

# Rode and Norton St Philip School Federation

## GOVERNOR VISITS POLICY



**Approved by the Governing Body of:**

Rode and Norton St Philip School Federation

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**Proposed Date of Future Review November 2020**

**Rode and Norton St Philip School Federation**  
**Governor Visits Policy**  
**November 2017**

### **Introduction**

Our Governing board has three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of the staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Governors draw on a range of evidence in order to carry out these functions and one source of information is gleaned through visits to, and learning walks in, both schools. This protocol applies to school visits made for the purpose of governance and not to visits to the school site that individual may make in other capacities e.g. as parents or members of staff.

### **Purpose**

All school visits will:

- Have a clear focus, linked to strategic priorities, which is agreed by the full governing board
- Be arranged with adequate notice through the head teacher and agreed with the relevant members of staff
- Be of value to the governing board which is demonstrable to outside agencies e.g. Ofsted or the LA

It is not the role of those governing to form judgements about the performance of school staff during visits and individuals will make every effort to avoid this impression.

### **Conduct**

Governors will comply with the school and governing board's codes of conduct expected of staff. They will be mindful that they are representing the whole governing board through their words and actions.

### **Follow Up**

Governors will have the opportunity to discuss the visit, including any concerns, with the head teacher immediately or soon after the visit. The attached 'Governor Visit Report' in Appendix 1 will be completed after each visit. A draft will be shared with the head teacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the next governing board meeting (this may be the full governing board or a committee, as appropriate).

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality should be adhered to regarding visits. Comments should be limited to the head teacher or senior or middle leader with who the visit was arranged but not with other staff or with parents. Individual children or staff members (other than the member of staff involved with the visit) should not be identified in school visit reports. See Do's & Don't in Appendix 2

**Governors will undertake a minimum of one visit to each school per academic year but no more than once a term.**

This protocol should be reviewed by the governing board every academic year. Suggestions for visits during the current academic year are in Appendix

**Appendix 1:**  
**Rode and Norton St Philip School Federation**  
**Governor Visit Report**

Name:	Date:
Focus of visit (link to strategy and school development plan)	
Summary of activities e.g. talking to staff and pupils, looking at specific resources, having lunch etc.	
What have I learned as a result of my visit? (relate this back to focus of visit)	
Aspects I would like clarified/questions that I have:	
Actions for the governing board to consider:	

Any other comments/ideas for future visits:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Governor

## Appendix 2: Do's and Don'ts

The table below provides a guide to what those governing should and shouldn't do before, during, and after a school visit.

	Do	Don't
Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Discuss the visit at a governing board meeting including identifying a clear purpose. (It can be useful to think of the governing board as 'commissioning' the visit and delegating responsibility for carrying it out to individual governor(s).)</li> <li>✓ Arrange a mutually convenient time, avoiding sensitive times such as exam or assessment periods.</li> <li>✓ Discuss the visit with the head teacher and ensure that any member of staff who will be involved in the visit understands the arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Turn up unannounced.</li> <li>✗ Approach staff directly without the approval of the head teacher</li> </ul>
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Report to reception and follow procedures for visitors – even those familiar with the school should do this.</li> <li>✓ Only enter classrooms and other areas of the school – including the staffroom – following invitation by a member of staff.</li> <li>✓ Keep to the role agreed; only talk to pupils if invited to do so by the teacher</li> <li>✓ Be flexible if something urgent crops up which means the arranged tasks cannot take place – always keep in mind that the education of the pupils is of overriding importance.</li> <li>✓ Be courteous and professional throughout the visit, including thanking members of staff before leaving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Give the impression that you are inspecting, for example by using a clipboard or making notes while visiting a classroom.</li> <li>✗ Assume a different role to that agreed; parents and education professionals, in particular, should be mindful not to stray into these roles.</li> <li>✗ Express personal opinions if pressed on a controversial issue – individuals should keep in mind that they are representing the governing board as a whole.</li> <li>✗ Make assumptions – always ask for explanations of anything not understood at an appropriate time when it will not interrupt pupils' learning (this may be in conversation with the class teacher after the lesson or with the head teacher at the end of the visit).</li> <li>✗ Check on the progress of individual children, including your own.</li> <li>✗ Walk around the school unaccompanied or put yourself in situations where you are likely to be unaccompanied with pupils.</li> </ul>

After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Share any concerns, however trivial, with the chair and the head teacher.</li> <li>✓ Complete a short visit report using our agreed Governor Visits form; a draft should be shared with any relevant members of staff and the head teacher, then taking their comments into account a final written report should be prepared and given to the governing board before the next meeting.</li> <li>✓ Ensure that school visits is an agenda item at the governing board meeting and that any findings are discussed</li> <li>✓ Send a thank you email to those that contributed to the success of the visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Make comments regarding the teacher's conduct of the lesson or individual pupils.</li> <li>✗ Refer to individual teachers or pupils in your report, even in a positive light. Gossip about your visit – what you have seen should be treated with the same level of confidentiality as any other governing board business.</li> </ul>
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**Appendix 1 and 2 are from [nga.org.uk/guidance](http://nga.org.uk/guidance) (2015)**

### **Appendix 3:**

#### **Possible Areas for Visits to monitor SDP 2016-2017**

**Priority 1 (Structure): To complete the next phase of the federation – with the aim of ensuring both of our schools are educationally outstanding, impressive and that all available places are filled.**

We will be successful if we achieve

- ✓ A best of both worlds education model which financially sustainable.
- ✓ Smooth transition of structures, learning & people by September 2017
- ✓ Successful single year group teaching
- ✓ First phase of age specific environment e.g. zone area changes, free flow access and outside facilities in NSP plus hall reinstatement and climbing wall etc at Rode)
- ✓ Successful marketing and stable numbers and full Reception intake (open days, website, flyers)
- ✓ Effective transportation and logistics (staff, parents and children)
- ✓ Effective after school care, which meets the needs of working parents and is largely self-funded.

**Priority 2 (Learning): To embed the accuracy of assessment, feedback and tracking with specific relation to improvement in writing in year 2, improvement in phonics in Y1/2 and increasing the number of children working above ARE in Yr 4.**

- ✓ Our assessment, feedback and tracking system is effective across the schools (data and files)
- ✓ Our assessment policy is applied consistently and effectively in all classes through minimum teacher effort but maximum pupil effort
- ✓ Assessment processes support quality learning for all pupils
- ✓ We are effective in providing evidence to demonstrate the assessment of pupils
- ✓ We keep parents fully informed

**Priority 3 (People): To ensure cohesive teams of quality teaching staff working successfully in a federated environment.**

- ✓ Successful projects on writing P4C, Writing, STEAM and the Arts embed innovative and inspirational practice.

**Other possible visits could be about: -**

- Curriculum Areas E.g. Literacy, Maths, The Arts, Science, PE, ICT
- Early Years
- Our values
- Collective Worship & RE
- Budget setting
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Health & Safety
- Healthy Eating/Lunch provision
- Safeguarding
- SEND
- Web site & marketing
- Our buildings & maintenance
- Our resources/inventory
- Appraisal
- Or?

**Register of Visits:**

	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
1	Richard Clayphan x2 Gill Warren Siobhan Thompson		
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			