



The John Fisher School External Speaker Policy

Responsible: Governors' SLAW Committee

Next Review Date: June 2023

Schools welcome a variety of visitors for a variety of purposes, for example, contractors, governors, LA officers, Education Commission staff, volunteers, speakers, priests, health care professionals, artists, sporting organisations, mission groups, inspectors and many more.

It is usual practice for part of a school's procedures to be customised to the specific purpose of an external speaker coming into the school. For example, a protocol for a building contractor on site would be different to the one for a governor making a link visit.

Schools will receive specific guidance from the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group (formerly the Primary Care Trust) and, if applicable, the Local Authority regarding health care professionals visiting schools.

This guidance focuses specifically on external speakers who are invited into the school for the purpose of working with or speaking to pupils.

Catholic schools in the Diocese are by their very nature welcoming communities. This is witnessed time and time again and identified as a strength in Section 5 and Section 48 inspection reports.

It is important that we encourage visitors to come to our school and witness the great work that is done for the young people entrusted to our care. For a number of external speakers it will be the first time they have visited a Catholic school and the welcome extended to them provides opportunities for the visitor to experience an ethos which contributes to the distinctive nature of the Catholic school.

External speakers can make positive contributions to the work of the school and very often the relationships that are established will continue and this can help towards the school's commitment to the common good in spreading its values further afield in the local and wider communities. It is important external speakers feel that the time spent in school has been positive and they take away a sense of what the school stands for.

Initial contact between the school and external speakers can be made in two ways. The first is when the invitation comes directly from the school. The second is where the school is approached by the external speaker or an organisation with which the external speaker is associated. In both cases preparatory work has to be carried out before a visit is agreed. In the case where the school is initiating the invitation it is likely the school knows the external speaker and has had successful arrangements in the past. It is still important to keep updated by visiting the relevant website(s) to ensure there has been no significant changes which might need further consideration before an invitation is agreed.

In the case of the school being approached it is important to find out as much as possible about the external speaker or organisation. This can be done by visiting the relevant website(s) and finding out if the external speaker or organisation has worked in other schools and connecting those schools.

It is the school's duty to ensure the wellbeing and safeguarding of all pupils and robust preparatory work will ensure that there is no risk to pupils in regards to them being given unsuitable resources and materials or being exposed to discriminating and extreme views that could be put forward by an external speaker.

The Headteacher should be informed of a proposed visit by an external speaker with clear explanations outlining the purpose, who will be visiting, which pupils will be involved and the proposed dates and time of the visit.

The member of staff preparing the visit should ensure:

- The work and values of the organisation represented by the external speaker are compatible with the aims and ethos of the Catholic school
- The focus of the work and presentation complements the curriculum or educational experience of the pupils involved
- The external speaker has the necessary skills, experience and knowledge and that the delivery and outcomes are age appropriate to the pupils attending
- The aims and outcomes are clear, achievable and agreed between the member of staff and the external speaker
- The external speaker shares with the member of staff any materials or resources to be used. It should be made clear at this stage the school has the veto on any materials or resources it considers unacceptable.

The school must check with the local safeguarding office on the requirement for visits to schools. These may differ between different Local Authorities. Some require all external speakers working with pupils to have DBS clearance whilst others only require this for those who will be working with pupils unsupervised. The advice from the Education Commission is to check this with the relevant local authority and comply with their requirements.

Any payment should be agreed before a visit is confirmed. The external speaker or organisation should be informed how the payment will be made which will be determined by the school's finance procedures.

The decision to invite the visitor into the school should be agreed between the member of staff preparing the visit and the link senior member of staff in accordance with the school's procedures. The Headteacher should be informed if it is the external speaker's first visit to the school.

Once the visit has been agreed the school should:

- Contact the external speaker to confirm arrangements
- Provide the external speaker with information about the school, its aims and values.
- Ensure staff are informed in the school's customary way
- Inform parents/carers with details of the purpose of the external speaker
- Prepare pupils (for example, pre-work may be needed)

The day of the visiting external speaker

To make sure that everything goes well on the day, the school should ensure:

- The reception staff know the name of the external speaker and time of arrival.
- The reception staff must ensure the visitor is 'signed in' in accordance with school procedures and given a visitor badge to wear along with any necessary documents.
- The contact member of staff comes to reception to meet the external speaker. The contact member of staff will be responsible for ensuring that all 'domestic' arrangements are explained.
- The member of staff should introduce the external speaker to the Headteacher and/or other senior members of staff
- There is a briefing meeting before the session with the external speaker to make sure that what

has been agreed previously will still take place. That is, there is nothing the external speaker will include that has not been agreed (materials should also be agreed in advance).

-Any request for religious images to be removed or covered should be politely refused.

-The external speaker should be introduced to the pupils with a short explanation of why the visitor is working with or speaking to them.

-It is important that a member of the teaching staff (it is important it is a member of the teaching staff and not a teaching assistant) is present at all times during the session. This includes Sixth Form students as the school must ensure it confirms to child safeguarding arrangements at all times, and according to the DfE a 'child' is a person in the school who is under 18 years of age.

-That the external speaker is thanked by the member of staff at the end of the session.

-That all departure procedures are followed according to school procedures, for example, sign-out, hands in badges.

After the visit

With the view to establishing relationships for the future the school should write a letter of thanks to the visitor/organisation. This can come from the Headteacher, the contact member of staff or the pupils, or a combination of the above.

-Ensure that any 'follow up' is carried out, for example, sending an example of pupils' work following the session.

-Maintain a record of the visit for school records and information for governors.

Key points

-Only materials and resources agreed in advance can be used with or given to pupils. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that there is compliance with copyright and intellectual property requirements.

-The external speaker is accompanied by a member of staff at all times whilst on the premises.

-The external speaker is never alone with a pupil or pupils.

What happens if things go wrong?

In almost all visits both the pupils and the external speaker gain a lot from the visit but there are very rare occasions when things go wrong, for example:

– The behaviour of the pupils is not what is expected

– The teacher who is in the session is responsible for discipline just as they would be in a classroom. The external speaker is not in charge of discipline

– The content and/or delivery of the session is not age appropriate

– The teacher should give a 'break' for pupils and use the time to make suggestions to the external speaker which could include the teacher taking part in the delivery

– The materials or resources are not the ones agreed and are unsuitable for the pupil's present

– The teacher should give a 'break' and inform the external speaker that the materials cannot be used or distributed

– There is content in the visitor's presentation which the teacher believes to be unsuitable

– The teacher should give a 'break' and inform the Headteacher or senior member of staff who will then decide if the session should be curtailed or continue

– If there is a decision to curtail the session the visitor and the organisation should be informed as to the reasons why

– If at any time the Headteacher or senior member of staff believes that the content, material or resources are a risk to the wellbeing or safeguarding of the pupils or if any views expressed are considered to be discriminating or extreme, then the safeguarding team should be informed.

CHECKLIST FOR EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

As an integral part of its educational vision for the holistic formation of children and young people, the Catholic Church expects Catholic schools to promote and uphold high standards throughout their activities and this includes visits from external speakers.

All external speakers invited to school should be of the highest quality and school leaders are responsible for ensuring that they have enough information about the content to be delivered by any external speaker to enable them to determine whether the content will be pitched at the right level for the age and level of maturity of the children and young people to whom the external speakers will present. The checklist for booking external speakers should be followed which includes sign-off of the booking by the Headteacher or someone at an appropriately senior level such as Assistant Headteacher and the necessary compliance with safeguarding checks should take place.

This checklist should be completed *prior* to welcoming (and establishing collaborative relationships with) external speakers (and any organisation they represent) to ensure that the Catholic character of your school is preserved and developed in the external speaker's communications with pupils and parents and carers.

Name of Speaker		
Question	Answer	Actions needed/Comment
<p>Will the Speaker be supervised at all times during their visit?</p> <p>If not, why not?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Have you carried out safeguarding checks (if appropriate) for the Speaker and have these been recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Has the Speaker understood and confirmed that their communications in the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful towards Catholic teachings • Not be prejudicial or detrimental to the Catholic character of the school • Not engage pupils in political activity and • Not cover certain partisan political views which are not deemed relevant or appropriate (provide details if applicable) • Be delivered in accordance with the requirements set out in the DfE's guidance on political impartiality in schools (if appropriate) 	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Have you reviewed the resources/materials that will be used by the Speaker?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Have you reviewed other resources produced by the Speaker (and by any organisation the speaker represents) even if they will not form part of the speaker's activities at the school?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Have you conducted a general internet search using the Speaker's name (e.g. a google search)? If parents or children and young people conducted a similar search are any concerns likely to arise?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you confirm that the political views espoused by the speaker/speaker's organisation are in compliance with British values and do not involve taking an extreme political position?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have school policies and procedures applicable to the speaker been explained to and understood by the Speaker?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any other outstanding issues or concerns with the Speaker and/or their suitability?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Will the Speaker deliver content of a high quality that is appropriate to the age and maturity of the children or young people in the audience?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	

If you have any concerns regarding the suitability of this Speaker, you should contact your Diocese to seek further clarification.

Signed _____

Position _____

Date _____

Approved for booking

Senior Staff member Name _____

Position _____

Date _____