



Children's Hospital School

# Governor Policy

Date of Approval: 18.06.2025

Approved by: Full Governors

Date of next review: Summer 2028

Chair of Committee: Jill Townsend

Signed:

J.E. Townsend

## **1. GOVERNOR VISITS**

### **AIMS**

The purpose of school visits for Governors is to ensure that Governors are

- knowledgeable about the school,
- are able to make informed judgements about the school and
- able to monitor the developments within the school.

To fulfil their role, governors need to be able to understand the unique arrangements of the Children's Hospital School. Governors will be better able to evaluate the information they are presented about the school if they are aware of how each of the bases works. Visits to Children's Hospital School provide an opportunity to experience the learning environment that the school provides for pupils.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Governor visits are not inspections but part of a dialogue between the school, the staff and governors. Visiting the school provides a valuable insight into how the school operates as well as provides an opportunity to put other information in context. A well-planned programme of visits forms an important element of the governing board's strategic role.

The Governors should feel able to learn about the school, ask challenging questions and take an objective view. School staff should receive constructive feedback and feel their efforts are valued.

As a result of this process Governors should

- know what the school is like
- understand how the school works
- feel able to assess the school's effectiveness

### **PLANNING VISITS**

A programme of visits is planned for each term, linked to the School Improvement Plan, school priorities and the roles of Link Governors. Over an academic year a range of monitoring areas will be covered.

In addition, the school arranges 'Getting to Know' visits to allow Governors to visit in a less formal capacity and understand each base at the school.

#### **Frequency, duration and nature of visits**

- All Governors should carry out at least one visit each year, and the programme of visits plans for this. There will usually be two or three Governor visits per term.
- Monitoring visits can take place virtually (for example, through a Teams meeting) or in person.
- The length of visits will vary depending on the monitoring activities arranged, but will be at least one hour in length.
- The time of the visit should be agreed between the Governor(s), Clerk and relevant staff at least a week ahead.

- The visit should be published in the school diary and staff should be informed in meetings a week ahead.
- The programme for the visit should be agreed beforehand. It should have a clear focus, either related to the school improvement plan or by a link governor to their department.
- The visit should involve the member of staff responsible for the objective or target, meeting with the member of the governing board to provide background information and context, showing the initiative in action, and if possible providing the opportunity for them to speak to children or staff members who are affected by it.
- Governors visiting the school should adhere to the protocols for governor visits. Further details can be found in the 'Governor Visit Handbook - Appendix B.

## **Reporting**

After each visit to the school, Governors should complete a written report using the 'Visit Report Form' (Appendix A), providing a write up of the visit. This should be emailed to the clerk in the first instance.

Visit reports are shared at the following Full Governors Meeting and should include:

- Focus of the visit / Link to SIP
- General information and observations
- Examples of good practice / areas of strength
- Potential areas for development
- Planned follow up of any areas of development - who & when

## **2. GOVERNOR ALLOWANCES**

This policy statement has been developed in accordance with the Education (Governors' Allowances) Regulations 2003. These regulations give Governing Bodies the discretion to pay allowances from the school's annual budget allocation to governors for certain allowances which they incur in carrying out their duties. The Children's Hospital School Governing Body believes that paying governors' allowances, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as governors for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of school funds. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

**All governors of The Children's Hospital School will be entitled to claim the actual costs, which they incur as follows:**

Governors will be able to claim allowances providing the allowances are incurred in carrying out their duties, as a Governor or representative of the School, and are agreed by the Finance and Personnel Committee that they are justified before any reimbursable costs are incurred.

Governors will be able to claim for the following, on a case-by-case basis and with the prior approval of the Governing Body:

Childcare or babysitting allowances to a registered child minder (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner. or family member);

Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner or family member);

The extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language;

The cost of travel relating only to travel to meetings/training courses at a rate in line with City Council guidance which does not exceed the specified rates for school personnel;

Telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage etc;

Any other justifiable allowances as agreed by the personnel and finance committee.

### **The Governing Body acknowledges that:**

Governors may not be paid attendance allowance;

Governors may not be reimbursed for loss of earnings.

Governors wishing to make claims under these arrangements, once prior approval has been sought, should complete a claims form (obtainable from Willow Bank School Office), attaching receipts where possible, and return it to the School within two weeks of the date when the allowances were incurred, when they will be submitted for approval by the Finance and Personnel Committee or delegated authority of Finance and Personnel committee.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the Chair of Governors if they appear excessive or inconsistent.

All decisions will abide by the DfE Regulations as outlined. This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

### **DfE Regulations: Paying Allowances to School Governors (September 2003)**

#### **Key Messages**

Governing bodies can continue to choose whether or not to pay allowances to governors. The Department thinks that it is good practice to pay such allowances as governors should not be out of pocket for the valuable work they do. Governors should be able to claim legitimate allowances where governing bodies have set up schemes to make such payments.

Payments can be made for any expenditure necessarily incurred by individual governors to enable them to carry out governor duties.

Allowances for travel cannot exceed the Inland Revenue Authorised Mileage Rates. Payments of other allowances must only be made on provision of a receipt. The amount to be paid should be determined by the governing body and be limited to the amount shown on the receipt.

Governors cannot claim attendance allowances i.e. payment for attending meetings themselves, or for loss of earnings.

Allowances can be paid to governors serving on temporary governing bodies, and to associate members.

Governor allowances will continue to be paid from the school's delegated budget.

In schools without delegated budgets, the LA may pay governor allowances.

### **3. GOVERNOR INDUCTION**

The Governing Body and Headteacher believe it is essential that all new governors receive a comprehensive induction package covering a broad range of issues and topics. There is a commitment to ensure that the new governors are given the necessary information and support to fulfil their role with confidence. The process is an investment, leading to more effective governance and retention of governors.

#### **Purpose**

- ✓ To welcome new governors to the Governing Body and enable them to meet other members.
- ✓ To encourage new governors to visit the school to experience its atmosphere and understand its ethos.
- ✓ To meet the Headteacher, staff and children.
- ✓ To explain the partnership between the Headteacher, School and Governing Body.
- ✓ To explain the role and responsibilities of governors.
- ✓ To give background material on the school and current issues.
- ✓ To allow new governors to ask questions about their role and/or the school.
- ✓ To explain how the Governing Body and its committees work.
- ✓ To allow new governors to join the committee(s) of their choice.

#### **Initial Visit**

Prior to appointment to the Governing Body, the potential Governor will meet the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. This provides the opportunity for an informal briefing about the school and tour and to discuss the experience and skills of the potential Governors.

#### **Appointment**

The Clerk to the Governors will contact Governor Services who will request completion of an eligibility form, along with verification of identity. Governor Services will send a welcome email and Governor pack. The clerk will request completion of the declaration of business interests form, and will create an account on the Governor Virtual Office (GVO). A welcome email will be sent to the Governor which outlines the functions of GVO.

#### **Induction**

All New Governors will follow a 6-part induction programme. This can be facilitated face to face or via email dependent on the circumstances and preference of the Governor. The induction programme should take approximately 6 weeks. An induction checklist is completed to monitor the progress of the induction programme.

The induction programme covers a broad range of information, introducing Governance and the strategic role of Governors, as well as school specific information. A range of documentation will be sent to the new Governor as part of the induction progress, along with links to useful websites and contact information. New Governors are expected to complete two training courses as part of their induction.

	Induction Topics Covered	Training Required	Document
1	<b>Welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structure of Governing Body</li> <li>- Meeting Dates</li> <li>- Governor Code of Conduct</li> <li>- GVO</li> <li>- Vice Chair Contact Details (Governor Buddy)</li> <li>- DBS Checks</li> <li>- Introductory Training</li> </ul>	Either Leicester Teaching School 'Effective Governance' <u>or</u> NGA online module 'Governance: Your role, your responsibility, your organisation'	Welcome Information Governor Code of Conduct
2	<b>Key Documents and Safeguarding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Handbooks</li> <li>- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'</li> <li>- DSLs at CHS</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	Safeguarding briefing with DSL (James Stafford), either face to face or online.	Governor Handbook Link Governor Handbook Terms of Reference
3	<b>Training and Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills Audit</li> <li>- Recommended Training</li> <li>- NGA information</li> <li>- Mead Institute for Professional Learning</li> <li>- Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>	Skills Audit Safeguarding Training (Hayes, NSPCC, Teaching School or Governor Services).	Training and Development Information
4	<b>Key Information about CHS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEF/SIP</li> <li>- Ofsted</li> <li>- Challenge Partners</li> </ul>		School Evaluation Form (SEF) School Improvement Plan (SIP) Latest Ofsted Report Latest Challenge Partners
5	<b>Visits and Scrutiny</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visits</li> <li>- Clerks Reporting</li> </ul>		Governor Visits Handbook
6	<b>Other Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DfE Documentation</li> <li>- NGA</li> </ul>		

## APPENDIX A: VISIT REPORT FORM

### Governor Visit Report

<b>Name of Governor:</b>	<b>Date of visit:</b>
<b>Base:</b>	

<b>Focus of visit:</b>	
<b>Link to School Improvement Plan:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil progress and attainment <input type="checkbox"/> Personal development of pupils <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil safety & wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Developing partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership, governance & finance <input type="checkbox"/> Investing in our staff	
<b>General Information / Observations:</b>	
<b>Examples of good practice / areas of strength:</b>	<b>Observations of Safeguarding Practice:</b>
<b>Potential areas for development:</b>	
<b>Follow up of any areas for development</b>	

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Next FGB Meeting for Feedback:**