

Visiting Speakers Policy



September 2023

To be reviewed 2025 or as required

Use of External Agencies and Speakers

At our schools we encourage the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils; however we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals and speakers who we engage to ensure that they are suitable and properly supervised.

The Headteacher is in charge of coordinating and vetting the booking of all visiting speakers and staff members should seek permission giving a clear explanation as to the relevance and purpose of any visit and intended date and time.

We ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos. We must be aware that in some instances the work of external agencies may not be directly connected with the rest of the school curriculum so we need to ensure that this work is of benefit to our pupils.

Our schools will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- Any messages communicated to pupils support fundamental British Values and our school values.
- Any messages communicated to pupils are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals.
- Any messages communicated to pupils do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise pupils through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion or culture or other ideologies.
- Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and are clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication.
- Activities are matched to the needs and age groups of students.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage pupils to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate or support this. Therefore by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our pupils recognise risk and build resilience to manage risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability but also to help pupils develop critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

As a school we will undertake the following processes to safeguard our pupils against inappropriate or unsuitable speaking visitors:

- A formal procedure for inviting speakers, which involves approval by the headteacher and a clear understanding of why the speaker has been chosen
- A list of appropriate checks on the suitability of the person, which may include internet searches and/or contacting other schools where the person has spoken previously
- Although not always possible, it is useful to invite speakers from an established company, charity or other group whose aims are well-documented
- An understanding that the speaker will be expected to talk with staff about the content of the presentation before the event; speakers and staff must allow time for this discussion, whether it is on the day or beforehand to ensure that they understand they must abide by the school's equality commitments; that there must be no statements which might cause offence to others, or otherwise undermine tolerance of other faiths or beliefs; and there must be no extremist material.

- An understanding that such talks and presentations will not be used to raise funds, without the prior written permission of the headteacher
- Visiting speakers must arrive at reception in good time to book in, and must bring suitable identification. Although viewing DBS certificates may be appropriate, most visiting speakers will not be in 'regulated activity' and so will not necessarily have a DBS certificate to present
- Visitors must be supervised at all times and not left alone with pupils, unless they have confirmed DBS checks.
- Visiting speakers should understand that their presentation will be brought to an early end, if the content proves unsuitable.
- All information about the visiting speaker and the booking process should be recorded in the school diary
- Once a person has visited a school, future checks should be proportionate.
- If any concerns over the conduct of the speaker or the content of the presentation are raised by the supervising adult, these should be brought to the Headteachers attention immediately and a review made of whether future visits suitable. The school reserves the right to refuse access to any visitor who it is deemed may present a safeguarding risk to pupils in line with this policy.

Related Documents

- School Curriculum Guidance
- The National Curriculum
- Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy