

Argyle House School

Visiting Speaker Policy and Procedures

New Policy – March 2025

Purpose

Argyle House School regularly invites speakers from the wider community to provide specialist knowledge, talks, presentations and demonstrations to enrich pupils' learning experience and add value to the existing educational provision. The school recognises the enormous benefit gained by pupils from speakers from all walks of life. Both the school and pupils greatly appreciate the time and effort that visiting speakers put into their presentations.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the school's legal obligations when using visiting speakers, the responsibilities of those involved in organising and hosting visiting speakers and the standards of behaviour expected from visiting speakers.

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the Government's Prevent Duty Guidance, DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2024), UKCIS guidance "Using External Expertise to Enhance Online Safety Education" and also takes account of the Educate Against Hate advice "Hosting Speakers on School Premises".

The policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and SMSC Policy.

Policy Statement

The school has a responsibility:

- to ensure that pupils can critically assess the information that they receive as to its value to themselves, and that such information is aligned to the ethos and values of the school and British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation, extremism and being drawn into terrorism.

The school will ensure:

- that the promotion of partisan political views is prohibited and will take steps to ensuring the balanced presentation of opposing views on political issues when they are brought to the attention of pupils, in accordance with the DfE guidance on political impartiality in schools (February 2022).
- that arrangements for visiting speakers are suitably assessed before the visit/webinar takes place and that clear protocols, including those set out in this policy are followed.
- that visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised and do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- to be mindful of sensitive topic areas and children who may be in vulnerable situations or circumstances.

Scope of the policy

This policy and its procedures apply to all staff involved in organising and hosting visiting speakers at Argyle House School. Any reference to visits by visiting speakers includes in person/face to face sessions and online webinars.

Procedures

Approval Procedure

- All requests for outside speakers (be this from a pupil or member of the school's staff) must be approved by either the Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at least 1 week before the event.
- The member of staff organising the visit or live webinar must be confident about the educational value and age appropriateness of the event as well as the suitability of the external speaker before completing the visiting speaker form; this includes bookings for live talks presented remotely.
- As appropriate, the school may conduct an online search on the visiting speaker and/or their organisation to ensure the speaker does not have any link to extremism, such as extremist groups and movements.

Arrangements Prior to the Visit

The organiser of the visit has the following responsibilities:

- to ensure that the visiting speaker provides them with an outline of what they intend to cover in advance of their visit. The member of staff should request that a copy of the visiting speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session to ensure it is appropriate to the age and development stage of the pupils to be in attendance, compatible with the learning objectives and does not undermine British values or the ethos and values of the school.
- to be mindful that subjects of sensitive topic areas may have a negative emotional impact on pupils who are in vulnerable situations/circumstances.
- to identify and put in place arrangements to ensure that individuals can access and participate in the event including disabled participants.
- to consider safeguarding for virtual sessions and remote learning.
- to brief the visiting speaker with sufficient information on specific learning needs or vulnerabilities, in line with the school's safeguarding and confidentiality policies, to ensure they are appropriately prepared for the session.
- to ensure that the visiting speaker has been booked in for the date/time specified on the booking form to avoid any delays upon arrival.
- to add details of the visiting speaker to the school calendar.

Arrival Arrangements

The speaker will be treated like any other visitor. Upon arrival, visiting speakers will be required to show an original current identification document including a photograph (such as a passport or photo card driving licence) and to sign in at Reception. The visiting speaker will then be issued with a visitors' lanyard which they must wear at all times whilst on school site.

The member of staff hosting the visiting speaker must collect the visitor from Reception, inform them of the school's fire evacuation procedure and supervise them appropriately whilst on the school site.

Supervising staff should also remind visiting speakers to not take digital images of pupils.

Arrangements During the Visit

At no point must a visiting speaker be left unsupervised on site.

The content of the presentation/talk must be monitored ensuring that it aligns with the values and ethos of the school and the British values. In the unlikely event that the content falls outside the school's expectations, school staff have the right and responsibility to interrupt and/or stop a presentation/talk. Any concerns for the content or nature of the talk must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

After the Visit

The organiser will evaluate the speaker and the speech as to whether the needs of the school were met and, where appropriate, feedback will be provided to the speaker and/or their organisation.

Record Keeping & Data Protection

A formal record of visiting speakers is kept in a folder in Reception and includes contact details and biography of the visiting speaker, information on the subject matter of the presentations.

Any personal data collected, communicated before, during or after the event must be kept in accordance with data protection legislation and the school's data protection policies.

Use of Images in School Publications and Social Media

When a visiting speaker or the topic they are covering is particularly noteworthy, the Marketing and Admissions Officer may wish to publish information/images about the event prior to as well as following the event. Permission is requested at the time of booking by asking the visiting speaker to complete the Visiting Speaker Consent Form.

Related Documents

- Data Protection Policy
- Educate.Against.Hate – Hosting Speakers on School Premises
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Using External Expertise to Enhance Online Safety Education (UKCIS September 2022)

Appendix 1: Visiting Speaker Booking Form

Please complete this form on Firefly which will be sent to the Head / DSL upon completion.

Details of the Arrangements	
Date of presentation/visit	
Name of the staff member responsible for booking visiting speaker	
Name of visiting speaker	
Visiting speaker contact details	
Audience details	
Delivery of the session (in person/online)	
Checklist	
Please confirm that you have checked the visiting speaker biography, to include speaker's organisation and other affiliations.	YES / NO
Details of presentation to be provided	Please attach notes / powerpoint slides
Details of research undertaken on visiting speaker (e.g. check the internet for any recent published reports, statements or speeches made by the individual, any retractions or public apologies etc.)	
Are you satisfied that the content seen in response to the above is not in any way contrary to the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, the ethos of inclusion of the school, British values or any concern in relation to the Prevent Duty?	YES / NO If such concerns exist, refer the matter to the Head or DSL
Name of person responsible for supervising the visiting speaker whilst on site.	

Signed by the organiser:	
Date:	
Approved by:	
Position:	
Date:	