



LOCAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER VISITS TO SCHOOLS POLICY

Version	2.0
Approving Body	Trust Board
Date ratified	March 2024
Date issued	March 2024
Review date	March 2027
Owner	CEO
Applies to	All Trust Local School Committee Members

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	March 2019	To establish a Trust Wide policy
1.1	March 2022	Periodic review
2.0	January 2024	Full re-write of policy to adopt National Governance Association model and reflect Initio scheme of delegation

1. Policy aims

This policy aims to ensure that all Local School Committee (LSC) members understand:

- the purpose of monitoring visits
- the expectations for carrying out visits including preparation, expected conduct and reporting back to the Local School Committee

2. Purpose of visits

LSCs are established to support and challenge the Head (and the Trust) in 5 critical and specific areas -

1. by being advocates for, and guardians of, the ethos and distinctiveness (church or otherwise) of the school;
2. by monitoring safeguarding, ensuring that there is a strong culture of safeguarding within a school, that school and Trust safeguarding policies are being effectively implemented, and that children and young people are safe;
3. by monitoring inclusion and SEND, ensuring that the school meets its statutory duties, that school and Trust policies are being effectively implemented, and that the needs of disadvantaged C&YP are being effectively met;
4. by monitoring, supporting and challenging where necessary the educational standards and performance of the school (to include attendance, behaviour, attainment and progress), ensuring that the Head maintains a focus on the School Improvement Plan, as well as any actions arising from Trust or external partner meetings with the schools;
5. by supporting communication with local stakeholders between the school and the Trust to advance the school to the benefit of C&YP and all community stakeholders

Monitoring visits should focus on the LSC scope of responsibilities as set out in the scheme of delegation including:

- strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the Trust Board
- the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows local school committee members to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in the life, work and achievements of a school
- experience the culture and ethos of the school and how the Trust and schools vision and values are being lived out

3. Frequency of visits

The schedule of committee member visits should be established by the LSC in agreement with the headteacher and relevant staff. Visits should be scheduled to allow local school committee members to see relevant activities and strategic milestones. For Link committee members for SEND and Safeguarding visits may be more frequent.

4. Arranging and preparing for visits

Visits should be arranged through the headteacher, with adequate notice, and agreed with the relevant members of staff.

Due regard should be given to:

- how the visit fits with the schedule of board, committee and any other school review meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion
- how to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life
- the workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits

Local school committee members are encouraged to prepare for their visit. This may include:

- reading and familiarising yourself with the Trust Board's protocol for visits and the expected conduct
- reading and familiarising yourself with the school's policy for visitors (this is different from the local school committee visits policy) that includes relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions
- reading the background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information
- clarifying the purpose of the visit with the headteacher and or relevant member of staff
- confirming the visit schedule and activities
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5. Conduct on visits

When visiting the school in a committee member capacity, you should:

- arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures (such as signing in and producing identification) including familiarisation with safeguarding and health and safety protocols
- adopt a friendly approach that puts everyone at ease
- be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this
- if you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching)
- ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit. These can be generated from information already provided by the school e.g Headteachers report, discussions at LSC, School Development Plan
- acknowledge the staff and pupils you meet

Local school committee members are also expected to behave in line with the Trust Board/local school committee code of conduct, being aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.

6. Expectations following a visit

A report should be completed as soon as possible after each visit – see Appendix A for visit report proforma. A draft will be shared with the headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be provided to the clerk to be included in the papers for discussion in the next local school committee meeting.

7. Monitoring and review

When reviewing the success of the policy, the following will be taken into consideration:

- Has every LSC member visited school at least **once** during the academic year?
- Are visits achieving the desired outcomes?
- Have visits been linked to the School/Trust Improvement Plans and in line with the LSC scope of responsibilities?
- What worked well?
- What could go even better?
- Have there been any unexpected benefits?

Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all LSC members.

All LSC members are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

Appendix A**Local School Committee Member Visit Proforma**

Name of LSC Member:	
Date of visit:	
Summary of activities:	
Links to the School/Trust Improvement Plans:	
What I learned during my visit:	
Positive comments about the visit:	
Aspects to clarify/questions I have:	

Issues for the local school committee to consider:

Evidence concerning equal opportunities:

Ideas for future visits:

Comments:

Signed (local school
committee member):

Signed (headteacher):