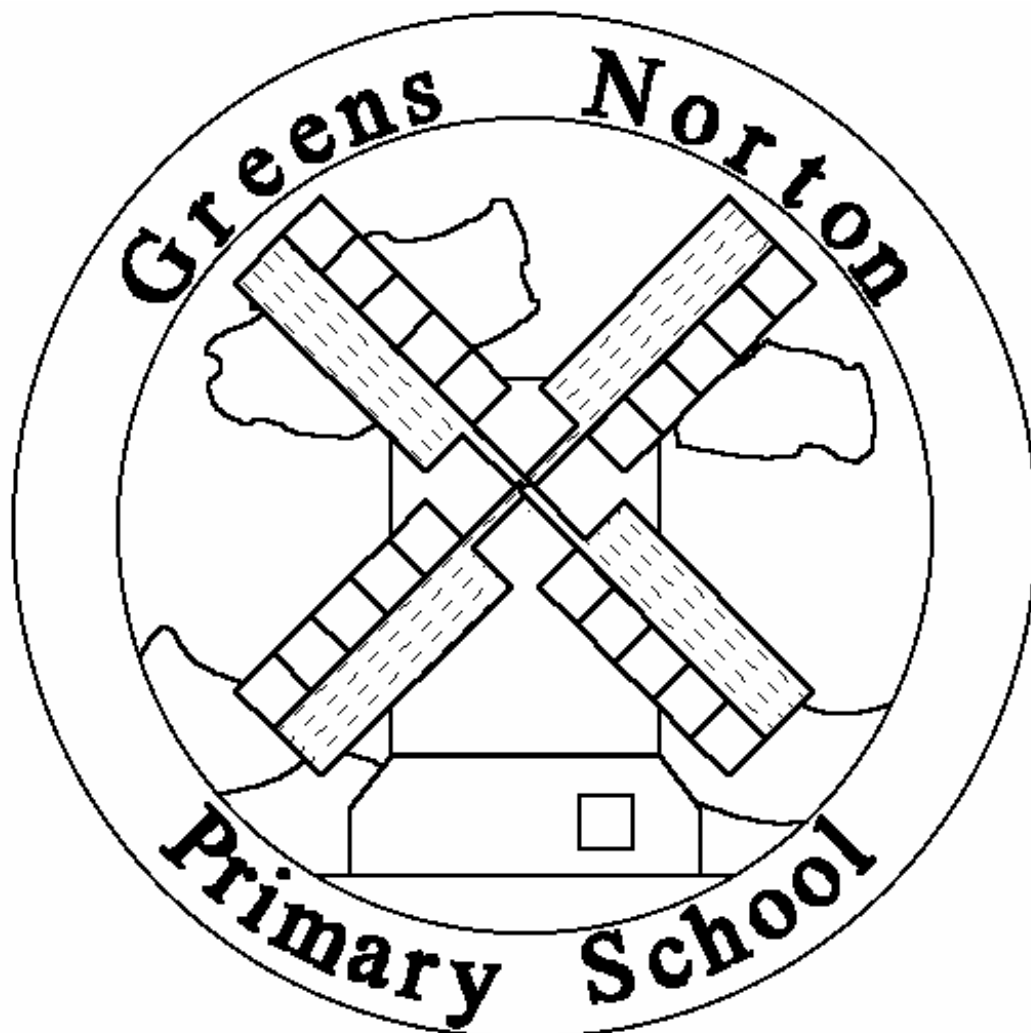


Greens Norton C of E Primary School



Governor's Monitoring Visits Policy

'In our school everyone can join in with everything we offer.'

Approved by

David Ward, Chair of Governors

Jan Pickering, Head Teacher

Greens Norton Church of England Primary School

Governors' Monitoring Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to the monitoring visits made by governors, and sets out the specific principles, responsibilities and actions that governors have agreed in order to fulfil the requirements of informing the governing body of the work of the school.

This policy does not apply to visits made for other purposes. Whilst providing governors with valuable experience of the school during working days or through discussions with staff at any time, general visits do not fulfil the specific role of monitoring. Governors are welcome to comment on their experiences from any visit provided they are consistent with the principles set out in this policy, and should therefore consider reviewing this policy before reporting on outcomes of visits at a governors' meeting.

This policy applies to monitoring activities both in school and outside, and can cover one or more governors working with one or more members of staff.

Policy

The aims of governors' monitoring visits are:

- To reinforce good relationships between governors and teachers.
- To help fulfil the statutory obligations of the governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school and its curriculum.
- For governors with specific links to visit with regard to their link area.
- To allow governors to view performance data in the context of an understanding of what happens in the classroom.
- To recognise and celebrate success.
- To get to know the children of the school.
- To see policies and schemes of work in action.
- To achieve an understanding of what resources are needed.

The aims of the monitoring visits are not about:

- Making judgements about the quality of teaching.
- Checking on progress of own children.
- Pursuing personal agendas.
- Monopolising teachers' time.

- Arriving with inflexible, preconceived ideas on outcomes.

Governors monitoring visits must have a purpose, and an outcome in written record form to be shared with those involved and once agreed in that forum, to be shared with all governors on a confidential basis. Given the governing body's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2004, consideration should be given to whether the written outcome can be released unedited to appropriate third parties, and work under the assumption that the report will be disclosed on request. This assumption applies unless the full governing body acts to make the report confidential and agrees a form for release. In such circumstances, the balance between the rights to privacy of individuals is considered against a right of access to information.

The key objective of a monitoring visit is to share the knowledge gained from the visit with all governors.

The expectation is that each governor will make at least one monitoring visit to the school during the school day at some point through the school year. Visits need not consume disproportionate amounts of time, all governors and staff are aware of the circumstances affecting each others' availability, and no one will be expected to commit more than a single visit each year, though more visits would be welcomed.

An equality of time served in monitoring is not a goal of this governing body, however where a commitment is made by a governor to visit and report their findings, all other governors share a responsibility to review the report and when appropriate discuss the matter in an appropriate forum.

Roles

The governing body believes that the corporate responsibility it holds should be discharged fairly amongst all governors. Governors with specific monitoring roles, or linked curriculum areas, are agreed by the governing body each Autumn Term, there is no monitoring co-ordinator, however the chair of the Teaching and Learning Sub Committee collates a list of assigned governors and is aware of key targets for curriculum matters, and associated diary dates.

The Monitoring Governor should obtain dates of monitoring already scheduled within the school. The Monitoring Governor liaises with the subject coordinator and the coordinator then informs the Head teacher that the Governor has been invited. .

The Clerk to the Governing Body should receive agreed reports to ensure distribution. The Chair of Governors should be advised if reports will require time for discussion as agenda items need to be agreed approximately 10 days before the next meeting of the full committee.

Format of visits

The format of monitoring visits varies according to purpose. Examples are listed for guidance.

1. Consultancy. This could be where a governor meets with a subject co-ordinator to ask questions and note answers. This provides an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of issues covered. For this type of visit, no planned outcome or follow-up action need be recorded or shared, though it would probably be best to identify what the key learning point from the visit was for the benefit of others. Such a record may enable a subsequent monitoring visit to be more focussed.
2. To audit resources. This would happen in a particular curriculum area in order to investigate the use and adequacy of the resources for that area, (books, equipment, practical aids, visual aids, etc.) It may include a review of deployment of resources other than those used in the classroom, for example teacher's training aids, a training programme schedule, etc.
3. Subject specific visits. These are particularly relevant to the named Literacy, Numeracy, SEN governors.
4. Year Group visits. It would be particularly useful for a visit to be made occasionally to both Year 2 and Year 6 in order to focus on issues to do with progress of pupils towards the key stage SATS. Other class visits could also greatly enhance the governors' understanding of the curriculum in operation, especially perhaps if a class was followed up through the school by the same 'governor friend.'
5. Specific Purpose visits. A visit could be made for a particular purpose when discussion at a governors meeting shows that there is a need for a follow up. This could be particularly linked to items on the RAP.

Process

What a governor should do before conducting a monitoring visit:

1. Acquaint themselves with the environment they can expect to be in during the visit, where appropriate research previous visit reports to establish a history of similar monitoring outcomes.
2. Agree with the group (or individual) that will be monitored what the purpose of the visit will be and agree a convenient time and duration.
3. For class visits, ask the teacher to explain the context at the outset, i.e. what are the learning objectives, any specific challenges or outcomes anticipated, and how the teacher would like you to engage with the children. (Appendix 1 Standard Monitoring Form)
4. For curriculum visits to see teaching in practice, obtain a copy of the relevant policy document.
5. For any other visit, ensure preparatory papers e.g. RAP are reviewed before attending, it may prove difficult to obtain copies on the day.

What a governor should do during a monitoring visit:

1. Avoid sitting on the periphery of activities in a manner similar to inspectors.
2. Join in activities if invited to do so by the responsible person.
3. Be friendly to children and take an interest in their work.
4. Make positive comments if appropriate to children who are engaged in their work.
5. Refrain from making any negative comments to children.

What a governor should do after a monitoring visit:

1. Thank the staff for allowing you to conduct the visit. If a class visit, make sure to comment on enjoyable aspects of the lesson.
2. With the staff that have been involved, review the purpose of the visit (set previously) to enable agreement on how the visit should be recorded. If matters arise outside the originally agreed purpose, note them as issues for a future monitoring exercise or governor follow up.
3. Complete a monitoring report pro-forma and issue a copy to each individual involved before circulation to governors, enabling comments to be collected by an agreed cut-off date. Consider confidentiality issues. Electronic copy is preferred.
4. Send agreed monitoring form (by email if possible) to the clerk for distribution before the next full governing body meeting.

Review

This policy should be reviewed at least once every four years, or as required by direction from LA, Diocese or statutory authority.