Redgate Community Primary School

Governor Visits Policy

We LEARN

We COLLABORATE

We NURTURE

We GROW

We are SAFE

Author	Nik Bentley
Date	October 2026
Review Date	October 2028
Headteacher's signature	H.Gambon
Chair of Governor's signature	Marti Fallon

1. Aims

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all governors to follow when making visits to the school. Governors do not have an automatic right to enter Redgate Community Primary School. When they do so, they are invited guests.

This policy sets out the procedure that all governors are expected to follow when visiting Redgate Community Primary School and how they are expected to report back on that visit to the governing board.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure that all governors understand their role and purpose, so school visits are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

2. Guidance and scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the maintained schools governance guide (section 3.3.3).

2.1 Occasional visits (e.g. learning walks)

Governors will visit the school on an occasional basis as such visits enable governors to:

- Fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school
- Observe whether the school is implementing its policies and improvement plans
- Observe how its policies and improvement plans are working in practice

Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish.

2.2 Focused visits (e.g. formal monitoring visits)

Governors will also take part in focused governor monitoring visits, which should be:

- In line with school improvement plan (SIP) priorities
- For a specific purpose linked to the governing board's responsibilities, such as safeguarding
- Pre-arranged with the headteacher

2.3 Governors are not inspectors

Governors:

- Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- Will not manage the school or interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school

For those governors who wish to spend time in a classroom, they will make their purpose in doing so clear.

3. Visits programme

Governors will carry out regular school visits in order to meet the board's statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness.

There are 2 types of visits:

- **Formal monitoring visits**, where governors discuss the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member
- **Learning walks**, where governors will go around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area and are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils

Governors will carry out school visits according to the following schedule:

3.1 Link Governors Visits

- Governors will undertake visits for their link roles in line with the school's annual schedule. Additional visits may be arranged where necessary, in consultation with the headteacher and relevant staff.
- The frequency and focus of visits will reflect the school's priorities, the governing board's monitoring requirements and any issues requiring further attention. Additional visits or meetings may be arranged where necessary, in consultation with the headteacher and relevant staff.
- Visits will be planned in advance, have a clear purpose and be proportionate to staff workload. They are intended to help governors understand and monitor the effectiveness of the school's arrangements, rather than duplicate the work of school leaders or replace their ongoing monitoring.

3.2 Curriculum and Teaching lead governor

Subject lead governors will attend:

- A monitoring visit with the subject lead in September/February/May
- A learning walk in October/March/June

3.3 All governors

- All governors are encouraged to take opportunities to develop their understanding of the school's work, including attending assemblies, learning walks and educational visits where appropriate. These activities will be arranged in consultation with the headteacher and will take account of the school's priorities and staff workload.

4. Before a visit

Governors will:

- Notify the headteacher before scheduling a visit, even if the headteacher will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware as a matter of courtesy
- Schedule an appointment with relevant members of staff in order to avoid friction and ensure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are more productive when conducted during a school day
- Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time
- Clarify the purpose of the visit in advance with the chair, the headteacher and/or relevant member of staff
- Send questions in advance to the staff member, so everyone can feel properly prepared

- Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures

5. During a visit

Governors should know how to conduct themselves appropriately during visits in order to minimise disruption for staff and pupils, and to receive the maximum benefit from the time spent.

Governors will:

- Be on time and meet with the headteacher or SLT appropriate SLT member ahead of the visit
- Always wear a visitor's badge
- Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are prohibited
- Remain as observers; they are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them
- Ensure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so
- Check with teachers before speaking to pupils
- Pass on any concerns the staff raise with the relevant people
- Be friendly but professional, and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils

Governors will not:

- Pass comment on classroom practice or any specific incidents that happen, judge teaching methods, assess the quality of teaching, or comment on the extent of learning
- Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school
- Behave in a manner than would make staff feel that they are there to inspect, e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard
- Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the chair of governors or headteacher after the visit

6. After a visit

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the appropriate visit form below, Appendix 1 or 2. In completing the report, governors will:

- Use neutral language at all times
- Remain observational, and describe only what they see
- Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit and its strategic role

Once complete, governors will submit their reports to the following people, in the following order:

- A more experienced governor for feedback – if they've been in place for less than 1 year
- The relevant staff member, both as a courtesy and to check for accuracy
- The headteacher, as a courtesy
- The chair of the governing board as agreed

Appendix 1: Template report for a monitoring visit

Formal monitoring visits are where a governor discusses the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member. Use this form as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: Plan the visit	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.	
Relevant school objective or priority This might be taken from the school improvement plan (SIP) objectives or the school's overarching vision.	
Questions to ask Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit. Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.	

Part 2: In the meeting
What is the school doing within this area of focus? *Tips:* ● *Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where'* ● *Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with* ● *Remember you are **not** there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer* ● *When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils*

How do you know the school's actions are having an impact?
Remember: ● *Include specific evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area* ● *Where a positive impact has not been made yet, note down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress* ● *Add any further evidence you would like to see to help you make a better assessment of the impact*

What successes stood out and why?

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors

Appendix 2: Template report for a learning walk

Learning walks are where a governor goes around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area. You are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils. Use this as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: Plan the walk	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus *Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.*	
Relevant school objective or priority *This might be taken from the school improvement plan (SIP) objectives or the school's overarching vision.*	
Questions to ask *Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit.* *Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.*	

Part 2: On the walk
General notes from discussions with staff *Tips:* ● *Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who', 'where' and 'can you show me …'* ● *Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with* ● *Remember you are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them* ● *When writing the report, use neutral language and don't name individual teachers*

General notes from discussions with pupils *Remember:* ● *Do not ask them for pupils' views on a specific teacher* ● *Do not record pupils' names*

General notes on the school environment and overall atmosphere *Note:* ● *Whether the governors' vision of the school is replicated on the ground* ● *Any issues with the school site you see, e.g. broken equipment or lack of resources*

What successes stood out on the learning walk and why?

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors