

St John's Highbury Vale CE Primary School



'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13

Governors' Visits to School Policy

**Ratified: Spring 2024
Review Date: Spring 2027**

At the heart of our school vision is a desire for an authentic and life-giving relationship with ourselves, one another, our world, and with God. We believe that it is through Christ who gives us the strength, all can achieve within a learning environment where every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image of God, and where teaching and learning is of consistently high standard.

STJHV Statement of Intent

St John's Highbury Vale in Islington is committed to providing a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child is empowered to reach their full potential. Grounded in our Christian ethos and guided by our values, we strive to create a vibrant and dynamic educational experience that prepares our pupils to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society.

1.0 **Introduction**

- 1.1 It is important that governors visit the school on a regular basis for a number of reasons:
- 1.2
- To gain a wider understanding of the way the school operates, and of the ethos and character of the school, which will enable them to make more informed decisions.
 - To be able to carry out their responsibility for monitoring the quality of education provided for the pupils more effectively.
 - To gain a better understanding of the work being done by pupils and staff, and of the curriculum.
 - To find out more about any areas they have particular responsibility for, as a link governor or member of a particular committee.
- 1.3 It should be remembered that governors are visiting the school in order to learn, not to inspect. Governors are not qualified or permitted to make judgements on the quality of teaching. Nonetheless, governors can learn a great deal through informal observation and through talking with staff members. It should be hoped that, through visits, governors and staff can develop an effective partnership based on mutual understanding. Such a partnership will benefit the whole school community.

2.0 **Aims of governors visits**

- 2.1 The general aims of governors' visits are as set out above. However, a visit will be more effective if it has a particular focus, e.g. for a Curriculum Link Governor to observe a lesson in their particular subject and to meet with the subject leader in order to monitor the relevant section of the School Development Plan. Prior to, or at the start of their visit, the governor visiting should discuss the particular aims of that visit with the member of staff they are visiting.

3.0 **Arrangements for linking**

- 3.1 At St. John's, link governors are appointed to cover a number of areas of responsibility.
- 3.2 Most governor visits are likely to be made by a link governor in order to liaise with the staff member responsible for the link governor's particular area of responsibility.

4.0 **Frequency of visits**

- 4.1 All link governors are encouraged to visit the appropriate staff member at

least twice per year. The date, time and duration of the visit should be agreed with the relevant staff member and with the Head Teacher in advance.

4.2 However, in addition to these “formal” visits, all governors are encouraged to visit the school on “special occasions”, for example:

- plays and concerts
- sports day
- services of worship on special occasions, e.g. Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter
- special assemblies such as the Year 6 Leavers’ service

4.3 The Head Teacher will inform governors at the start of each term of the events to which they are invited. On occasions such as these, governors will be attending as guests of the school and are there to observe only, unless they have been specifically asked to participate. They should be aware that on occasions such as these the staff will be very busy and will be unlikely to have time to interact with governors.

5.0 **Protocol for visits to school**

5.1 You will get more out of your visit if you plan it in advance. Be sure you understand what the purpose of your visit is and what you hope to achieve/learn from it and discuss this with the Head Teacher or relevant member of staff prior to your visit.

5.2 During your visit, remember that you are coming to learn and find out more about the school, not to inspect or make judgements.

5.3 It may be that you learn things during your visit which need to be followed up; for example, the purpose of your visit may have been to find out more about a particular subject, so that you could take the lead in reviewing a policy on that subject or monitoring a particular section of the School Development Plan. In this case, you may need to follow up your visit by a further meeting with the Head Teacher and / or appropriate staff members.

Governors should report, in writing, to the Governing Body on their visit at the next Governing Body meeting.

Governors should be aware that they may be given information about, for example, the progress of particular pupils during a visit. Any such information is confidential and should not be discussed outside the context of the Governing Body. When reporting to the Governing Body, any information on, for example, pupil progress should be anonymised.

6.0 **Governors’ Days**

6.1 As well as visits made by individual governors, a Governors’ Day is held from

each year, when governors are invited to come into the school, usually for a morning, for a visit with a particular focus. This will usually be a curriculum area and governors may be invited to visit a lesson to observe this area of the curriculum being taught and to attend a presentation given by the subject leader. Governors' Days might also include observing an assembly or meeting with the School Council. Sometimes, governor training will be included as part of a Governors' Day.

7.0 Safeguarding

- 7.1 All governors must report to the School Office at the start of any visit. They must collect their lanyards and sign in on the school's electronic system, ensuring to sign out the same way. During their visit, they should wear their governor lanyard. All governors must have a current DBS check.

Link Role:

Name:

Date of visit:

Purpose and focus of visit – where relevant refer to relevant SDP priority, policy etc.

Summary of activities

What have I learned as a result of my visit? (relate to the purpose / focus of the visit)

Aspects I would like clarified / any questions

Any issues for the board to consider

Any other comments

Signed
Governor

Member of Staff

Date
