

# The Blue Tangerine Federation

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS

## POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES



# Governor Federation Visits Policy

**Date Implemented:** August 2022

**Date Last Reviewed:** August 2023

**Date Governing Body Approved:** September 2032

**Staff Responsibility:** Manda Sides

**Date for Next Review:** September 2025

**Changes since last version:**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Details of change</b>
Front page	Review changed from yearly to every two years

## **1. Background Information**

The Blue Tangerine Federation highly values its governors as they are essential members of our community. They demonstrate huge commitment and dedication and their expertise, drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds, impacts positively on the schools improvement.

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the schools within the federation. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Governors' role in the strategic management of the federation by helping to hold the schools to account and evaluate their progress.

All the schools within the Blue Tangerine Federation welcome the governing body's active involvement in its life. Governors are encouraged to visit during the school day to:

- Advise the whole governing body on its fulfilment of its statutory role;
- Meet with the Executive Head and Heads of School, senior staff, subject leaders, HIP or other members of the Local Authority;
- Improve governor knowledge of the ethos of the school and awareness of the work on the curriculum;
- Observe school policies in action;
- Carry out specific responsibilities on behalf of the governing body for example, health and safety checks;
- Develop governor links with staff, pupils, parents/carers;
- Attend school functions, for example assemblies, social and fundraising events and school trips;
- Assist the leadership team with staff selection, job descriptions, personal specification and interviews where appropriate;
- Highlight the needs for particular resources.

Each governor is allocated a link role and are encouraged to visit the school on a termly basis. When organising and conducting a visit, governors will be courteous and considerate at all times, respecting the professional roles of the staff.

## **2. Aims of the Policy**

The policy aims to ensure that:

- Governors are fully conversant with their duties in relation to School Visits;
- Teachers fully understand the purpose of Governor Visits;
- All involved understand how these visits fit into the statutory and strategic purpose of the Governing Body;
- All involved fully understand what a Governor will and will not do;
- All involved know what will happen following a Governor visit and how information will be used;
- All involved will understand how the success of this policy will be measured.

## **3. Guidance and scope**

This policy takes account of best practice and guidance from the [Governance Handbook](#) (section 3).

### **3.1 Governors are observers**

Boards must know their schools in order to maintain robust accountability. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors will:

- ❖ Observe whether the school is properly implementing school policies, and actions from the school improvement plan
- ❖ Observe how those procedures are working in practice
- ❖ Have the opportunity to gather the views of pupils and staff

### **3.2 Governors are not inspectors**

Governors:

- ❖ Will not assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- ❖ Will not manage the school or interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school

For those governors who wish to spend time in a classroom, they will make it clear about their purpose in doing so.

## **4. Visits programme**

Governors will carry out regular school visits in order to meet the board's statutory obligation to monitor the school's effectiveness. It is anticipated that the majority of the visits will be planned and agreed in advance, with clearly stated aims for each one, in line with the School Development Plans or to see a policy in action.

There are 2 types of visits:

- **Formal monitoring visits**, where governors discuss the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member
- **Learning walks**, where governors will go around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area and are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils

### **4.1 Governors will carry out school visits according to the following schedule:**

#### **Governors for health and safety**

The governor will attend:

- Yearly and conduct full health and safety audit report
- A 6 monthly monitoring visits with corresponding staff leads
- Ad hoc meetings as required or requested on issues specific to their areas of responsibility

#### **Governor for safeguarding**

The governor will attend:

- Termly monitoring meetings
- Ad hoc meetings as required or requested on issues specific to their areas of responsibility

#### **Curriculum governors**

These governors will attend:

- Termly monitoring/learning walk visits with the Head of School and Deputy Head
- Ad hoc meetings as required or requested on issues specific to their areas of responsibility

#### **All governors**

All governors will:

- Carry out at least 1 learning walk each term
- Attend at least 1 educational visit in the year

## **5. Before a visit**

Governors will:

- Notify the executive head/head of school before scheduling a visit, even if the executive head/head of school will not be involved in the visit. They should be made aware just as a matter of courtesy;
- Schedule an appointment with relevant members of staff in order to avoid friction and ensure visits are scheduled for times that are mutually convenient. Generally, governor visits are more productive when conducted during a school day;
- Be sensitive to the numerous demands staff have on their time;
- Clarify the purpose of the visit and expectations in advance with the chair, the executive head, head of school and/or relevant member of staff ahead of the visit;
- Send questions in advance to the staff member so everyone can feel properly prepared;
- Be familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

## **6. During a visit**

Governors should know how to conduct themselves appropriately during visits in order to minimise disruption for staff and pupils and to receive the maximum benefit from the time spent.

**Governors will:**

- Be on time and meet with the executive head/head of school ahead of the visit and clarify the timetable with the executive head/ head of school/ member of the SLT/subject coordinator;
- Always wear their governor ID badge;
- Use the agreed recording method for the visit. Photographs and videos are to be avoided unless specifically agreed with the head of school for a specific purpose;
- Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher (if the visit entails a classroom observation);
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering;
- Ensure all parties are clear about why a governor wishes to spend time in the classroom, if they wish to do so;
- Liaise with teachers before speaking to pupils and seek advice and support on which pupils to engage with;
- Pass on any concerns the staff raise with the relevant people;
- Be friendly but professional and dress appropriately, bearing in mind the standards of dress set for teachers and pupils.

**Governors will not:**

- Pass comment on classroom practice or any specific incidents that happen, judge teaching methods, assess the quality of teaching, or comment on the extent of learning;
- Interfere with the day-to-day running of the school;
- Behave in a manner than would make staff feel that they are there to inspect, e.g. sit at the back of the classroom with a clipboard;
- Raise concerns in the moment. Governors should note down any concerns they may have and raise them with the chair of governors or the executive head/ head of school after the visit.

## **7. After a visit**

Governors will complete a written report as soon as reasonably practicable (Appendix 1). In completing the report, governors will ensure to:

- ❖ Use neutral language at all times
- ❖ Remain observational, and describe only what they see
- ❖ Focus closely on the agreed reasons for the visit, and its strategic role

Once completed, governors should upload the report to Governorhub into the relevant folder for visits. Advice and support can be sought from the Chair with regards to the completion of the forms.

## **8. Review**

The policy should be reviewed by the Governing Body each academic year. The success of this policy will be measured by the following: The extent to which:

- Governors become involved in visits to school;
- Governors make more informed decisions;
- Staff feel comfortable with Governors' involvement in their school;
- Governors feel more involved in school;
- Governors can demonstrate an enhanced understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, needs and priorities.

Whole school agreement to this policy will ensure that our school community continues to value the efforts and consideration of our governors and also benefit from their valued insight and contribution



## Blue Tangerine Federation

### Governor Visit Form

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>School Visited:</b>
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#### **School Development Plan (SDP) Priorities**

Alongside your Link Governor Role areas of focus, please select a priority from the SDP or a Visit Question. During your visit, investigate this priority / question with the school team and through observation; please include your findings and any recommendations.

<b>SDP Priorities - The Collett School</b>	<b>Select</b>
Personal Development – how is the impact of physical development linked and evidenced with wellbeing throughout teaching and learning?	
Quality of Education: How does the school's curriculum embed improved knowledge, skills and understanding of the individuals' journey into adulthood?	
Behaviours and Attitudes: How does the school's work on diversity impact on pupil's engagement in the curriculum?	

<b>SDP Priorities - St Luke's School</b>	<b>Select</b>
Behaviours and Attitudes: How consistent is the schools' work around <i>improving behaviours for learning</i> applied	
Quality of Education: How well matched is learning with Curriculum mapping?	

<b>Visit Questions</b>	<b>Select</b>
Is the curriculum effective for all learners – how would I know?	
How do leaders know the curriculum mapping supports confidence of the teachers to teach the right things/experiences?	
Who would be able to tell me what is taught in year 5 Communication area of learning?	
Ofsted said that 'challenge' needs improving in some teaching at St Luke's – how is this embedded in the current curriculum?	
What is the plan for improving EHCP relatedness to learning in the classroom?	
Where are examples of work related learning in this classroom?	
How do you know what you are measuring is meaningful and appropriate and will not change in a year or two?	
How effective are new teachers and those covering more experienced teachers?	
What have been the issues with benchmarking progress in the past and how have they been addressed?	
What benchmarking has taken place with learning in other settings?	
How well does benchmarking and moderation impact on planning and progress?	
What impact has the MHEP on pupils' mental health? How is the school supplementing / building on this?	
How is staff wellbeing a genuine focus of the school?	
How well does the school use the INSET days – how do you know?	
Where are the greatest safeguarding needs and are these consistent?	
What should I not expect to see in the school?	
Tell me about the teaching of reading in this class. What is expected progress in this group?	
What are you measuring with pupils reading?	
What do you do with parents non-engagement in reading?	
What is homework in this school?	
Why are there different class sizes?	
How is sex education taught in the upper school?	
What impact has the cost of living had on the school?	
How is the financial situation impacting on the quality of provision?	
How well do you engage parents in the school?	
How do medical needs impinge on the teaching of children in the school?	
What do you understand by the term 'safeguarding'?	

How effective is communication in the school?	
What is the school doing to build on its prior work with alumni pupils?	

**Purpose of the Visit** (in addition to the selected SDP priority)**Summary of Visit:**

Include the name of any classes visits, numbers of children in class and staff spoken to.

**Notes on staff wellbeing:**

**Did you get the impression safeguarding was a priority? Give examples.**

**Any safeguarding concerns must be raised with Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.** Please see the Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Children Quick Reference for new staff or volunteers.

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**Proposed actions / issues to be discussed at Full Governor Meeting:**

**Any other comments:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**