



Non-Statutory Policy

Category

Governance

Governor Monitoring Visits Policy

Chair signed:	Ratified by Governing Body	11.11.21
Headteacher signed:	Review frequency	Every 2 years
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Pre-amble: School Vision, Ethos and Values

Dr Walker's is a mixed Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School in Fyfield, Ongar, Essex.

We support all pupils to succeed in reaching their God given potential at Dr Walker's – 'An Exceptional Place to Flourish', by developing

- **Belief** in self and the development of confidence, respect and trust for others and an appreciation of spirituality and an understanding of faith in God;
- **Engagement** in a love for learning by nurturing curiosity and independence; and
- **Excellence** in reaching personal goals by demonstrating resilience and positive behaviour.

Our **CHRISTIAN VALUES** are reflected in:

- Standing with **COURAGE** for what is right.
- Using **CREATIVITY** in problem solving and making life beautiful.
- Treating every person and everything with **RESPECT**.
- Having **COMPASSION** for others.
- Completing every task with **PERSEVERANCE**.
- Taking **RESPONSIBILITY** for ourselves.
- Living with **HOPE** for a better future.

At Dr Walker's we provide every pupil with the care and support they need to develop as individuals and become educated and successful British Citizens who understand the importance of the following British values:

- **Democracy**
- **The rule of law**
- **Individual liberty**
- **Mutual respect and**
- **Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.**

Introduction

- The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight, and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Governing Board at **Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School** therefore needs to know if accountability is going to be robust and our vision for the school is to be achieved.
- The Governing Board has **three core functions**:
 - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction.
 - Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
- **The focus of monitoring is strategic and not operational.**
- Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, the Governing Board can see whether the school is implementing its policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice.
- Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with stakeholders (pupils, staff, parents, etc.) to gather views and build up a good professional relationship with them. Visits should affirm well-being and value all stakeholders.
- Governors are **not inspectors**, and it is not our role to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning. Governors are also **not school managers**, and we will make

sure we do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Both are the role of the school leaders.

Visits should be undertaken as:

Part of the strategic Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve governor knowledge of the school, our staff needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses and contribute to the school self-evaluation process. ▪ Monitor and assess the impact of the priorities outlined in the School Development Plan (SDP). ▪ Help the Governing Board to fulfill our statutory duties. ▪ Acquire knowledge to enable the Governing Board to inform strategic decisions and challenge as appropriate.
Holding leaders to account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluating plans, budgets, standards of education and achievement
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual reports and meetings, publication of minutes, surveys of parental views

- The Governing Board links governors to subjects or school priorities in the SDP. This involves individual governors visiting the school and classrooms and taking the opportunity to discuss issues with subject leaders and/or the Headteacher and/or Management Team.
- Governors are also given specific roles and responsibilities e.g., Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety, Pupil Premium.
- Within the SDP, the monitoring role of governors is to be clearly outlined and this should be used to develop a monitoring program for the year.

Roles: Governing Body link governors

Christian Ethos / Collective Worship	Jill Smylie
Curriculum	
EYFS	Jill Smylie
GDPR	
Finance	Nicola Curtis
Link Training	Nicola Curtis
Pupil Premium	Marilyn Leon
Safeguarding	Karen Bush Jane Davenport
SEND	Marilyn Leon
Website	Jill Smylie
Whistleblowing	Nicola Curtis

The benefits to Governors and Staff

Governors	Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish and develop effective relationships with the staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get to know and build positive relationships with Governors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a greater understanding of pupils' needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

• To recognize and celebrate success	• To feel valued
• To monitor the implementation of the SDP	• To appreciate and value the role and responsibilities of all governors
• To increase first-hand knowledge of the school which will inform strategic decisions	•
• To understand the environment in which staff work and teachers teach	• To ensure governors understand the reality of the classroom and the school
• To see policies and schemes of work in practice	•
• To find out what resources are used, what resources are needed and prioritise them	• To highlight the need for further resources
• To show support and encouragement to staff and pupils	•
• To demonstrate that the Governing Board is contributing to the school's self-evaluation process	•
• To develop links with a subject area or development focus.	•
• To develop individual Governor's roles in terms of their specific responsibilities e.g. SEND, Safeguarding, etc.	• To share an understanding of the specific area.

How often should visits take place?

- This will essentially depend on the number of Governors available to take on the responsibility.
- The minimum number of monitoring visits is three per Governor over an academic year (**once a term**) and the visits should link to the SDP priorities.
- Details, actions, and responsibilities should be agreed at the relevant committee.
- All monitoring and visits to be pre-arranged and pre-agreed by the Headteacher.
- Timing of monitoring should be agreed with the Headteacher and relevant members of staff.

Focus of the visit

- The focus of the visit will come from the SDP, subject monitoring, mounting the implementation of a policy or statutory requirements such as health and safety, SEND or financial monitoring.

Types of monitoring

- There are several different aspects of monitoring, and the most appropriate type of monitoring should be chosen, depending on the information required.
- A visit can be either to see the school generally in operation, a specific classroom visit, a School Improvement Plan focus, a Learning Walk, or an office monitoring visit.
- All monitoring should start with a specific question and information collected to answer that question or generate questions to come back to the leadership team.

- The types of monitoring include:

General <i>(Often a first visit/new governor)</i>	WHAT IT IS NOT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking on the progress of your own or known children. • Monopolising staff time. • Arriving with inflexible or pre-conceived ideas. • Pursuing personal agendas or issues.
	WHAT IT SHOULD FOCUS ON:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory sessions, viewing the entrance and reception areas along with corridors and administrative areas. This may be accompanied by an experienced governor, a member of staff or a pupil ambassador. • To see the playground in operation. • To visit classrooms and look at displays and ‘Learning Walls’. • To talk with children.
<p>The school in operation</p>	<p>WHAT IT IS NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking on the progress of your own or known children. • Monopolising staff time. • Arriving with inflexible or pre-conceived ideas. • Pursuing personal agendas or issues. <p>WHAT IT SHOULD FOCUS ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition and maintenance of the premises. • Security on site and the monitoring of Health and Safety. • Break and lunchtimes. • The use and condition of resources e.g., furniture and subject equipment. • Office procedures e.g., budget monitoring. • Pupil behaviour around the school. • The effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
<p>Classroom visits</p>	<p>WHAT IT IS NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors’ visits to classrooms are not a form of inspection in terms of making judgments about the professional expertise of members of staff, especially about the quality of teaching. <p>WHAT IT SHOULD FOCUS ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of a particular curriculum area. • The impact of a School Improvement Plan focus. • Gain an understanding of the process of assessment and tracking pupil cohorts and their attainment. • Assessing a group of pupils working together on a task. • The impact on learning of educational visits. • The deployment of support staff. • To see a class or teacher led assembly (to consider SMSC). • Pupil Voice. • Behaviour for learning. • Book Scrutiny.
<p>Learning walks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Board oversees the strategic operation of the school, so it is important that board members have a clear understanding of how the school works and how children are learning. • To do this it is suggested that governors undertake Learning Walks. • These should be planned beforehand, be part of an annual schedule and be integral to the monitoring and evaluation calendar. • Confidentiality will be emphasized and always maintained e.g., during the planning, implementation and in any follow up discussions. <p>WHAT IT SHOULD FOCUS ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Governors’ knowledge and understanding of the school through seeing at first-hand how it operates. • Experience the impact of plans and policies. • Demonstrate to the school community that Governors are taking

	<p>their responsibilities seriously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and develop good working relationships. • Be able to contribute effectively to the school's self-evaluation. • Show support and encouragement and be able to celebrate successes and achievements. • See evidence of work matching the individual needs of pupils. • Be able to see that the resources and the learning environment are adapted to meet the needs as appropriate.
<p>Specific School Development Plan focus</p>	<p>WHAT IT SHOULD FOCUS ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific priority or strand within the SDP, these are identified within the SDP. • How children learn Maths and English? • How well a particular curriculum programme is working? (E.g. intent of curriculum; implementation of a new scheme and/or governmental statutory updates; and the impact thereof.). • Displays, resources and equipment used in a subject area. • How Health and Safety is carried out and how policies are adhered to. • Behaviour. • Pupil Premium and its impact. • Inclusion and disadvantaged pupils. • Use of support staff to support pupils' learning. • Lunchtimes and break times.
<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits with teachers/SLT/Subject leaders. • Book monitoring. • Visits with support staff - finance/H&S. • Visits with children, asking specific questions to children selected randomly from specific year groups. • Surveys - parent/staff/children. 	

General procedures for visits

	Always	Never
<p>Before (At least one week prior to visit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the action points in the School Improvement Plan. • Agree the purpose of the visit with Headteacher or a member of the Management Team. • Read any relevant policy. • Identify the key questions to be answered and the best way to gather the information to answer them. • Arrange details of the visit. • Try to visit at different times of day. • Headteacher/relevant member of staff draws up a schedule for visit- When? Where? With whom? Duration? Time for feedback? • Discuss with HT or Management Team what is to be visited in school or the context of the lesson to be visited and possible involvement. • Agree level of confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn up unannounced for a focused, formal visit. • Expect to go into a classroom without prior arrangement and a recommended minimum notice of one week. • Visit during a SATs week without the visit being authorised by the HT or member of SLT.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the teachers to discuss protocol in the classroom. 	
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared, organised and punctual. • Report to the school office and sign in. • Fulfill the agreed purpose of the visit. • Observe school/class guidelines. • Jot down discussion points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monopolise staff. • Interrupt the teaching or talk to the teacher while he/she is teaching. • Behave like an inspector! • Walk in with a clipboard and take copious notes.
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the member(s) of staff and pupils. • Discuss observations as soon as possible after the visit. • Feedback appropriately to the HT. • Discuss Health and Safety issues if relevant. • Complete the Visit Form and give a copy to the Headteacher and relevant member of staff. • Once approved, send copy to other governors through email and to the clerk of Governors. • Prepare your own portfolio to include records of your visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave without a word of thanks and giving some feedback. • Discuss observations with other members of staff, parents, or individual Governors (except the Chair) unless given permission.

Protocol in the Classroom

- A week before a classroom visit, check the agreed protocol with the Headteacher and/or teacher. For example:
 - Please make it clear where you would like me to sit.
 - Are you comfortable if I respond to a child that asks for help?
 - If I see a pupil behaving inappropriately, I will wait for the school staff to respond following the school's Behaviour Policy.
 - If the teacher has problems controlling the class, I will make my excuses and leave to allow the teacher to regain the situation without allowing the pupils to take advantage of an audience.

After The Visit

- Feedback should be provided after a visit. This can be a sensitive area, but it is essential that warm thanks are given and a comment on the focus received. Remember as a Governor you are making a visit on behalf of the Governing Board and not in a personal capacity.
- Staff should also realise that Governors are not able to address everyday matters that are normally sorted out by line management.
- Any expression of concern should be shared with the Headteacher as soon as possible. Comments should be limited to the focus of the visit unless health and safety is being compromised. This should always be reported immediately.
- Oral and written feedback should be given to:
 - The member(s) of staff involved
 - The Headteacher

- The appropriate Committee or Governing Board.
- Written feedback using the Governor's Visit Form should be completed as soon as possible or within 14 days and copies made available to the member of staff and the Headteacher.
- Once approved the reports will be distributed to Board members by email and discussed at the FGB meeting and placed on the Governors' Portal.
- The monitoring log should be filled in online, so that a record of the monitoring visits for the year is in a single place.

Monitoring And Evaluation of The Governing Board's Policy

- This policy will be reviewed annually at the Autumn FGB meeting. The review will consider:
 - Are we doing what we set out to do?
 - Are our visits achieving the potential benefits identified in the policy?
 - Have I learned more about the school?
 - Are we better informed and able to make sensible decisions?
 - Have we developed a further method of direct communication with staff?
 - Do staff feel affirmed and valued?
 - Have I helped the Governing Body fulfill its duties? i.e.
 - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction.
 - Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
 - Have there been any unexpected benefits?
 - How can we make policy and practice even better?

Appendix: Governor's Visits Monitoring & Evaluation Record

Date	
Time	
Length of Visit	
Link Governor (Name)	
Staff Member(s) involved	
Purpose of Visit / Objectives <i>(Prior to visit, select a maximum of two areas as a focus of time.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision and direction focussing on <i>improving the quality of learning and teaching.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision and direction focussing on <i>raising attainment.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective <i>use of data</i> to manage an overview of performance and target support.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of <i>performance management</i> in increasing effectiveness and driving achievement and standards.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our engagement with parents and or local community.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target setting impacting on planned developments and/or interventions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of collaborations with other schools or agencies.
Focus of monitoring linked to SDP and/or key priorities/questions	Leadership & Management
	Quality of Education
	Personal Development
	Behaviour and Attitudes
	Quality of EYFS Education
	Ethos / Church School Effectiveness
Nature of Monitoring How was evidence gathered?	Attended assembly
	Attended open Governors' Day
	Attended specific event / initiative
	Classroom visit
	Meeting: Area / Subject co-ordinator and/or Lead
	Meeting: Bursar
	Meeting: Headteacher
	Meeting: School Effectiveness Partner
	Scrutiny: Book look
	Scrutiny: Data
	Scrutiny: Display
	Scrutiny: Log books
	Scrutiny: Policies
	Scrutiny: Resources
	Scrutiny: Single Central Record (SCR)
	Talking to finance staff (Bursar / Finance consultant)
	Talking to parents/carers
	Talking to pupils
	Talking to staff
	Talking to student council and/or class representatives
Other (Specify):	

<p>General narrative summary of visit / Outcome of Visit</p>	
<p>What is working well?</p>	
<p>Areas for development <i>(Even better if...)</i></p>	
<p>Questions, observations and/or issues identified to bring back to FGB</p>	
<p>Issues for specific class teachers <i>(This information will only be shared with HT / DHT / TLC and specific member of staff)</i></p>	
<p>Follow-up Action(s) / Suggested focus for future visits</p>	

SAFEGUARDING

We take safeguarding very seriously in our school. Everyone in school has a role to play in keeping children safe.

(Were any strategies or procedures seen?)

Link Governor			Date	
Headteacher			Date	

Appendix: Monitoring Log (to be put in the Governors' portal)

Monitoring Log		2021-2022		
Date	Focus of monitoring linked to SDP and/or key priorities/questions	Nature of Monitoring	Further action(s) required?	Link Governor
	Leadership & Management			
	Quality of Education			
	Personal Development			
	Behaviour and Attitudes			
	Quality of EYFS Education			
	Ethos / Church School Effectiveness			
	Leadership & Management			
	Quality of Education			
	Personal Development			
	Behaviour and Attitudes			
	Quality of EYFS Education			
	Ethos / Church School Effectiveness			
	Leadership & Management			
	Quality of Education			
	Personal Development			
	Behaviour and Attitudes			
	Quality of EYFS Education			
	Ethos / Church School Effectiveness			
	Leadership & Management			
	Quality of Education			
	Personal Development			
	Behaviour and Attitudes			
	Quality of EYFS Education			
	Ethos / Church School Effectiveness			