



The Federation of Haddenham Schools

Governor Visits Policy

Adopted: November 2025
Next review: November 2028

Governor Visits Policy

The purpose of this policy

The Governing Board of the Federation of Haddenham Schools has a statutory responsibility to promote high standards at Haddenham Community Infant and Junior Schools and to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. Visiting the schools is an essential part of governors' strategic role in understanding, supporting, and holding the school to account for its performance.

Visits enable governors to:

- See the school at work and observe attitudes, behaviour and achievement.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the school's culture, curriculum and priorities.
- Strengthen partnerships between governors and staff based on mutual respect.
- Evaluate progress against the School Development Plan (SDP) and statutory duties.
- Gather first-hand information to inform strategic decision-making.

Governors visit as representatives of the Governing Board, not as individuals. The purpose is to learn, not to inspect. Monitoring the quality of teaching and staff performance remains the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Governor visits at The Federation of Haddenham Schools (Infant and Junior)

This policy has been produced by the Head teachers of both schools with consultation of the Full Governing Board.

Principles and Aims

Governor visits are designed to:

- Strengthen the Governing Board's understanding of the school.
- Provide evidence to support monitoring of SDP priorities.
- Encourage professional dialogue between staff and governors.
- Support the school's commitment to continuous improvement.
- Celebrate good practice and identify future priorities.

Governor visits are not about:

- Making judgements on teaching or staff performance.
- Inspecting the school or checking on individual pupils (including governors' own children).
- Pursuing personal agendas or preconceived ideas.

Organisation of Visits

3.1 Visit Programme

- The annual programme of visits will be linked to SDP priorities or statutory duties.
- Each governor has an assigned area of responsibility within the curriculum or leadership framework, reviewed annually in November by the Full Governing Board (FGB).
- Governors are expected to visit at least once per year, and twice per year for SDP-linked priorities.
- New governors will be offered an introductory visit within their first term, supported by the Headteacher or an experienced governor for shadowing and handover.
- All visits are arranged in advance with the Headteacher and relevant staff member.

Duration and Format

A typical visit lasts up to one hour. It may include observing teaching and learning, talking to pupils about their learning, reviewing displays or work samples, and discussing subject leadership and progress with staff.

Staff Involvement

Staff will have been briefed as to the purpose of the Governor visit and how this fits within the School Development cycle and focus. Governors should expect to see aspects of teaching, either whole class or small group, within each classroom. They should expect to see work that is appropriately pitched for different groups of children to ensure there is progress within the lesson.

Visit programme

The programme of visits will be organised as follows.

All areas for visits will be focused and will be taken from the SDP as priorities. All governors should visit at least twice a year during the working day. All Governors with subject responsibilities are expected to make contact with the subject leads and to discuss the action plan for that year and any progress later in the academic year. Discussions regarding visits will occur with subject leads and the Head teacher as to planning when and how often.

All Governors are given an area of responsibility within the curriculum to ensure there is coverage and effective triangulation of monitoring and progress. Areas of the curriculum for Governor responsibility are reviewed on an annual basis in September at FGB. All new governors are to be offered an introductory visit within the first term after their appointment to the governing body as part of their introductory programme.

Governors who have a child in the school should talk through with the Head teacher about protocols for visiting their child's class and the professional conduct around confidentiality and remaining professional throughout the visit.

Governors are welcome to visit the school on many occasions during the school year taking into account the needs of all concerned and the appropriate timing of visits.

Procedure for Carrying Out Visits

Before the Visit

- Agree a mutually convenient date and time with the Headteacher and relevant staff.
- Clarify the purpose and focus of the visit, ensuring it links to the SDP.
- Plan which classes, subjects, or areas will be visited.
- Read relevant documents (e.g. SDP, action plans, previous reports).
- Confirm etiquette, expectations, and safeguarding requirements.

During the Visit

- Remember that this is a learning visit, not an inspection.
- Be punctual, sign in, wear a visitor's badge, and store your phone in the school's phone locker.

- Respect the teacher's professionalism; observe without interrupting.
- Only participate at the teacher's invitation.
- Follow safeguarding and confidentiality protocols at all times.
- Be courteous, positive, and discreet — avoid direct commentary on lessons or pupils.
- Take notes quietly or immediately after the visit.
- Represent the Governing Board, not personal opinions.
- Thank staff and pupils for their time and contribution.

After the Visit

- Discuss the visit with the relevant staff member and Headteacher.
- Reflect on how the objectives were met and any emerging issues or successes.
- Complete the Governor Monitoring Visit Report Form (Appendix A)
- Agree the report with the Headteacher and relevant staff before sharing it with the Clerk and Governing Board.
- Store the approved report in the Governor Visits Folder on GovernorHub.
- Provide a brief verbal summary at the next governing board or committee meeting.

Safeguarding Governor Visit Template

The Safeguarding Governor will complete a termly visit report covering:

- DSL coverage, training dates, and display compliance.
- Current safeguarding status and number of active cases/referrals.
- CPOMS or equivalent system updates and usage.
- Safeguarding and CP/SG training compliance for staff and governors.
- Allegations management and LADO referrals (if any).
- Attendance, persistent absence data, and actions.
- Visitor and sign-in procedures.
- Safeguarding records for new starters/leavers.
- Evacuation and lockdown drills.
- Use of restraint (if applicable) and reporting.
- Policy and website compliance checks (Safeguarding, Behaviour, Code of Conduct, SCR).
- Pupil and Staff Voice feedback
- Agreed follow-up actions and responsibilities.

Reporting

Governors will complete a Governor feedback report form (Appendix A) Reports are shared with the Headteacher, Chair, and Full Governing Board each term. Staff and governors to give opinions on the effectiveness and success of these visits.

Procedure for carrying out visits at the Federated Haddenham Schools (Infant and Junior)

Our governor visits will be organised as follows:

Before the visit

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agree a mutually convenient time to visit with the Headteacher/class teacher or head of department. Avoid stressful or busy periods in the School calendar</i> |
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- *Clarify the purpose of the visit and agree this with the Headteacher and relevant staff. Agree together how best to approach the identified focus to make effective use of everyone's time.*
- *Agree how you will be introduced to the children and young people and the extent to which you will be involved in any activity or lesson*
- *Agree a convenient time to discuss your lesson observation with the class or subject teacher. This will also be your opportunity to clarify any issues you are unclear about.*
- *Prepare for your visit by reading any relevant documents*
- *Ensure that you are aware of the core principles underlying the governor visits at your School and abide by them.*

During the visit

- **Remember this is a visit, not an inspection.** Governors are visiting to learn more about the School and to gather information to inform decision making by the governing body. It is not the governors' role to judge the quality of the teaching. Monitoring staff performance and the quality of teaching and learning is the job of the Headteacher.
- *Remember that you are an invited guest.*
- *Be aware of, and adhere to, the School's Child Protection policies and procedures.*
- *Be punctual, sign in, wear a visitor's badge and place phone in our phone locker for safeguarding reasons.*
- *Try hard not to disrupt the normal working of the School by monopolising the teacher's time.*
- *Smile and listen. Try to relax and enjoy yourself.*
- *Think carefully about what you say and do. Remember that a visit by a governor can be stressful for staff. Be courteous, tactful, positive and interested. Avoid criticism e.g. Never make a comment on the teacher's conduct of the lesson or on individual pupils.*
- *Try not to draw too much attention to yourself. Avoid overtly making notes as this can be disconcerting. Instead, write down your thoughts as soon afterwards as is practical.*
- *Remember that you are representing the governing board. Governors should be prepared to explain policies, but should avoid giving personal opinions which could be misinterpreted as the views of the governing board.*
- *Avoid making promises on behalf of the governing board.*
- *Only go into the staffroom if you are invited to do so.*
- *Observe previously agreed levels of confidentiality.*
- *Remember to thank the staff for supporting you in your role as governor*

After the visit

- *If you have seen something that worries you, you would normally discuss this first with the teacher.*
- *Discuss your visit with the Headteacher and agree a draft of any written report with the Headteacher, and with staff, as appropriate. Be prepared to take the comments of others on board before you circulate your report to governors and the clerk.*
- *Send a note to thank the relevant staff. Be open and honest; recognise and celebrate achievement.*
- *Reflect upon your visit. Your views will inform the review of the policy and procedures.*

Evaluating the visit

Following a visit, governors may reflect on the following questions:

- How did the visit go?
- Were you clear about your objectives?
- What, if anything, would you do differently next time?
- Are there further areas you would like to explore?
- How has the visit helped you, the School and/or the governing body? E.g. in collecting monitoring evidence, in greater understanding of a particular aspect.

Monitoring, evaluation and review of this policy

Governors' visits will be an agenda item at ***termly governing board/committee meetings***. This policy will be reviewed on a 3 year cycle by the Full Governing Board. The views of the staff will be sought. The governing board will consider if governor visits are contributing to the information that the governing board has about progress towards meeting priorities and targets identified in the School Development Plan.

This policy was approved by the Federated Governing Board of Haddenham Community Schools November 2025.

This policy will be reviewed on 25th November 2028.

Signed (Chair)

Date

Signed (Headteachers)

Date

Appendix A

Governor Visit Report – Template

Name of Governor	
Link Governor role	
Name of key staff member	
Date of Visit and class(es) to be attended (if applicable)	
Purpose and aims of Visit	
Links with the School Improvement Plan:	
Observations and comments by the governor (to be agreed with key staff member): <i>(e.g. What you saw; what you learned; what you would like clarified; how long the visit lasted)</i>	
Safeguarding observations <i>(e.g. what did you observe, if of concern who were they raised with and what actions were taken)</i>	
Any key issues arising for the GB (to be agreed with key staff member): <i>(e.g. How are the relevant policies implemented? Are there resource issues?)</i>	

Actions following GB meeting:

(Record any actions agreed by the GB with regards to this visit)