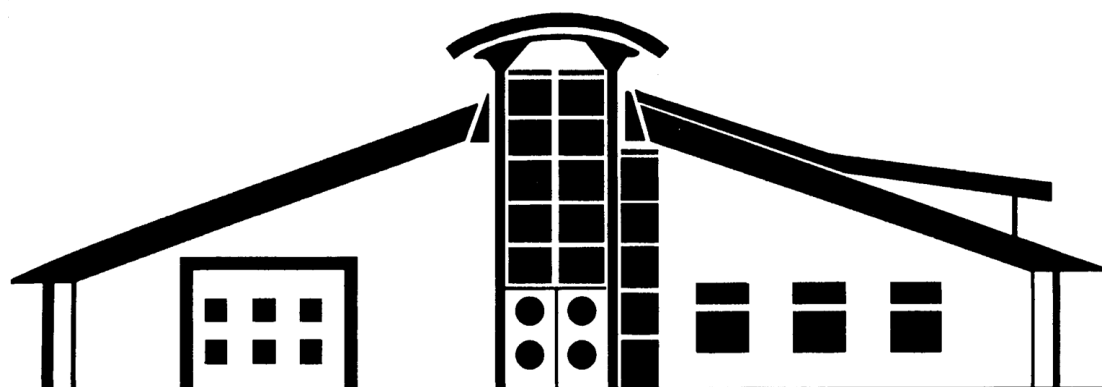




**HOLMESDALE COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL**



## **GOVERNOR VISITS PROTOCOL**

Approved by Governors .....January 2023

Review Date .....January 2026

# 1. Aims

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

This policy sets out the procedure which all governors are expected to follow when visiting the 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 visits to the School are a productive and enjoyable event for all involved.

## 2. Guidance and scope

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the DfE Governors' Handbook.

### 2.1 Governors are observers

Committees must know their schools in order to maintain robust accountability. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors will:

- › Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school improvement plan
- › Observe how those procedures are working in practice
- › Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

### 2.2 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 school, they must make it clear about their purpose in doing so.

## 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 and in accordance with their assigned responsibilities. A schedule should be agreed with the Headteacher and in line with any relevant Greensand MAT requirements.

Visits enable Governors to:

- › Focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning
- › Ensure accountability to parents and the wider community for the school's overall performance
- › Get to know the school, the staff and the pupils
- › Understand the teaching and learning process and recent developments in education
- › Monitor the curriculum
- › Monitor the progress of the School Development Plan
- › Become integrated into the school team and feel the "ethos"

Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. Governors are welcome at all school events including fund-raising occasions and services such as class assemblies, Harvest Festivals, Carol services etc. These are all good opportunities to get to know the school. It is important for visits to school/classrooms to be planned so that maximum benefit can be gained by governors, staff and children.

## 4. Before a visit

### Governors will:

- › Agree a suitable time for the visit with the Headteacher who will act as co-ordinator for all governor visits, ensuring that visits do not coincide with other visits or pressures
- › Agree the purpose of the visit in advance and the Governor's role. Fill in the monitoring form with the agreed focus and send questions in advance so everyone can feel properly prepared
- › Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time
- › Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures
- › Discuss the context of the visit
- › If appropriate to the visit, discuss approaches to learning, as this will look different in Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) to Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)
- › Review the safeguarding policy and read any relevant information (e.g. policies, data)

### Governors will not:

Turn up without an appointment

## 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 – aim to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the lesson and telephone the school in case of delay or cancellation
- › Always wear a visitor's badge
- › Pass on any disclosures or safeguarding concerns to the DSL immediately
- › Maintain confidentiality
- › Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are to be avoided unless specifically agreed with the Headteacher for a specific purpose
- › Remain as observers
- › Ensure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the school/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:

- › Discipline or distract pupils from their task
- › Assume a different role to that agreed in the visit plan
- › Be dismissive or intimidating
- › 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, intervene or interrupt the teacher. The teacher's first responsibility is to the children and they will not have time for general discussion during the contact time.
- › Behave in a manner that would make staff feel they are having judgement passed on them or inspect them e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard
- › Jump to conclusions or 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. (This does not refer to immediate safeguarding concerns)

## **6. After a visit**

### **Governors will:**

- › Thank the teacher and, if appropriate, the pupils/class
- › Discuss the visit with the teacher / HT at their convenience
- › Complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable using the form attached as Appendix A using neutral language, describing only what was seen and focusing on the reasons for the visit
- › Agree the written report with the staff member, then share it with the Head Teacher, Chair, and the Clerk
- › Analyse whether the purpose was achieved
- › Take any concerns to the Head Teacher

### **Governors will not:**

- › Leave without thanking staff
- › Break the confidentiality rules

## Appendix A: Template report for a monitoring visit

### Governor Monitoring Report

	<b>1. Name of governor and role</b>	
	<b>2. Date and time of monitoring</b>	
Plan	<b>3. Focus of monitoring (tick)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> School Improvement Plan objective</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Statutory compliance</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Policy in action</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Seeing the vision or ethos in practice</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Ongoing (business as usual)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> </ul> <b>Description:</b> Focus of visit was to ....	<b>4. Type of monitoring (tick)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Meeting with staff</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Learning walk</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Book look</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Gathering views of stakeholders</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Review of data</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> </ul> <b>Description:</b> Met with ....
	<b>5. Monitoring objectives (from Governor Monitoring Plan)</b>	
	..	
<b>6. Key questions to be answered by the monitoring (share with school ahead if visiting)</b>		
..		
Do	<b>7a. Answers to key questions</b>	<b>7b. Evidence</b>
	i) xxx?	
	..	
	ii) xxx?	
	..	
iii) xxx?		
..		
iv) xxx?		
..		
Review	<b>8. Assess the evidence – what did it tell you? Are we on track/where we want to be? Yes/No? Explain your answer</b>	
	..	
<b>9. Are there any points that need to be shared at the next meeting of the board? Or any further questions that need to be asked?</b>		
..		
<b>10. Follow-up monitoring required?</b>		
..		

#### Next steps:

Share this with the headteacher for factual accuracy and then share with clerk/chair to add to meeting papers