

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>St. Michael's Academy</u></p> <p>Policy for: Governor Visits to School</p>	<p>Date signed off:</p> <p>19 May 2014</p>
	<p>Review date:</p> <p>Summer Term 2017</p>

Aims:

1. This document aims to give guidelines to Governors and Staff on the purpose and process of school visits. Governing Bodies are responsible for promoting effective learning within the school. To this end, Governors are linked to the main areas of the curriculum, and through visits and discussions between the Governors and subject leaders, the whole Governing Body will be better informed about these areas of the curriculum. Governors should use their visits to collect information to report back to the Governing Body on progress toward key priorities or initiatives in the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP). Planned and focused Governors' visits contribute significantly to more informed decision-making by the Governing Body.

Through our programme of individual governor visits we aim to:

- Improve governor knowledge of the ethos of the school and awareness of the work on the curriculum.
- Assist the whole governing body to fulfil its statutory role.
- Improve governor understanding of the needs of the school and the priorities for the future school development plan.
- Monitor and evaluate the current school development plan especially in relation to curricular issues.
- Improve governor links with staff, pupils and parents.
- Help governors to be better able to support the school community.
- To highlight the needs for particular resources.
- If possible all governors to visit at least once a year during the working day.
- All new governors are offered an introductory visit soon after their

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appointment to the governing body as part of their introductory programme.

- Governors are welcome to informally visit the school (with prior notice) taking into account the needs of all concerned and the appropriate timing of visits e.g. assemblies.
- Specific invitations are sent for some occasions.
- Visits to talk with the head or curriculum coordinator can also be made by appointment.
- Governors receive copies of parents' newsletters which contain notice of events and are welcome to attend these.

Focus of Monitoring Visit:

Visits will focus on aspects of the school development plan, and on carrying out the work of the governing body e.g.; SEN, Health and Safety, Literacy governor roles.

The visits could have particular emphasis on one year group, or on one major aspect of delivery of the curriculum. The Curriculum committee will discuss the focus of these visits and suggestions brought to the whole governing body.

Purpose:

2. Formal Visits
 - To consider the plans for delivering a subject across the whole school – especially in terms of linkage to the RAP and targets.
 - To see how a subject is monitored and managed within the school.
 - To discuss with Staff and children particular subject areas.
 - To gain knowledge of how a subject is taught.
3. Informal Visits
 - To become more familiar with daily school life.
 - To help in the classroom.
 - To join in and be part of the school community.
4. Each of the above types of visit is equally valid and useful for Governors and the school. The aim is a mix of both types of visit with as many Governors as possible participating in visits.

Procedure and responsibilities:

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5. Governors should familiarise themselves with supporting documents, in particular the Raising Attainment Plan and the current version of the Ofsted School Evaluation document.
6. It is the responsibility of the subject leader to keep the Principal informed of proposed visits.
7. Participation in Governors' visits is an important and formal part of the subject leader's role and should be given appropriate priority by teaching staff.
8. As a matter of course, any information Governors are planning to feed back to the governing body should be discussed in the first instance with the member of staff involved in the visit. Any written report should be shared with the appropriate member of staff before presentation to the Governing Body.
9. Formal feedback. A feedback form should be completed for all formal visits. A copy of the feedback form is attached.
10. Informal feedback. General observations on visit that may include feedback from children, staff etc. These could inform the basis of an oral presentation to the governing body.
11. Governors should aim to have two formal visits per year arranged around the subject monitoring cycle or area of interest, with possibly an initial meeting with subject leader to discuss plans for the development of the subject and a review meeting to discuss how matters are progressing, particularly with regard to any targets which may have been set in the School Development Plan and performance in the SATs. Governors should also aim to see their subject in action in the classroom. Informal visits to be undertaken by individual governors at their convenience.

12. Format for Visits

- Arrange a visit with the appropriate teacher and agree the aim of the visit and arrangements for it in advance. Out of courtesy and in order to get the best from a visit, particularly formal visits, it is best to arrange visits **at least two weeks in advance**. Ensure the Principal is aware of the details of the visit.
- Most visits take place in the classroom and staff will have been consulted about the date and purpose of the visit. This

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will have enabled them to prepare any information related to the focus of the visit and to set up a programme for the governor. This might include:

- Supporting a group of children on a set task
 - Informal observations of children at work
 - Opportunities to speak with children on their work in progress
 - Opportunities for observing displays of work in the classroom which show progress over time
 - Opportunities for pupils to demonstrate work to governors
 - Governors would be expected to be present at the beginning of a lesson - this will enable the teacher to introduce them to the class and explain the reason for their presence.
 - Governors should be aware of the confidentiality of what they see and hear
 - Governors should be discreet so as not to disrupt the lesson in progress.
- A further meeting with the Principal or curriculum coordinator to review the focus of the visit and clarify any queries.

The follow up:

1. Governor to fill in a report sheet for governing body/staff as appropriate (as attached)
2. Feed back to governing body in full governing body meeting/curriculum committee that the visit has taken place.
3. Staff and governors to give opinions on the effectiveness and success of these visits
4. Governors and staff to update the policy every three years.

13. Please remember to:

- Arrange details of visit in advance.
- Agree levels of confidentiality.
- Observe any class rules.
- Be sensitive about taking notes.
- Save your questions/comments for staff until the lesson is over.
- Thank the class before you leave them.

14. What Governor visits are NOT about:

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- Making judgements about quality of teaching and operational management
- Checking the progress of own children
- Pursuing personal agendas
- Monopolising teachers' time
- Arriving with inflexible preconceived ideas
- Interrupting, giving ideas or suggestions during teaching time

Appendix to Policy: School Performance Monitoring Visit, Questions for Governors attached.

Appendix 1

St Michael's Academy Suggestions for School Performance Monitoring Visit Questions for Governors – select one or two as appropriate

1. How do teachers plan for their lessons?
2. How do teachers ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged
3. How do teachers explain to pupils what they are going to teach?
4. How do teachers keep track of progress?
5. To what extent do teachers seek the views of their pupils about learning?
6. What teaching styles do the teachers use?
7. How do teachers ensure all children are making progress?
8. What professional support do teachers get to help them teach more effectively?
9. How do support staff contribute to teaching and learning?

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10. How do support staff help pupils to ensure all have equal access to the curriculum?
11. To what extent are children able to make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions? Does this happen for all groups of children?
12. How do whole school policies work in different classes?
13. How do teachers help children to assess their own learning?
14. How is the Every Child Matters agenda being development

Name:	Date:
Purpose of Visit:	
Links with the School Development Plan/School Action Plan:	
Governor observations:	
Actions:	

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Appendix 2

Governor Visit Report Form

Name of Governor:		Date:
Name of subject leader:	Subject under discussion:	
Objectives of visit:		
Consideration of current situation in terms of the development of the subject and meeting SIP objectives (e.g. what activities are current, planned etc):		
Progress on delivering the development plans:		
General comments (eg where has there been good progress? Where are there causes for concern?)		
Subject Leader's comments:		

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SIGNED: Governor:
Subject Leader:
Principal:

5.

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