St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Governor School Visits Policy

Date of Adoption:	SEPTEMBER 2026	Date of Review:	RECOMMENDED ANNUALLY
Author:	CLERK/HT	Committee responsible for Review:	FGB
Version:	V1	Date approved:	15.09.2026

Office use only:

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1. Aims

This policy explains how governors of St Paul's Catholic Primary School will plan, conduct and report on visits to the school.

Governor visits are one way in which the governing body gathers evidence and assurance to support its strategic responsibilities. Visits enable governors to develop their understanding of the school, monitor agreed priorities and consider whether policies and improvement plans are being implemented effectively.

As a Catholic voluntary-aided school, the governing body has a particular responsibility to preserve and develop the school's Catholic character, mission and ethos. Where appropriate, governor visits will therefore consider how the school's mission and values are reflected in its relationships, curriculum, pastoral care, religious education, prayer, liturgy and wider life.

The aims of this policy are to:

- establish a clear and purposeful programme of governor visits;
- ensure that visits are linked to the School Development Plan, statutory responsibilities or other priorities agreed by the governing body;
- clarify the distinction between strategic governance and the operational leadership of the school;
- ensure that governors understand that they are not acting as inspectors or evaluating the performance of individual members of staff;
- support governors in gathering appropriate evidence through discussion, observation and the review of relevant information;
- ensure that visits are planned in partnership with the headteacher and relevant members of staff;
- minimise disruption to pupils, staff and the normal operation of the school;
- establish clear expectations relating to safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection and professional conduct;
- provide a consistent process for recording and reporting the evidence gathered during visits; and

- ensure that findings contribute to governing-body discussion, challenge, decision-making and future monitoring.

The governing body acts collectively. Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school or to conduct monitoring independently. All visits must have an agreed governance purpose and be arranged in advance with the headteacher or a senior leader authorised by the headteacher.

2. Guidance and scope

This policy takes account of the Department for Education's current *Maintained schools: governance guide* and relevant guidance from the Catholic Education Service, the Diocese of Portsmouth and the local authority.

It should be read alongside the school's:

- safeguarding and child-protection policies;
- staff code of conduct;
- SEND policy and SEN information report;
- health and safety policy;
- confidentiality and data-protection policies;
- records-management arrangements;
- Catholic life and mission policy;
- religious education policy;
- prayer and liturgy policy; and
- governing body's code of conduct.

This policy applies to visits undertaken by governors for an agreed governance purpose, including:

- monitoring priorities within the School Development Plan;
- seeking assurance about the implementation and impact of school policies;
- monitoring safeguarding, SEND, health and safety, attendance and other statutory responsibilities;
- monitoring the school's Catholic life, mission, religious education and prayer and liturgy;
- meeting school leaders or members of staff to discuss an agreed area of responsibility;
- participating in an agreed learning walk;
- speaking with pupils or staff as part of an agreed monitoring activity; and
- following up questions or actions identified by the governing body or one of its committees.

This policy does not apply when a governor is visiting the school:

- as the parent or carer of a pupil;
- to attend a public event, Mass, liturgy, performance or celebration;
- at the invitation of the school without a monitoring purpose;
- in a professional or voluntary capacity unrelated to their governance role; or
- to deal with an individual complaint, grievance or personal concern.

When attending in another capacity, governors must keep that role separate from their governance responsibilities and must not present personal observations as formal governor-monitoring evidence unless this has subsequently been agreed through the appropriate governance process.

Governor monitoring must remain strategic. Governors will not:

- inspect lessons or judge the quality of teaching;
- evaluate the performance of individual members of staff;
- undertake staff appraisal or line-management functions;
- investigate complaints, safeguarding concerns or individual incidents;
- request access to confidential information about individual pupils, families or staff unless this is necessary for the governing body to fulfil a specific responsibility and has been agreed through the appropriate process; or
- direct staff or become involved in the day-to-day operation of the school.

All monitoring visits must be linked to the School Development Plan, a statutory responsibility or another priority formally agreed by the governing body. Each visit must have a clear purpose, an agreed focus and identified questions. Visits must be arranged in advance with the headteacher or a senior leader authorised by the headteacher.

Where a visit concerns Catholic life and mission, religious education or prayer and liturgy, its scope should be agreed with the headteacher and should take account of relevant diocesan expectations.

3. Visits programme

The governing body will agree an annual programme of governor monitoring visits. This programme will be informed by:

- the School Development Plan;
- the school's Self-Evaluation Form;
- statutory and regulatory responsibilities;
- priorities identified through governing-body and committee meetings;
- outcomes from Ofsted and diocesan canonical inspection;
- areas of responsibility allocated to link governors; and
- matters requiring follow-up from previous monitoring.

The programme will be reviewed during the year so that it remains proportionate and responsive to the school's needs. Additional visits may be arranged where further assurance is required, provided that they are agreed in advance with the headteacher.

There are two principal types of governor monitoring visit.

3.1 Formal monitoring visits

A formal monitoring visit normally involves a governor meeting with the relevant school leader or member of staff to discuss an agreed area of responsibility.

The visit may include the consideration of:

- progress against agreed actions and success criteria;
- relevant policies, plans and reports;
- anonymised data and other appropriate evidence;

- the implementation and impact of agreed actions;
- strengths, risks and barriers to improvement;
- support and resources available to the school; and
- matters requiring further governing-body consideration or monitoring.

Formal monitoring visits must focus on strategic assurance. Governors will not direct staff, make operational decisions or evaluate the performance of individual employees.

3.2 Learning walks

A learning walk enables governors to gather first-hand, contextual evidence relating to an agreed strategic priority. It may include visiting classrooms or other areas of the school and, where appropriate, speaking with pupils and staff.

Learning walks will:

- have a clearly agreed focus linked to the School Development Plan, a statutory responsibility or another governing-body priority;
- be planned with the headteacher or an authorised senior leader;
- normally be accompanied by the headteacher or an appropriate member of staff;
- use questions and areas of focus agreed in advance;
- consider whole-school practice and patterns rather than the performance of individuals; and
- be conducted in a way that minimises disruption to teaching and school routines.

Governors taking part in a learning walk are not conducting a lesson observation or inspection. They must not grade teaching, comment on the performance of individual members of staff or draw conclusions from isolated incidents.

3.3 Link-governor monitoring

Governors with responsibility for safeguarding, SEND, health and safety, Catholic life and mission, or another agreed area will undertake monitoring in accordance with the annual programme approved by the governing body.

Link governors will normally meet the relevant school leader at least termly where this is appropriate to the nature and level of responsibility. They will seek assurance, ask constructive questions and report their findings to the governing body. Responsibility remains collective: assigning a link governor does not transfer the governing body's responsibilities to an individual.

3.4 Expectations for all governors

All governors are expected to:

- participate in at least one agreed monitoring visit or learning walk each academic year;
- attend at least one Celebration of the Word, Mass, liturgy or other agreed aspect of the school's Catholic life each academic year;
- participate, where reasonably practicable, in the school's annual Governor Day;
- undertake any visits associated with an allocated committee or link-governor responsibility;
- follow this policy and the governing body's code of conduct during every visit; and

- report evidence and findings through the agreed governance process.

The chair of governors and headteacher will work with the clerk to coordinate the programme, avoid unnecessary demands on staff and ensure that monitoring covers the governing body's priorities without excessive or duplicated activity.

4. Before a visit

All governor visits must be agreed in advance with the headteacher or a senior leader authorised by the headteacher.

Before undertaking a visit, the governor will:

- confirm the purpose, scope, date and approximate duration of the visit;
- ensure that the visit is linked to the School Development Plan, a statutory responsibility, an allocated link-governor role or another priority agreed by the governing body;
- notify the chair of governors and clerk of the planned visit;
- arrange the visit with the relevant member of staff at a mutually convenient time;
- be sensitive to staff workload and the demands of the school day;
- identify the questions to be explored and share them with the relevant member of staff in advance;
- identify the evidence that may reasonably be considered during the visit;
- review relevant sections of the School Development Plan, Self-Evaluation Form, policies, previous visit reports and governing-body minutes;
- understand the distinction between strategic monitoring and operational leadership;
- agree whether the visit will involve classrooms, discussions with pupils or staff, or access to particular areas of the school;
- agree who will accompany the governor during any learning walk;
- confirm the school's signing-in, identification, safeguarding and emergency procedures;
- understand how any safeguarding concern arising during the visit must be reported;
- consider whether the visit may involve confidential, personal or sensitive information and agree how this will be protected; and
- use the appropriate monitoring-visit or learning-walk template to record the agreed focus and questions.

Governors must not request access to identifiable information about individual pupils, families or members of staff unless the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead or chair of governors confirms that this is necessary for the governing body to discharge its responsibilities.

Where a visit relates to Catholic life and mission, religious education, or prayer and liturgy, the governor should familiarise themselves with the school's Catholic mission and any relevant diocesan expectations before the visit.

If a governor is unclear about the purpose, boundaries or arrangements for a visit, they must seek clarification from the chair of governors or headteacher before it takes place.

5. During a visit

Governors must conduct themselves professionally and respectfully throughout a visit. They should minimise disruption to the school day and remain focused on the agreed strategic purpose.

During a visit, governors will:

- arrive on time and follow the school's signing-in and visitor procedures;
- wear the identification badge provided by the school;
- meet the headteacher, senior leader or relevant member of staff as agreed;
- remain focused on the agreed purpose, questions and evidence;
- be courteous and sensitive to the demands placed on pupils and staff;
- listen carefully and ask appropriate, open and constructive questions;
- remain objective and avoid making assumptions based on isolated observations;
- distinguish between evidence they have directly observed, information provided by staff or pupils, and matters requiring further clarification;
- check with the relevant member of staff before speaking with pupils or entering a classroom;
- ensure that any discussion with pupils is appropriate, purposeful and normally conducted in the presence or sight of a member of staff;
- keep any notes factual, proportionate and limited to the agreed purpose;
- avoid recording the names of individual pupils, parents or members of staff;
- maintain confidentiality and protect any sensitive information shared during the visit;
- follow the school's safeguarding, health and safety, data-protection and staff-conduct expectations; and
- thank the pupils and staff who have contributed to the visit.

Governors will not:

- grade lessons or assess the quality of teaching;
- evaluate or comment on the performance of an individual member of staff;
- attempt to inspect the school or reproduce the role of Ofsted or diocesan inspectors;
- intervene in teaching, routines or the operational management of the school;
- give instructions to staff or pupils;
- pursue matters outside the agreed focus of the visit;
- ask pupils to comment on the performance of a particular member of staff;
- raise personal complaints or matters relating to their own child;
- make promises to pupils or staff about actions that will be taken;
- promise confidentiality where a safeguarding concern is disclosed;
- investigate a safeguarding, conduct or disciplinary concern;
- take photographs, video or audio recordings unless this has been expressly agreed in advance for a specific, lawful and safeguarding-compliant purpose; or
- share information or commentary about the visit through personal email, messaging services or social media.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy designated safeguarding lead in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Governors must not investigate the matter themselves or delay reporting it until the end of the visit.

Any other significant concern should be raised with the headteacher through the agreed process following the visit. If the concern relates to the headteacher, it should be raised with the chair of governors.

6. After a visit

At the end of the visit, the governor should have a brief discussion with the relevant member of staff or accompanying senior leader. This provides an opportunity to:

- thank those who contributed to the visit;
- clarify any factual matters;
- identify evidence that may require further consideration;
- confirm any questions that remain unanswered; and
- agree the process and timescale for completing the visit report.

The governor will complete the appropriate monitoring-visit or learning-walk report as soon as reasonably practicable after the visit.

The report will:

- state the agreed purpose of the visit;
- identify the School Development Plan priority, statutory responsibility or governing-body objective to which it relates;
- record objectively the evidence seen, heard and discussed;
- distinguish between direct observations, information provided and questions requiring further clarification;
- identify relevant strengths and evidence of progress;
- record any barriers, risks or areas where further assurance is required;
- identify appropriate questions and follow-up actions;
- avoid judgements about the performance of individual members of staff;
- avoid naming individual pupils, parents, families or staff unless there is a clear and agreed governance reason to do so;
- exclude details of individual safeguarding cases; and
- use neutral, professional and proportionate language.

The draft report will be shared with the relevant member of staff and the headteacher to check its factual accuracy. This process is not intended to remove legitimate governor questions, challenge or concerns.

A governor who has served for less than one year may also share the draft with their mentor or another experienced governor for support with completing the report.

Once the report has been checked for factual accuracy, it will be submitted securely to the clerk. The clerk will arrange for it to be considered by the relevant committee or full governing body and retained as part of the governing body's records.

The governing body will use visit reports to:

- triangulate information provided by school leaders;
- monitor progress against agreed priorities and actions;

- identify areas of strength;
- determine whether further evidence or assurance is required;
- agree appropriate questions or follow-up actions; and
- inform future monitoring and strategic decision-making.

Any follow-up action must be agreed through the appropriate governance route. An individual governor must not direct a member of staff or independently require operational action following a visit.

Governors must submit reports and supporting evidence through the school's approved secure systems. Any temporary notes containing confidential or sensitive information must be securely destroyed once the final report has been approved and stored.

Where a visit relates to Catholic life and mission, religious education, or prayer and liturgy, the report should consider how the school's Catholic character is being preserved and developed.

Appendix 1: Template report for a monitoring visit

Formal monitoring visits are where a governor discusses the progress of the school in a particular area with the relevant staff member. Use this form as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: Plan the visit	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.	Use this form for Catholic life and mission, SEND, safeguarding, health and safety or other agreed link governor monitoring visits, alongside the relevant role description and sample questions in the appendices.
Relevant school objective or priority This might be taken from the school improvement plan (SIP) objectives or the school's overarching vision.	
Questions to ask Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit. Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.	

Part 2: In the meeting
What is the school doing within this area of focus? *Tips:* • *Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who' and 'where'* • *Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with* • *Remember you are **not** there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them – you remain an observer* • *When writing the report, use neutral language and do not name individual teachers and pupils*

How do you know the school's actions are having an impact? *Remember:* • *Include specific evidence that demonstrates the positive impact the school is having in this area* • *Where a positive impact has not been made yet, note down why that is and what steps are being taken to make progress* • *Add any further evidence you would like to see to help you make a better assessment of the impact*

What successes stood out and why?

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors

Appendix 2: Template report for a learning walk

Learning walks are where a governor goes around the school with the relevant staff member to get a feel for a particular area. You are likely to talk to a range of staff members and pupils. Use this as a reminder of what to look for and what to ask.

Part 1: Plan the walk	
Name and role of governor(s)	
Name and role of staff member(s)	
Date and time of visit	
Agreed focus *Make sure you focus on this agreed reason for the visit. Avoid getting distracted by other issues that have not been agreed with the member of staff.*	
Relevant school objective or priority *This might be taken from the school improvement plan (SIP) objectives or the school's overarching vision.*	
Questions to ask *Note specific questions you want to ask based on the SIP, or points to follow up on from a previous visit.* *Share these questions with the staff member you are visiting in advance, so they can prepare.*	

Part 2: On the walk
General notes from discussions with staff *Tips:* • *Ask open questions beginning with 'what', 'how', 'when', 'how often', 'why', 'who', 'where' and 'can you show me …'* • *Don't be afraid to clarify any terms or acronyms you're not familiar with* • *Remember you are not there to pass judgement on staff or inspect them* • *When writing the report, use neutral language and don't name individual teachers*

General notes from discussions with pupils *Remember:* • *Do not ask them for pupils' views on a specific teacher* • *Do not record pupils' names*

General notes on the school environment and overall atmosphere *Note:* • *Whether the governors' vision of the school is replicated on the ground* • *Any issues with the school site you see, e.g. broken equipment or lack of resources*

What successes stood out on the learning walk and why?

Questions and clarifications to follow up with the headteacher or chair of governors

Appendix 3: Role of a SEND Link Governor

The governing body has collective responsibility for ensuring that St Paul's Catholic Primary School fulfils its responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The SEND link governor supports the governing body by monitoring the school's SEND provision, seeking appropriate assurance and reporting their findings to the governing body. Appointment of a link governor does not transfer responsibility from the governing body to an individual governor.

The SEND link governor is not responsible for managing SEND provision, evaluating individual members of staff, assessing the quality of teaching or becoming involved in individual pupils' cases.

The SEND link governor will develop an understanding of:

- the governing body's responsibilities under the SEND Code of Practice and Equality Act 2010;
- the school's SEND policy and published SEN information report;
- the range and level of need represented within the school;
- the school's approach to identifying, assessing and supporting pupils with SEND;
- the responsibilities of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO);
- the funding and resources available to support pupils with SEND;
- the school's arrangements for making reasonable adjustments;
- the progress, attainment, attendance, behaviour and wider experiences of pupils with SEND;
- how pupils with SEND and their families contribute to decisions about provision and support; and
- how pupils with SEND are included fully in the school's Catholic life, curriculum and wider opportunities.

Monitoring arrangements

The SEND link governor will normally meet with the SENCO at least termly. Visits will be agreed in advance and conducted in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

Monitoring may include:

- discussion with the SENCO and other appropriate leaders;
- consideration of anonymised or aggregated information;
- review of the SEND policy, SEN information report and relevant improvement plans;
- review of progress against agreed actions;
- consideration of the deployment and impact of SEND funding and resources;
- an agreed learning walk;
- discussion with pupils, parents or staff where this has been appropriately arranged; and
- follow-up of questions or actions identified by the governing body.

The SEND link governor will seek assurance that:

- the school identifies pupils' needs accurately and in a timely manner;
- appropriate provision is planned, implemented, reviewed and adjusted;
- pupils with SEND can access and participate fully in the curriculum and wider life of the school;
- reasonable adjustments are made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010;
- teachers receive appropriate information, training and support;
- parents and carers are involved meaningfully in decisions about their children;
- pupils' views are sought and taken into account;
- the school works effectively with external professionals and the local authority;

- SEND funding and resources are deployed strategically and their impact is evaluated;
- the school's SEND policy and SEN information report are accurate, accessible and up to date;
- the SENCO has appropriate status, time, training and support to fulfil the role effectively;
- governors receive sufficient information to understand patterns in progress, attainment, attendance, behaviour and participation;
- the needs of pupils with SEND are considered within financial and strategic decision-making; and
- pupils with SEND are included fully in prayer, liturgy, religious education, pastoral care and the wider Catholic life of the school.

Reporting to the governing body

Following a monitoring visit, the SEND link governor will complete a written report in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

The report should:

- summarise the evidence considered;
- identify strengths and progress;
- identify risks, barriers or areas requiring further assurance;
- record questions and agreed follow-up actions;
- avoid identifying individual pupils, families or members of staff; and
- support the governing body in fulfilling its collective responsibilities.

The SEND link governor will also alert the chair of governors and headteacher promptly if monitoring identifies a significant strategic, statutory or resource concern.

Suggested monitoring questions

Questions should be selected according to the agreed focus of the visit. Not every question should be asked during every meeting.

- What are the main SEND needs and trends within the school?
- How have these changed since the previous visit?
- How does the school identify pupils who may have SEND?
- How are parents, carers and pupils involved in identifying needs and reviewing support?
- What provision is currently in place, and how is its impact evaluated?
- How do leaders know that pupils with SEND are learning and making progress?
- How do the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND compare with their starting points and with other pupils?
- How does attendance and persistent absence for pupils with SEND compare with the rest of the school?
- Are pupils with SEND disproportionately represented in behaviour or suspension information? If so, what action is being taken?
- How does the school ensure that pupils with SEND participate fully in the curriculum and wider school life?
- What reasonable adjustments are commonly made?
- How are teachers and support staff trained and supported to meet pupils' needs?
- How is the quality and impact of additional support evaluated?
- How is SEND funding used, and what difference is it making?
- How effectively does the school work with the local authority and external professionals?
- Are there delays or barriers in accessing assessment, advice or support? How is the school responding?
- How are pupils with SEND included in religious education, prayer, liturgy and the Catholic life of the school?
- What are the principal strengths of the school's SEND provision?
- What are the most significant current challenges or risks?
- Does the SENCO have sufficient time, resources, training and leadership support?

- What actions have been agreed, who is responsible and when will progress be reviewed?

Training

The SEND link governor will undertake appropriate training and keep their knowledge of SEND governance responsibilities up to date. Any additional training needs should be discussed with the chair of governors and clerk.

Appendix 4: Role of the Safeguarding Link Governor

The governing body has collective responsibility for the strategic leadership of the school's safeguarding arrangements. It must have regard to the current *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* statutory guidance and ensure that the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law.

In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, the governing body will appoint a senior board-level lead to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements. At St Paul's Catholic Primary School, this responsibility will normally be undertaken by the safeguarding link governor.

The appointment of a safeguarding link governor does not transfer the governing body's collective responsibility to an individual governor. Operational responsibility for safeguarding remains with the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead and school staff.

The safeguarding link governor will not investigate concerns, review individual case files, become involved in operational decisions or receive unnecessary identifying information about pupils, families or staff.

Purpose of the role

The safeguarding link governor will support the governing body by:

- developing an informed understanding of the school's safeguarding context;
- seeking assurance that statutory safeguarding responsibilities are being met;
- providing appropriate support and strategic challenge to the headteacher and designated safeguarding lead;
- monitoring whether safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively;
- considering whether the school has a strong, child-centred culture of safeguarding;
- reporting findings, risks and areas requiring further assurance to the governing body; and
- helping the governing body remain informed about changes to statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

Knowledge and training

The safeguarding link governor will:

- read and understand the parts of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* relevant to governing bodies, particularly Parts Two, Three, Four and Five and Annex B;
- complete appropriate safeguarding and child-protection training, including online safety, at induction;
- ensure that their safeguarding training is updated regularly;
- understand the school's child-protection policy and safeguarding procedures;
- understand the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding leads;
- understand the school's procedures for reporting concerns about children and adults;
- understand the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and relevant referral and escalation routes;
- undertake appropriate safer-recruitment training where they are involved in recruitment; and
- keep the governing body informed of significant changes to statutory safeguarding requirements.

All governors must receive appropriate safeguarding and child-protection training, including online safety, at induction, with this training updated regularly. The safeguarding link governor should seek assurance that this requirement has been met.

Working with the designated safeguarding lead

The safeguarding link governor will normally meet with the designated safeguarding lead at least termly. Meetings and visits will be arranged and reported in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- the designated safeguarding lead is a suitable senior member of the leadership team;
- the designated safeguarding lead has the appropriate status and authority to fulfil the role;
- the designated safeguarding lead and deputies have sufficient time, funding, training, resources and support;
- deputy designated safeguarding leads are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead;
- appropriate cover arrangements are in place whenever the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable;
- a designated safeguarding lead or deputy is available during school hours and suitable arrangements exist for out-of-hours and out-of-term activities;
- safeguarding concerns are recorded, responded to and referred appropriately;
- the school works effectively with children's social care, the police, health services, the local authority and other safeguarding partners;
- child-protection information is transferred securely and promptly when pupils move schools; and
- safeguarding information is used appropriately to support pupils' attendance, engagement and educational outcomes.

The safeguarding link governor should also consider whether the designated safeguarding lead's workload is manageable and whether further support or resources are required.

Areas of monitoring

Termly safeguarding monitoring should be proportionate to the school's context and may consider the following areas.

Safeguarding culture

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- safeguarding is understood to be everyone's responsibility;
- the school maintains an open, vigilant and child-centred culture;
- staff demonstrate an attitude that safeguarding concerns could arise within the school;
- pupils feel safe and know how to seek help;
- pupils believe that adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously;
- appropriate systems exist for pupils to report concerns, including where they may not feel ready or able to make a direct disclosure;
- safeguarding arrangements reflect the additional vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups; and

- prejudice-based harm, discrimination, harassment and abuse are recognised and addressed appropriately.

Policies, procedures and staff training

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- the child-protection policy is reviewed at least annually and updated whenever required;
- the policy is publicly available and reflects current statutory and local requirements;
- all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child-protection training, including online safety, at induction;
- staff training is updated regularly and staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually;
- all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* in full;
- staff understand the school's child-protection policy, behaviour policy, staff code of conduct, procedures for managing concerns about adults and response to children who are absent from education;
- staff know the identity and role of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies;
- staff understand how to report a concern and how to escalate it if they believe appropriate action has not been taken;
- staff understand that they must not promise confidentiality to a child; and
- safeguarding training is informed by the school's context and the advice of local safeguarding partners.

Attendance and children absent from education

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- attendance is understood as a safeguarding matter;
- the school monitors unexplained, repeated and prolonged absence;
- staff understand the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education;
- patterns of absence are considered alongside behaviour, wellbeing, attainment and other safeguarding information;
- concerns are escalated appropriately where absence may indicate neglect, abuse, exploitation or another welfare risk; and
- the school follows current statutory attendance guidance and local procedures for children absent or missing from education.

Child-on-child abuse

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- the child-protection policy includes appropriate procedures for responding to child-on-child abuse;
- staff recognise that child-on-child abuse can occur within and outside school and online;
- incidents are not dismissed as banter, part of growing up or an inevitable part of school life;
- the school responds appropriately to sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, bullying and discriminatory behaviour;
- victims are taken seriously, supported and kept safe;
- risk and needs assessments are completed where appropriate;

- the school identifies patterns, locations, groups or contextual factors associated with incidents; and
- the governing body receives anonymised information about themes, trends, actions and lessons learned.

Online safety, filtering and monitoring

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- online safety is integrated into the school's safeguarding arrangements;
- pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe online;
- online-safety education reflects emerging risks, including artificial intelligence, deepfakes, digitally altered images, harmful content and the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place;
- roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring are clearly assigned;
- the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring is reviewed at least once every academic year;
- checks include all internet-connected devices and relevant locations;
- the annual review is recorded and any required actions are completed;
- leaders and relevant staff understand the filtering and monitoring arrangements and know how to report concerns;
- the governing body has considered the Department for Education's filtering and monitoring standards;
- the school undertakes an appropriate annual review of its wider approach to online safety;
- appropriate cyber-security and access-management arrangements support safeguarding; and
- online-safety risks are considered in relation to pupils' ages, needs and vulnerabilities.

Safer recruitment and the single central record

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- safer-recruitment procedures comply with Part Three of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*;
- at least one person conducting every recruitment interview has completed appropriate safer-recruitment training;
- required pre-appointment checks are completed before an individual begins work;
- appropriate checks are completed for staff, agency workers, contractors, volunteers and governors;
- the school maintains an accurate and up-to-date single central record;
- responsibility for checking and maintaining the single central record is clearly allocated;
- the single central record is checked regularly by appropriately trained school leaders;
- any errors or omissions are addressed promptly; and
- the governing body receives appropriate assurance about the effectiveness of these arrangements.

The safeguarding link governor should not normally administer or undertake a detailed operational audit of the single central record. Their role is to seek assurance that effective checks, oversight and review arrangements are in place.

Concerns or allegations about adults

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- the school has clear procedures for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations about staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors;
- staff understand the difference between concerns that may meet the harm threshold and low-level concerns;
- staff know how and to whom concerns must be reported;
- allegations are referred to the local authority designated officer when required;
- low-level concerns are recorded, reviewed and considered for possible patterns;
- whistleblowing arrangements are understood and accessible; and
- the governing body receives appropriate anonymised assurance about themes, trends and lessons learned.

The safeguarding link governor must understand that concerns or allegations about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors. Concerns about the chair of governors should be reported through the route specified in the school's child-protection policy and current statutory guidance.

Safeguarding within the curriculum

The safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online;
- safeguarding education is planned, sequenced, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate;
- Relationships and Health Education contributes effectively to preventative safeguarding education;
- teaching addresses healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries, consent, kindness, prejudice, discrimination, harassment and online harms in an age-appropriate way;
- teaching is adapted for pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities;
- pupils know how and where to seek help; and
- external visitors or organisations contributing to safeguarding education are checked and managed appropriately.

Use of premises and alternative provision

Where relevant, the safeguarding link governor will seek assurance that:

- appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place when school premises are used by external organisations;
- concerns arising from the use of the premises are managed in accordance with the child-protection policy;
- alternative provision is suitable and safe;
- required safeguarding checks are completed before a placement begins;
- the pupil's attendance, welfare and progress are monitored; and
- the school remains responsible for safeguarding pupils it places in alternative provision.

Information reported to the governing body

The safeguarding link governor should receive sufficient information to understand the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements without routinely receiving identifiable information about individual cases.

Information considered may include anonymised or aggregated information about:

- the number and broad nature of safeguarding concerns;
- referrals to children's social care and other agencies;
- early support or Family Help;
- allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults;
- child-on-child abuse, bullying, discrimination and harmful sexual behaviour;
- attendance and children absent or missing from education;
- online-safety incidents;
- staff safeguarding training;
- safer-recruitment compliance;
- filtering and monitoring reviews;
- safeguarding audits and resulting actions;
- pupils' views about safety; and
- the capacity, training and support available to the safeguarding team.

The safeguarding link governor must not request details of individual cases unless the chair of governors, headteacher or designated safeguarding lead confirms that the information is necessary for the governing body to fulfil its responsibilities.

Reporting and follow-up

Following each monitoring visit, the safeguarding link governor will complete a written report in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

The report will:

- summarise the evidence considered;
- identify strengths and evidence of effective practice;
- identify risks, gaps or areas requiring further assurance;
- record strategic questions and agreed follow-up actions;
- specify who will provide further assurance and by when;
- avoid identifying individual pupils, families or staff; and
- be submitted securely to the clerk for consideration by the governing body.

Any immediate safeguarding concern must be reported straight away through the school's safeguarding procedures. It must not be recorded solely as a future action within a governor visit report.

Suggested monitoring questions

Questions should be selected according to the agreed focus of the visit. Not every question should be asked at every meeting.

- What are the principal safeguarding risks within the school's current context?
- What has changed since the previous monitoring visit?
- How do leaders know that pupils feel safe and know how to report concerns?
- What themes or patterns are emerging from safeguarding information?
- Are any groups of pupils disproportionately affected or particularly vulnerable?
- How is attendance information used as part of safeguarding oversight?
- How does the school respond to repeated or prolonged absence?
- Have all staff read Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* in full?

- Are staff training and safeguarding updates complete and current?
- How does the school check that staff understand and apply safeguarding procedures?
- Does the designated safeguarding lead have sufficient time, authority, training, resources and support?
- Are effective cover arrangements in place for the designated safeguarding lead?
- How does the school work with local safeguarding partners and external agencies?
- What assurance is available about safer recruitment and the single central record?
- When was filtering and monitoring last reviewed, and what actions resulted?
- How are emerging online risks reflected in policies, training and the curriculum?
- What patterns are evident in child-on-child abuse, bullying or discriminatory incidents?
- How are pupils with SEND and other vulnerable pupils supported to understand and report safeguarding concerns?
- What safeguarding audits have been completed, and are resulting actions on schedule?
- What is working particularly well?
- What are the most significant current weaknesses, barriers or risks?
- What further assurance does the governing body require?

Annual review

This appendix must be reviewed at least annually and whenever *Keeping Children Safe in Education* or other relevant statutory guidance is revised. References to *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* must be updated when a subsequent version comes into force.

Appendix 5 : Role of a HEALTH & SAFETY Link Governor

The governing body has collective responsibility for overseeing health and safety at St Paul's Catholic Primary School and seeking assurance that appropriate arrangements are in place to protect pupils, staff, visitors and contractors.

As a voluntary-aided school, the governing body is the employer and is accountable for health and safety. Day-to-day responsibility is delegated to the headteacher and other appropriately designated members of staff.

The health and safety link governor supports the governing body by monitoring the effectiveness of the school's arrangements, seeking appropriate assurance and reporting their findings to the governing body.

Appointment of a link governor does not transfer the governing body's collective responsibility to an individual governor. The health and safety link governor is not responsible for managing health and safety, writing risk assessments, carrying out technical inspections or directing members of staff.

Purpose of the role

The health and safety link governor will support the governing body by:

- developing an informed understanding of the school's health and safety arrangements;
- seeking assurance that the school complies with relevant health and safety legislation and guidance;
- monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the school's health and safety policy;
- providing appropriate support and strategic challenge to the headteacher and other responsible leaders;
- considering whether health and safety arrangements are proportionate to the school's context and activities;
- reviewing themes, trends, risks and actions identified through the school's monitoring systems;
- reporting findings and matters requiring further assurance to the governing body; and
- helping to promote a positive and proportionate culture of health, safety and risk management.

Knowledge and training

The health and safety link governor will:

- understand the governing body's responsibilities as employer;
- become familiar with the school's health and safety policy;
- understand the roles allocated to the headteacher, staff, competent person and external advisers;
- understand the principles of proportionate risk assessment and risk management;
- complete appropriate training for the role;
- remain informed about relevant changes to legislation and guidance; and
- seek advice from the school's competent person or other qualified professional where specialist knowledge is required.

Monitoring arrangements

The health and safety link governor will normally meet with the headteacher, school business manager, site manager or other relevant leader at least termly.

Monitoring visits will be agreed in advance and conducted in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

Monitoring may include:

- discussion with relevant school leaders and staff;
- consideration of the health and safety policy and associated action plans;
- review of anonymised or aggregated accident, incident and near-miss information;
- consideration of reports from the competent person, local authority, insurer, contractor or other specialist;
- review of progress against actions arising from audits, inspections and risk assessments;
- an agreed tour of the school site accompanied by an appropriate member of staff;
- consideration of staff training and competency records;
- review of emergency planning and business-continuity arrangements; and
- follow-up of actions or questions identified by the governing body.

The purpose of an accompanied site tour is to help the governor understand the school's arrangements and seek assurance. It is not a technical inspection and does not replace checks completed by competent staff or specialist contractors.

Areas of assurance

The health and safety link governor will seek assurance that:

- the school has an appropriate and up-to-date health and safety policy;
- roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood;
- the school has appointed or has access to a competent person with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience;
- risks to pupils, staff, visitors and contractors are assessed and managed proportionately;
- significant findings from risk assessments are recorded;
- risk assessments are reviewed following significant change, an incident or evidence that existing controls may no longer be effective;
- statutory, routine and specialist checks are completed at the required intervals;
- identified defects, risks and remedial actions are prioritised, assigned and completed within appropriate timescales;
- staff receive the health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision relevant to their roles;
- suitable arrangements are in place for first aid and the management of medical needs;
- accidents, incidents and near misses are recorded, investigated and reported as required;
- any reportable incident is considered in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations;
- leaders review accident and incident information to identify patterns and lessons;
- appropriate fire-safety arrangements, testing, evacuation procedures and drills are in place;
- arrangements are in place for managing asbestos and other hazardous substances where relevant;

- appropriate controls exist for contractors and building work;
- security, site access and visitor arrangements are effective;
- emergency, lockdown and business-continuity plans are in place and reviewed;
- health and safety arrangements for educational visits are appropriate;
- staff wellbeing and work-related health risks are considered;
- adequate resources are available to manage significant health and safety risks; and
- the governing body receives timely information about serious concerns, incidents and outstanding actions.

Catholic life and community activities

Monitoring should also consider whether appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place for:

- Masses, liturgies and Celebrations of the Word;
- visits to the church or other parish premises;
- clergy, parishioners and other visitors attending the school;
- processions, performances and large gatherings;
- retreats, pilgrimages and other off-site activities;
- events involving parents, families and the wider community; and
- the use of candles, liturgical materials and temporary displays.

Arrangements should protect pupils and adults while enabling the school's Catholic life to be lived fully and proportionately.

Accidents, incidents and emerging risks

The health and safety link governor should receive appropriate information about:

- significant accidents or incidents;
- reportable incidents;
- near misses and emerging patterns;
- enforcement action or contact from a regulatory body;
- significant defects or premises risks;
- overdue high-priority actions;
- major building work or changes to the school site;
- significant security concerns;
- public-health incidents; and
- any matter presenting a serious legal, financial or reputational risk.

Information should normally be anonymised unless identifying information is necessary for the governing body to fulfil its responsibilities.

The link governor must not investigate an accident or incident. Their role is to seek assurance that it has been reported, investigated and responded to appropriately by competent staff or relevant authorities.

Reporting to the governing body

Following a monitoring visit, the health and safety link governor will complete a written report in accordance with the Governor School Visits Policy.

The report will:

- summarise the evidence considered;
- identify strengths and effective practice;
- identify significant risks, barriers or areas requiring further assurance;
- record questions and agreed follow-up actions;
- identify who is responsible for providing further assurance and by when;
- avoid technical judgements outside the governor's competence; and
- be submitted securely to the clerk for consideration by the governing body.

Any serious or immediate concern must be raised promptly with the headteacher and chair of governors. Where the concern presents an immediate risk of harm, the governor should alert the headteacher or responsible member of staff straight away and must not wait to record it in a visit report.

Suggested monitoring questions

Questions should be selected according to the agreed focus of the visit. Not every question should be asked at every meeting.

- Who is the school's competent person, and what support do they provide?
- Are responsibilities within the health and safety policy clear and understood?
- When was the policy last reviewed?
- What are the school's most significant current health and safety risks?
- How are risks identified, assessed, prioritised and reviewed?
- What statutory or specialist checks have been completed since the previous visit?
- Are any required checks, servicing activities or remedial actions overdue?
- How are high-priority actions tracked to completion?
- What accidents, incidents or near misses have occurred?
- Are any patterns or recurring issues evident?
- Were any incidents reportable, and were the appropriate procedures followed?
- What lessons have been learned from recent incidents?
- What health and safety training has staff completed?
- Are there any gaps in staff competency, training or supervision?
- Are fire-safety arrangements, drills and testing current?
- Are first-aid arrangements sufficient for the school's needs?
- How are contractors selected, supervised and monitored?
- How does the school manage health and safety during educational visits?
- Are emergency, lockdown and business-continuity arrangements current and understood?
- Are there any planned building works or changes that create additional risks?
- Are sufficient financial and staffing resources available to manage identified risks?
- How are staff consulted about health and safety?
- What external audits or inspections have taken place, and what actions resulted?
- What is working particularly well?
- What matters require further governing-body assurance or action?

Annual review

The health and safety link governor will contribute to the governing body's annual review of the school's health and safety performance.

This should include consideration of:

- the effectiveness of the health and safety policy;
- accident, incident and near-miss trends;
- significant risks and changes during the year;
- progress against audit and inspection actions;
- staff training and competency;
- outstanding or recurring concerns; and
- priorities for the following year.

Together we achieve.

CURRICULUM GOVERNOR VISIT REVIEW DOCUMENT

Date:		**Carried out by:**		**Met with:**	

Before the school visit, send the subject leader some questions in advance. This will help them prepare and give you more useful answers.

Keep the "3 Is" firmly in mind: intent, meaning what the school is trying to achieve through the curriculum; implementation, meaning how the curriculum is being delivered; and impact, meaning how the curriculum is making a difference.

Before the visit get familiar with the curriculum provision. Make sure you really understand the key principles.

Questions below are a guide – not all questions need to be asked on one visit

QUESTIONS	**GOVERNOR OBSERVATIONS**
How long have you been subject leader? If they've been subject leader for a while, ask: How do you feel the subject is doing? What impact have you had as leader?	
What training have you had? How well do you understand the area?	
How do you support staff?	
CURRICULUM PLAN REVIEW Use these questions as a guide - you don't need to ask all of them in one meeting:	
Tell me about your curriculum plan	

How will your subject develop across the school? What are the plans and how will you do this?	
How much time each week is devoted to your subject? Do you think it's enough?	
What measures are in place to ensure all pupils can participate fully in your subject?	
What does this action/curriculum plan look like in practice day-to-day? *As a governor, you're not the expert. Ask the subject leader what the items on the plan actually mean in practice, so you know what to look out for on a school visit.* *For example, if the plan mentions "shared reading", ask what this is, and what are the signs of it being done successfully.*	
How do you know you're making progress towards the plan?	
How do you monitor your subject across the school? How often do you do this?	
How are we supporting children who aren't on track? Do we know this support is working? How do we know?	
How are we helping children to take responsibility for their own learning? Is this having an impact?	

The subject leader should point to a variety of evidence that can prove how effectively the subject is delivered, including: • Pupil books • Internal and/or external data • Lesson observation forms • Pupil surveys • Speaking to teachers and pupils	**NOTE EVIDENCE SEEN**
What challenges are you facing this year?	
Are there any barriers to meeting the improvements/objectives/targets for your subject?	
What's going well and how can we make sure that it continues?	
Do staff have the right knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum really well? Are there any gaps where we need to provide additional training? *This will help you, as a governor, decide what needs priority to make sure that this subject is delivered effectively.*	
What support do you have as subject leader?	
Do you need specific training? If so, when will you receive it?	
Do you get enough time to execute your duties as subject leader?	
Do you have the budget and resources as subject leader to be effective?	

If you could be better supported, how would you want this, ideally? *You want to know that the subject leader's feeling supported. If they aren't, you need to find out what additional support they need.*	