

St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

GOVERNORS' VISITS POLICY

Approved at:	Spring Term 2022
Review:	Every 3 years
Review date:	Spring Term 2025

Aims

The governors have a statutory responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum in achieving our mission:

To educate and inspire every child to fulfil their unique giftedness within a loving catholic community.

The Governing Body (FGB) fulfils this role by challenging and supporting the school, providing a strategic view and ensuring accountability. To enable the Governing body to be effective individual governors need to visit the school regularly to learn about all aspects of school life and to demonstrate to staff, parents and children that they take their responsibilities seriously and are genuinely interested in the life of the school. Visits are not operational. They are not to assess quality or method of teaching, or the extent of the learning

Objectives

- Improve governor knowledge of ethos and work of curriculum
- Assist the whole governing body to fulfill its statutory role
- To focus on priorities in the SIP and to see the SIP in action
- Improve governor understanding of the needs of the school and the priorities for the future school improvement plan
- Improve governor links with current staff, new staff, pupils and parents
- Help governors to be better able to support school community
- Enable governors to take part effectively in assisting in staff selection, job descriptions, person specifications and interviews to meet the needs the school
- To highlight the financial needs for particular resources
- To recognize and celebrate success
- To inform Governors' decisions

Timetable of visits

All governors will visit the school during the working day for a minimum of once each year, for a Formal Visit, but preferably more as the need arises. All new governors are offered an introductory visit soon after their appointment and thereafter governors are welcome to visit the school for formal and informal visits. The SEN governor meets termly with the SENCo. The Safeguarding Governor meets regularly with the Head Teacher. The Chair of Governors meets regularly with the Head Teacher.

Once appointed, each Governor is attached to a class/phase, and will keep in touch through class newsletters, email and informal visits.

4. All governors visiting the school are asked to complete the fire register in the foyer and also the Governors Visits book which is kept in the office.

Focus of the 2 main types of visit:

-  formal visits on behalf of the governing body (or a particular committee) to help build up information and evidence to fulfill our statutory duties.
-  informal visits for governors to learn more about the school generally

Format for Formal Visits

1. Formal Visits will be agreed and arranged at committee meetings of the FGB in conjunction with discussion with the appropriate teacher or at an invitation of a member of staff. The focus will relate to the priorities of that committee and be based on the SIP and MER.
2. The Formal Visit will be arranged with the relevant member of staff with date, time and agenda for the visit agreed upon. The Head teacher will be notified of the visit by the Governor.
3. At the end of the visit, governors may have a discussion with the staff member that they have been working with to reflect on what they have seen during the visit. If necessary, they may wish a further meeting with the HT or AHT to review the focus of the visit and clarify any queries.
4. After a Formal Visit, Governors should complete a Visit Report Form for the staff member that they were working with and welcome any feedback for clarification etc. Then they will send on the report form to the training governor who will forward it to the governing body, HT and clerk.
5. Through linking each Governor with a class/phase, it is hoped to establish an open atmosphere that will allow governors to establish a good relationship with their designated class/phase. This could include receiving information e.g. through the class newsletter, and opportunities, with the agreement of the class teacher, to be part of class activities such as liturgies, school trips etc.
6. The teacher and Governor may also agree on a visit to a particular lesson. This could include 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 or opportunities for pupils to demonstrate work to governors.
7. It is hoped that all Governor Formal Visits and communications with their link class/phase, will be welcomed by staff as a way of seeing Governors as a supportive part of the school community, and as a useful forum for observation and discussion.

Informal Visits

1. Governors are welcome to informally visit the school and their link class/phase on many occasions, taking into account the needs of all concerned and the appropriate timing of visits e.g. parent evenings, assemblies, Mass, open mornings, sports days, fetes etc. Governors receive copies of parents' newsletters which contain notice of events and are welcome to attend these. Governors will also be updated regularly by SLT, about forthcoming events in the school calendar. Governor attendance and support for events is essential.
2. If appropriate, informal visits may be arranged with the appropriate member of staff so that the aim of the visit is agreed in advance.
3. Information from informal visits does not need to be fed back on a visit form.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- At FGBs, the DTG will invite Governors to give brief verbal reports on formal and informal visits that have been recently undertaken. These will then provide evidence to inform future decision making and to plan future visits.
- The DTG will organise opportunities for Staff and governors to give opinions on the effectiveness and success of visits once a year and report findings to the governing body.