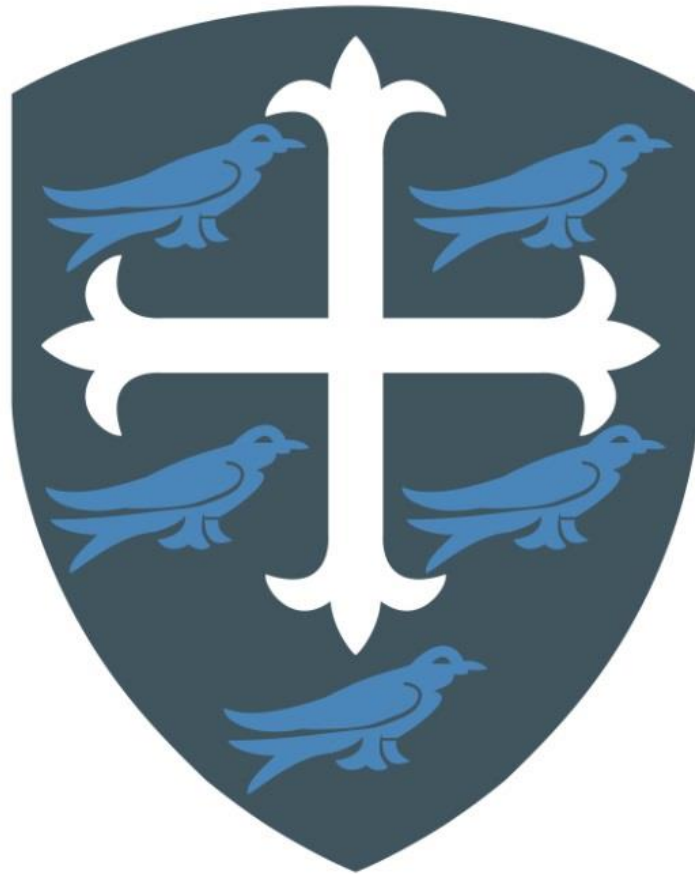


St Mary's Catholic Primary School



School Visits by Governors Policy

Legal Status:	Non-Statutory
Last Review:	October 2020
Review date:	November 2023
Next Review:	November 2026
Responsible Person:	Governing Body

Mission Statement

"The family of St Mary's strives to grow in God's love and care by learning together and valuing the uniqueness of each person."

The Governing Body are to carry out their functions with the aim of taking a largely strategic role in the running of the school. This includes setting up a strategic framework for the school, setting its aims and objectives, setting policies and targets for achieving the objectives, reviewing progress and reviewing the strategic framework in the light of progress. The Governing Body should act as a "critical friend" to the Head of School by providing advice and support.

The Head of School is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school; and for advising on and implementing the Governing Body's strategic framework. In particular, Head of Schools need to formulate aims and objectives, policies and targets for the Governing Body to consider adopting; and to report to the Governing Body on progress at least once every school year.

Governors, however, need to be able to visit from time to time to develop their understanding of the school. These visits enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school. Governors should arrange their visits with the Head of School who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school.

The Governing Body should plan visits to cover a wide range of school work and each visit should have a clear purpose. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Head of School.

Purpose of the Visit

Visits are undertaken to:

- Improve Governing Body knowledge of the school and the people that work in it
- Assist the Governing Body in monitoring the implementation of the school development plan
- Assist a Governor to fulfil a Link Governor role
- Assist the Governing Body in fulfilling its statutory duties
- Assist the Governing Body in making informed decisions

Visits are not undertaken to:

- Pursue any personal agendas
- Make any judgements about pupil's work, behaviour, any teacher's classroom practice or issues relating to the day-to-day running of the school – those are the responsibility of the Head of School
- Check on the progress of individual children

Planning the Visit

Visits should be undertaken only as part of a strategic programme formally organised by the Governing Body or one of its committees and with approval of the Head of School. The Chair of Governors should be informed of the details of the visit by the visiting Governor.

Link Governors should always request and read relevant documents prior to their visit to the school.

Key documentation for Link Governors

- School development plan
- Subject action plans
- Governor action plan
- Current Ofsted Report
- Calendar of school events
- Governors yearly timetable/schedule
- School attainment and progress targets
- Summary standards and progress data at pupil group level across year groups and Key Stage
- Subject policy and curriculum guidance
- School INSET overview

The Head of School should be kept informed of, and agree, the subsequent details of the planned visit.

If the visit is to involve any member of staff, then that member of staff must be fully involved in the planning through the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Governor(s) making the visit should make themselves fully acquainted with health and safety procedures, including fire safety, prior to making the visit.

The role of the Link Governor

The Link Governor must work to develop a positive working relationship with the subject/aspect coordinator by:

- maintaining a regular communication
- agreeing (in advance) a timetable of visits for the year – I suggest one a term and at least one of these during school hours. These could be timed to dovetail with governor meetings so feedback is timely
- agreeing dates when subject policies/action plans etc will be received/reviewed and discussed
- having a reasonable working knowledge of the curriculum, action plan, SDP/Ofsted action plan priorities, school targets for standards and progress and the standards and progress of pupils in the particular subject/aspect if applicable
- keeping up to date with policy, practice and change/legislation in the subject/aspect and acting as an advocate on behalf of the subject/aspect in terms of resourcing and development in governing body strategy discussions
- completing the required paperwork and providing feedback to the governing body as agreed
- to attend, where possible, relevant staff training where this is appropriate to visit, by agreement with teaching and other staff, lessons or other activities in order to gain an understanding of teaching and learning strategies and resources available

The role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader must work to develop a positive working relationship with the Link Governor by:

- carrying out their delegated subject/aspect leadership role in accordance with their job description
- maintaining regular communication
- agreeing (in advance) a timetable of visits for the year
- ensuring that the programme of visits links closely to the priorities in the SDP/subject action plan
- agreeing dates when subject policies/action plans etc will be sent/reviewed and discussed
- ensuring that the Link Governor is fully prepared and briefed prior to a visit (if necessary) particularly when this involves classroom visits/learning walks or scrutiny of work
- preparing summary standards and progress data and up to date quality of teaching overview in the subject area termly, prior to evaluation with the Link Governor

During the Visit

Governors will, at all times, report to reception upon arrival and follow the procedure for visitors in order to provide a good example for other visitors.

If visiting a classroom, the Governor must arrive at the time planned to avoid disrupting the learning process and follow the agreed purpose of the visit. Governors must be aware that some teachers may feel nervous or stressful about having a visitor in the classroom. At the end of the visit thank everyone concerned, including the children.

Governors should be aware of their behaviour and avoid any implication that they are inspecting, such as by using a clipboard.

Following the Visit

After visiting the school, the Governor(s) should:

- Complete the Record of Visit
- Email the Record of Visit to the staff member that you met with for them to add or amend information/discussions
- The staff member then email the Record of Visit, with their amendments, to the HT
- The HT then shares it with the Chair of Governors
- The Chair of Governors emails it to the Governing Body

Following completion of the agreed monitoring programme the Governor should report back to the Governing Body or committee by forwarding 'Record of School Visit by Governor' document (appendix 1), completed to the Chair and Head of School, for inclusion in the next agenda.

Record of School Visit

Name of Governor:	
Name of Staff member:	
Date of visit:	
Subject/Area:	

Purpose of visit
How does this visit relate to the priorities in the School Development Plan?
Documentation/guidance needed:
Findings, observations and comments:
<p>Related to SDP priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
Any key issues arising for the Governing body? (The Link Governor is responsible for bringing the key issues to the attention of the Governing Body)
<p>To be discussed with the Governing Body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

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