



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Visitors Policy

APPROVED BY: SENIOR LEADERSHIP

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1. Introduction

Visitors are very welcome to St Mary's Catholic Primary School, however it is our responsibility to ensure that the security and well-being of our pupils is uncompromised at all times.

The school has a legal duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to 'safeguard' all pupils from being subjected to any form of harm or abuse. It is the responsibility of the Governing Board and the Headteacher to ensure that this duty is implemented at all times.

In performing this duty, the Governing Board recognises that there can be no complacency where child protection and safeguarding procedures are concerned.

The school therefore requires that **ALL VISITORS** (without exception) comply with the following policy and procedure.

All visitors must have prior authorisation from the Headteacher, or delegated senior leader unless attending a publicly notified school event.

2. Guidance and Responsibilities

The Governing Board, Headteacher and SLT are responsible for implementing this guidance and for ensuring all staff are aware of it, are able to apply it on a day-to-day basis when welcoming visitors to the school, and understand that it applies to all visitors equally.

All breaches of this policy must be reported to the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher in the absence of the Headteacher.

All visitors must be made aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs and how to report any safeguarding concern. Where a visitor has a concern about a child, member of staff, volunteer or another visitor, this must be reported immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, the Headteacher.

3. Where and to whom this policy applies

The members of the school are deemed to have control and responsibility for its pupils anywhere on the school site, during normal school hours, during after school activities, and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities

The policy applies to:

- All teaching and non-teaching staff employed by the school
- All external visitors entering the school site during the school day or for after school activities (including supply teachers/peripatetic tutors/sports coaches and topic related visitors e.g. authors, journalists)
- All Governors of the school
- All parents (including parent helpers)
- All pupils
- Other education related personnel (Local Authority staff, Inspectors, health care professionals etc)
- Buildings and Maintenance Contractors
- 'Special Category' visitors (see below).

- Volunteers, including regular volunteers, one-off volunteers and parent helpers
- External speakers and organisations delivering workshops, assemblies or curriculum support
- After-school club staff

Where practicable, visits should be pre-planned, with the Headteacher being made aware of the planned visit. An anticipated and effectively organised visit should run smoothly taking into account not only the need to safeguard children, but also the reputation of the school and the ability of the visitor to fulfil the purpose of the visit. Where appropriate, risk assessments may be undertaken.

Examples of visitors that need authorised permission –this list is not exhaustive

- Ex-members of staff or staff on maternity leave wanting to visit
- Union Representatives
- Diocese representatives
- Local Authority Officers
- Other head teachers, or staff from visiting schools
- Members of staff on sick leave

4. Volunteers

The school recognises that volunteers can make an important contribution to pupils' education and wider school life.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised with children or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

The Headteacher will undertake a written risk assessment to determine:

- the nature of the volunteer role
- whether the role involves regulated activity
- what level of supervision is required
- whether an enhanced DBS check and barred list check are required

All volunteers must follow safeguarding procedures and report concerns in line with the school's Child Protection Policy.

5. Procedures for ALL visitors

5.1 Planned visitors to the school

All visitors to the school **MUST be asked to provide formal identification** at the time of their visit unless they are known to the school (Director of Education, Governors etc)

Wherever possible, visits to schools should be pre-arranged and the school office should be informed.

Visitors must report to the school office and not enter school via any other entrance. Access should only be given to the car park if the visitor is expected.

Visitors will only have access to the reception area at the front of school. No visitors are to be allowed through the secure doors until all checks have been completed.

At reception, all visitors:

- Should explain the purpose of their visit, who they are in school to see, and (where applicable) who has invited them;
- Will be advised of the process of providing satisfactory ID to be admitted beyond reception and be able to produce formal identification, where applicable
- Where visitors are working with children, the school will check photographic identification and seek written assurance from the visitor's employer or organisation that appropriate safeguarding checks, including enhanced DBS and barred list checks where required, have been completed. The school will not request to see the DBS certificate itself unless there is a specific safeguarding concern.
- Will be asked to sign the visitors' record book or equivalent such as an electronic recording system (this may necessitate a photograph of the visitor being taken).
- Will also be advised that if being alone with pupils or children is not a legitimate feature of their purpose for being in school and they find during their visit that they are alone with pupils or children, they should report to a member of staff or reception.
 - If the visitor is part of a large group of visitors a separate register will be used to ease congestion.
- Will be required to wear an identification badge, the badge must remain visible throughout their visit
- Should be made aware of whom the designated lead is for child protection and that any safeguarding concerns should be reported to them. Written guidance may be provided to visitors containing this information
- Should wait in the reception area until they are met by an appropriate member of staff to be escorted to their destination.
- On departing the school, visitors should leave via reception, sign out of the building, return their visitor badge and be seen to leave the premises. School reception staff should check the 'in – out' records regularly to monitor compliance with these procedures

Visitors must not use personal mobile phones or take photographs of pupils unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher and in line with the school's safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Visitors must respect confidentiality and comply with GDPR and school data protection expectations at all times.

Visitors must be informed of fire evacuation procedures, safeguarding reporting arrangements and emergency procedures on arrival where appropriate.

Please note: If a planned visitor fails to arrive with appropriate identification, they will not be permitted to have unsupervised contact with a child.

5.2 Unknown/ Unplanned visitors to the school

We are fortunate that the school has a secure perimeter that does not permit entry directly onto the school property. It is therefore, prudent to ensure that before allowing entry onto the school premises, staff are confident that any unplanned, or unknown visitor is safe to enter the grounds before entering the building.

- Any visitor to the school site who is not wearing an identity badge should be challenged politely to enquire who they are and their business at the school
- They should then be escorted to the school office to sign the Visitors' Record Book and be issued with an identity badge.
- In the event that the visitor refuses to comply, they should be asked to leave the site immediately and the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (or the Teacher-in-Charge) should be informed promptly
- The Headteacher (or the Teacher-in-Charge) will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to inform the police
- If an unknown / uninvited visitor becomes abusive or aggressive, they will be asked to leave the site immediately and warned that if they fail to leave the school grounds, police assistance will be called for
- If for any reason you are suspicious of the visitor, or their conduct, no entry into the school is permitted. Examples may be: concerns they are under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse, previous aggressive behaviour, banned from the premises.
- Where appropriate, the school may implement formal restrictions or banning orders for individuals whose behaviour presents a safeguarding, health and safety or welfare concern.

5.3 External Speakers and Organisations

All external speakers, organisations and curriculum visitors must be approved by the Headteacher or delegated senior leader before the visit takes place.

The school will consider:

- the educational value of the visit
- the appropriateness of content for the age and stage of pupils
- safeguarding risks
- whether supervision is required
- whether safer recruitment checks are required
- whether the visitor's values and content are consistent with school safeguarding duties and British Values expectations

Visitors must not have unsupervised access to pupils unless appropriate checks and employer assurances have been confirmed.

5.4 Visitor Conduct

Visitors to the school will be required to act in accordance with the schools code of conduct and other relevant policies at all times.

The school reserves the right to escort individuals from the premises who act in aggressive or threatening manner, towards staff members, pupils, Governors, parents or other visitors.

In the event of persistent occurrences of unacceptable behaviour on the school site, the school has the right to implement a banning order to the individual(s) in question.

If for any reason, the office staff are concerned about a visitor's behaviour they must not wait for SLT but take action that they deem reasonable to ensure the safety of themselves and others.

6. Categories of visitor

6.1 Special Category Visitors

These can usually be categorised as visitors of local, national or international prominence, often in the public eye in positions of considerable importance and influence. Sometimes classified as "VIPs", the following are examples of special category visitors whose presence in school necessitates particular consideration:

- Royalty and royal representatives
- Members and former Members of Parliament and Government
- Foreign dignitaries and parliamentarians
- Diplomats and senior public servants
- Chairpersons/ Chief Executives of major companies and organisations
- Leaders in industry, trades, commerce and other professions
- Senior officers from charitable trusts
- Trade union leaders
- Religious leaders
- Civic and local community leaders
- Notable academics, Olympians, poets, authors, journalists, high profile prize winners and those prominent, with or without fame or "celebrity", in such fields as sport, music, film, theatre, and broadcast, social and other media.

Important considerations for special category visits

An invitation should be made in advance with sufficient time to enable appropriate planning for a safe and successful visit in appreciation of how the visit will be hosted and how it will be experienced and perhaps reported. Careful thought should be given to the arrangements for escorting and supervising the visitor and the need to do so at all times.

In general terms special category visitors should be treated in a very similar way to any other. However, the identity of the prominent visitor, and the nature of and arrangements for the visit, will determine the extent to which in certain circumstances, for that visitor – though not for any associated entourage – normal protocols (such as satisfying a receptionist of proof of identity or permanently displaying an identifying badge) might appropriately be waived.

Nevertheless, all those visiting should be accompanied at all times by a member of staff and have permission from the Headteacher

6.2 Local Authority Staff

Doncaster Council staff who visit schools and who have unsupervised contact with children will have had an appropriate DBS check conducted by their employing service.

“Schools and colleges must obtain written notification from any agency, or third- party organisation they use that the organisation has carried out the checks (in respect of the enhanced DBS certificate that written notification has been received that confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business), on an individual who will be working at the school or college that the school or college would otherwise perform. Where the position requires a barred list check this must be obtained, by the agency or third- party prior to appointing that individual. The school must also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.”

This guidance can be regarded by schools as the “written notification” required by the guidance but separate “written notification” is available to be presented per visit.

Schools will need to see to their satisfaction identification from visitors to confirm that they do indeed work for Doncaster Council. All Doncaster Council staff visiting schools carry photo identification alongside their name and job role.

6.3 Staff from other agencies

The same requirement as in 6.2 applies. If schools have “written notification” from an agency that their staff have a DBS “Enhanced with barred list information” check, then it is not necessary for the visitor to produce individual evidence of their DBS check before being granted unsupervised contact with children.

6.4 Contractors

For building or maintenance contractors’ schools should establish a formal agreement regarding access to specific areas of the building. For many building projects physical separation – fencing off of the work areas, will provide additional safeguards. Any DBS checks required should be completed before the contractor begins work in school.

For contractors working regularly or over extended periods, safeguarding arrangements must include:

- clear separation of work areas from pupil areas
- safe access and exit routes
- supervision arrangements where required
- toilet and welfare arrangements
- identification procedures
- site induction where appropriate
- confirmation of DBS checks where the work involves opportunity for regular contact with children

6.5 Trainee teachers

As with other visitors who have been checked by an external organisation, the school should have “written notification” that appropriate checks have been made. If tutors of trainee teachers do not have unsupervised contact with children, they will not require a DBS check. If they do have such contact, then it will be the responsibility of their institution to undertake the check and inform the school that appropriate checks have been made.

6.6 Governors

Governors should follow the same procedures as other visitors when coming in to school. If they are to have unsupervised contact with children, they will require the appropriate DBS checks.

6.7 Parents and relatives

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025, schools do not have the power to request DBS checks, barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates for visitors such as children’s relatives attending school events such as sports days, performances or assemblies.

The Headteacher will use professional judgement to determine whether supervision or escorting is required.

7. Staff Development

This policy will be reviewed following any significant safeguarding updates, changes to legislation, or local safeguarding partnership advice.

All staff will receive regular safeguarding training to ensure consistent implementation of visitor procedures.