ordinated by the Chair of Governors.
2. Clerk to contact Governors for two or three convenient dates, three weeks in advance of the visit and to advise governor of most convenient time as soon as possible.
3. Clerk to give details to Curriculum Leader or other line manager who will arrange programme with a specific theme or focus.
4. On the day of the visit please report to reception and sign in and out when leaving. You will be met by the Curriculum Leader with whom the programme and focus will be discussed.
5. If your visit involves a lesson observation please introduce yourself to the staff and ask them to introduce you to the class. Ask the teacher for guidance about whether you might look at students' work and talk to the students.
6. Please thank the member of staff briefly at the end of the observation, which may be for part of the lesson. Do not pass judgement/comment on the lesson or delay the teacher.
7. You may meet other staff as part of the visit. Please make sure that they understand the focus. You should meet with a member of the Leadership Group for any points needing clarification at the end of the visit.
8. Please complete a pink visit form by the next FGB meeting and give to the clerk.
9. Please give a brief 2 minute feedback to the next FGB meeting on what you have gained from your visit.

## SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL GUIDANCE

PURPOSE OF VISITS	WHAT MIGHT A GOVERNOR CONCENTRATE ON DURING A LESSON?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To develop relationships between Governors and staff</li> <li>▪ To get to know the pupils</li> <li>▪ To recognise different teaching styles</li> <li>▪ To act as a researcher for the teacher</li> <li>▪ To become familiar with the working environment of the school</li> <li>▪ To observe implementation of policies and schemes of work</li> <li>▪ To ensure more informed decision making at governing body level</li> <li>▪ To understand the constraints within which teachers work</li> <li>▪ To observe the use of (or need for) practical resources</li> </ul>	<p>This will depend on the agreed purpose of the visit.</p> <p>There are many possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individual pupils' capabilities/difficulties in relation to a given task</li> <li>▪ What pupils manage to do well and where they get stuck</li> <li>▪ Individual pupil tracking/achieving key learning objectives</li> <li>▪ How pupils try to overcome problems</li> <li>▪ Aspects of pupils' behaviour/relationships</li> <li>▪ What does a pupil do when he/she is confused or frustrated</li> <li>▪ How pupils respond to praise</li> <li>▪ Consider the effectiveness of specific resources, eg the deployment of learning support or the use of ICT.</li> <li>▪ The effect of a given experimental teaching strategy</li> </ul> <p>The more specific and concrete the focus, the better.</p> <p>General rule: try to observe who does what without judging whether it is good or bad</p>
PROTOCOLS TO BE OBSERVED	WHAT IT'S NOT ABOUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pre arranged visits</li> <li>▪ Ensuring confidentiality</li> <li>▪ Agree purpose of visit</li> <li>▪ Opportunity for discussion with Leadership group after the visit</li> <li>▪ Agreed level of feedback to the governing body</li> <li>▪ Any class guidelines/rules to be observed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Making judgements about the quality of teaching</li> <li>▪ Checking on the progress of own children</li> <li>▪ Pursuing personal agendas</li> <li>▪ Monopolising teachers' time</li> <li>▪ Arriving with pre-conceived ideas</li> </ul>