

St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School
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Governor Visits Policy

July 2025



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& NOTTINGHAM
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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We choose courage over comfort because we know that 'the Lord our God is with us' (Joshua 1:9).

Courage

We are called to create an environment where both children and staff aspire to be, and give, their best. Everyone is emboldened to take risks, overcome challenges and be courageous in their efforts to achieve their potential. Leaders make bold curriculum choices that enable children to:

- gain knowledge, skills and experiences to navigate life in an evolving world; and
- develop characteristics such as self-belief, ambition, and resilience to overcome life's challenges.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you." (Joshua 1:9)

Love

Jesus embodies the love and compassion of God for each person, and Christians are called to follow him in this. In our family, love impels us to:

- put others' needs above our own;
- act with humility and without entitlement;
- empower all our community to flourish and succeed;
- provide a haven of compassion and safety, where children and adults know that they are cherished; and
- support those experiencing suffering and sadness – in our community and beyond.

"Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Respect

We seek to model to children an ethos of living well together. The flourishing of pupils goes hand in hand with the flourishing of the wider school community: staff, families, governors and friends of the school. Just as Jesus respected people by taking the time to care for them, we endeavor to:

- celebrate the Christian faith;
- foster deep respect for other cultures, faiths and traditions;
- provide an inclusive environment where special provision is afforded to those with disabilities or special educational needs; and
- challenge inequality.

"Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them." (Matthew 7:12)

Forgiveness

Faults, flaws, and mistakes are an unavoidable part of human life. Though Jesus preached the importance of repentance, even in moments of great personal torture, he prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors. Therefore, in our family, we seek to:

- hold ourselves and others accountable for our/their actions;
- have a robust approach to dealing with situations when things go wrong;
- repent when we fall short of our own and others' expectations; and
- forgive others for their indiscretions.

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him." (Luke 17:3)

Honesty

An honest person makes a habit of making accurate, trustworthy statements about life, self, others, and God; they represent themselves just as they are and tell others the truth about themselves. That said, the Bible tells us that honesty should always be accompanied by gentleness (Colossians 4:6). With this in mind, we strive to build kind and trusting relationships by:

- speaking and acting with integrity;
- ensuring that children have a strong voice in every aspect of school life, and acting on this; and
- working openly and compassionately with others, even when messages might be difficult to give or receive.

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

Local Governing Body Member Visits

Useful Forms

1. Academy Visits – a check list
2. Guidelines for LGB Members on monitoring visits
3. LGB Member Visit - report proforma
4. LGB Members Monitoring Visit proforma – Academy Improvement Plan
5. Ground rules for conducting classroom visits



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Academy Visits – a check list

What is the purpose of the visit?

- What is the focus of my visit?
- Is the reason specific or general?
- What are my/other people's expectations?
- How will my visit benefit my work as a governor, the teacher and the children?

How shall I carry it out?

- Which age age-group(s) or subject do I need to focus on?
- What are the questions that can be answered by observation?
- What questions should I ask?
- Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

- To what extent did I meet the purpose of my visit?
- Which of my questions did I answer?
- To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?
- What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

- Have I recorded my experiences?
- Did I 'report back' to the relevant staff?
- Have I prepared a short report for the next LGB meeting?
- How can I build on this for the next visit?



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Guidelines for Local Governing Body Member Monitoring Visits

Before making a visit

The LGB members will:-

- ensure they are familiar with safeguarding/signing in procedures
- contact the relevant senior leader and agree a date, time and focus for the visit
- clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit
- plan which classes will be visited
- draw up a timetable for the visit with the curriculum/subject leader

A senior leader will:-

- ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

On the day of the visit

The LGB member will remember to:

- arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the senior leader or curriculum leader
- act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher
- respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering
- be calm and enjoy the visit

After the visit

The LGB member will:

- remember to thank the teachers and children
- meet with a senior leader to give a verbal report, and to raise any questions that arose
- complete the LGB member visit proforma, reporting on the focus.
- LGB members must report without giving opinions and where possible individuals should not be able to be identified.

It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time, and judgements should not be made arbitrarily.

The visit is not about:

- inspection
- making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- checking on your own children
- pursuing a personal agenda
- arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas

LGB members are an important part of the academy team and are welcomed into the academy by staff. It is important that LGB members remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Headteacher and the staff, and acknowledge that they represent the full LGB. If agreed principles and procedures are followed then LGB member visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved, and will result in effective monitoring by the LGB, which will contribute to academy improvement.



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LGB Visit Report

Name
Date of Visit
Focus of visit
Classes / staff visited
Summary of activities e.g. observing classroom, talking to staff and students, looking at resources, event
What I have learned as a result of my visit?
Positive comments about the focus
Aspects I would like clarified / questions I have
Ideas for future visits
Any other comments

Signed _____
(LGB member)

Signed _____
(Senior Leader)



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LGB Visit Report

Monitoring the Academy Improvement Plan

Focus Area on Academy Improvement Plan	
Source of Evidence of Progress	Comment on Impact

Evaluation and Impact (So What?)

Signed _____ Signed _____
(LGB member) (Senior Leader)

Date: _____

Date: _____



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Ground Rules for Conducting Classroom Visits

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit and agree purpose of visit Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed Agree role within the lesson	Turn up unannounced
During	Keep to the role agreed Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over Please remember confidentiality Stick to the times and purpose agreed Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children	Assume a different role Walk in with a clipboard Interrupt the teacher Distract the students from their task
After	Thank the teacher and the students Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience Feedback to the governing body	Leave without acknowledgement Break rules of confidentiality

What to Avoid

It is important for all parties to note that LGB members' visits are not a form of inspection and do not involve LGB members making a judgement about teaching in any official capacity. That remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and other education professionals with QTS.

It might be wise for LGB members to avoid visiting classrooms where their own children are present. It can cause discomfort for everyone! They should also be aware of 'pursuing personal agendas' and make sure they fulfil the code of conduct as it is outlined here.

Please remember that members of staff are very busy people whose first priority must be the children. There may be times when arrangements have to be changed or alterations made. Please be sensitive to the circumstances and flexible in your expectations. No two days are ever the same.

Keep an open mind about what you see. Education and classrooms have changed a great deal since you were at school and practice is very different. Don't expect to see the formal type of lesson you might remember from your own childhood. By all means ask questions (preferably at the end of the lesson) but be sensitive to the extra demands of differentiation and inclusion that teachers now face.

Format of the Visit

After planning your visit with the curriculum leader or class teacher you might have agreed to:

- take part in a lesson acting as classroom helper during your visit
- do a more formal observation-taking no immediate role other than talking to the children about what they are doing
- work with a small group
- observe - focussing on an agreed area/issue that the class teacher would like some feedback on e.g. the involvement of a particular group of students

Please remember that observations do not require judgement on the teacher. It might also be useful to clarify some **'what ifs'** beforehand. For example:

- What if I see children misbehaving when the teacher doesn't?
- What if a student asks me how to do something?
- What if I have a suggestion to make?

Discussing the Visit

It is important that a time is agreed between yourself and the class teacher to discuss the lesson you have taken part in or observed. During this time you might refer to notes you have made. The structure might include;

- asking the teacher for any further clarification of the lesson or for their views on how it went.
- giving your own impressions on what you saw
- providing any positive comment.
- raising any issues that appeared to develop.
- any further questions you might have
- a summary of the feedback you will be giving to the governing body.

At the end of the feedback both you and the teacher should be clear about what you will be sharing with the LGB - there should be no surprises!

The **LGB members' visits report** pro-forma should be completed as soon as possible after the visit. It should reflect the discussion you have had with the teacher. The report should be copied to:

- the Headteacher
- the curriculum leader
- the teacher concerned
- the link governor for training