



**ST MARGARET'S**  
SCHOOL

# Visitors' Policy and Procedures

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# St Margaret's Visitors' Policy and Procedures

## Policy Statement

St Margaret's School (the "School") welcomes an increasing number of visitors each year. It is important that visitors are welcomed into our community as this plays an important part in both the educational and charitable ethos of the School and is encouraged wherever possible. The School has a duty of care for the health, safety, security, and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to safeguard all pupils from subjection to any form of harm, abuse, or nuisance. It is the responsibility of the School and senior staff to ensure that this duty is uncompromised at all times. In performing this duty, the School recognises that there can be no complacency where child protection and safeguarding procedures are concerned. As such, this Visitors' Policy applies to all visitors (without exception) entering the School site, including:

- 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 peripatetic tutors, sports coaches, and topic related visitors (e.g. authors, journalists etc.);
- all pupils;
- all parents and volunteers;
- building and maintenance and all other contractors visiting the School; and
- independent contractors who may for instance transport pupils on minibuses or in taxis.

Failure to comply with this Visitors' Policy may result in a visitor's escorted departure from the School site.

This Visitors' Policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Hosting Events and Sports Fixtures Policy, and Data Protection Policy.

## Policy Responsibility

The Head is the member of staff responsible for implementation, coordination, and review of this Visitors' Policy. The Head is also responsible for liaising with the School's security, support staff and Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL") as appropriate. All breaches of this Visitors' Policy must be reported to the Head as soon as possible.

As part of their induction, new staff will be made conversant with this Visitors' Policy and asked to ensure compliance with its procedures at all times.

The Head can be contacted at [Head@stmargarets-school.org.uk](mailto:Head@stmargarets-school.org.uk) or 02084164400

## **Objectives**

The objective of this Visitors' Policy is to have a clear procedure and protocol in place for admission of external visitors, which is understood by all staff, visitors, and parents, and which conforms to child protection guidelines as outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 statutory guidelines ("KCSIE").

## **Context**

Visitors support pupil learning and have the potential to be very effective. They bring a wealth of experience, expertise, support, teaching approaches and viewpoints to complement the curriculum and work of the teaching staff.

Pupils and staff receive guidance on interacting with visitors to the School. Any pupil or member of staff who is concerned about a visitor should speak immediately to the DSL.

The DSL can be contacted at: [j.chatkiewicz@stmargarets-school.org.uk](mailto:j.chatkiewicz@stmargarets-school.org.uk) or [02084164535](tel:02084164535)

## **Access Protocol**

There are several permissible access points into the School buildings. Access is controlled by fob. Initial access for visitors should only be via The Waterhouse Building front door or Junior School front door for those visiting the Junior School site.

Visitors should not be allowed to enter or leave the School via other access points by staff or pupils unless this is an event taking place after 5pm and the front door is locked.

Doors should not be held open for any individual who is not wearing identification.

Visitors will be escorted out of the School via the Vance Way door or the exit point of another area of the School in which they were working by the member of staff leading the relevant event.

Visitors entering the School's Junior School reception must be made aware in advance that the Junior School site is a 'no mobile phone' building and they should not have mobile phones on their person upon arrival. If a visitor has their mobile phone on their person upon arrival at the School's Junior School reception, a member of staff will place the mobile phone in a secure locked drawer for collection upon leaving.

Any member of staff must challenge any person who they do not recognise and who is not wearing a visitor's pass or who is attending an event, such as an academic parents' evening. In this situation the member of staff should follow (as appropriate) the Protocol for dealing with intruders on site as set out in this policy below.

No visitor should be left alone with a single pupil, including Sixth Form pupils conducting tours, including during Saturday Open Days which are open to members of the public.

### **Protocol for all Visitors**

All visitors to the School must sign in at the School Reception.

All visitors to the School between the hours of 8am and 5pm on weekdays are required to sign in and out of the online Visitors' Book at the School Reception. A visitor's pass will be issued and must be worn and displayed at all times whilst on the School site. Visitors must return the visitors' pass when they leave the School. Visitors will be asked for photo ID on arrival unless they are already known to the School.

All visitors are issued with 'St Margaret's School - Information for Visitors' covering key elements of the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and fire safety information which, upon receiving, they agree to comply with. Teachers and non-academic staff must manage the involvement of visitors to the School to make sure that they deliver material that supports pupil achievement and meets the aims of the session, whilst offering balanced views on the topic

For a visit to be successful, there must be a clear and shared understanding of what the outcome will be and the needs of young people taking part.

If any visitor is delivering an aspect of the curriculum, it is important that their contribution has been well-planned and it is part of/contributes to the overall programme of learning

If the visitor is a planned speaker, or workshop coordinator, the member of staff responsible for planning this event must follow the School's Visiting Speakers' Protocol set out at Schedule 1.

### **Protocol for different types of visitor**

The following may represent the types of visitor who may enter the School site.

#### **i. Casual Visitors (e.g. people coming for a pre-arranged meeting)**

The School Office should be notified of any expected visitors at least an hour before a meeting, but ideally more time than this, and the visitor must be added to the visitor list. On arrival the visitor must be signed in and checked off against the visitor list and given a 'visitor's pass'.

Visitors who will be engaging with pupils should be asked to bring an original and current photo ID (a company ID card for example) if they are not already known to the School. The member of staff

hosting the visitor should be called and is then responsible for the visitor until they sign out and leave the School site.

At least one member of staff should be in the room with the visitor and the member of staff leading the event must know where the visitor is at all times.

## **ii. Parents and Guardians**

The School Office must be notified in advance of an expected visit from a parent at least 1 hour before expected arrival and the parent must be added to the visitor list. Parents must always sign in and out of School during school hours.

Parents must be given a visitor's pass and remain in the waiting area of the School Office until the member of staff meeting the parent arrives to collect them. The focus of the meeting must be agreed in advance.

The School will not request DBS checks from parents, guardians, relatives of pupils and other visitors attending a sports day or similar event.

## **iii. Events**

Visitors who have been invited to attend a specific event should normally be managed within a pre-booked classroom or hosting room, and as a group wherever possible. Different arrangements will be appropriate in different circumstances, but in all cases a member of staff must be responsible for visitors who are in the School and for identifying how they will be managed on a particular occasion through the online events form which can be found on the School's intranet.

All other arrangements should accord with the **Visiting Speakers' Protocol** set out below, including adding the visitor's name and evidence of a risk assessment and pre-checks to the rolling annual spreadsheet which is shared with key staff and uploaded to Evolve.

## **iv. Parents' Evenings, Open Mornings, concerts, and similar, larger events**

A list of visitor or family names should be gathered through an RSVP system in advance of a parents' evening, opening morning, concert, or similar event.

A register of visitors should be taken at the start of the event and visitors should be given evacuation instructions and details of assembly points in case of a fire.

Visitors should only be allowed access to the School once instructed by the member of staff leading the event. Visitors should then be directed to the venue and access to the wider School site should be controlled. A plan for this should be shared with the School Office, DSL and relevant staff managing the event.

#### **v. Sporting Events**

Staff leading sporting events must comply with this Visitors' Policy and the School's Hosting Events and Fixtures Policy.

Visiting teams, spectators and their coaches must be known and feature on a visitors list prior to the fixture. Visitors must be greeted by the staff lead at the School gates if the gates are secured. Fixture lists are managed through the SoCs system. The member of staff leading the event must exercise good and diligent practice when managing visitors and ensure that visitors sign in.

#### **vi. Drama, Boarding/Departmental events, workshops, and Music Rehearsals**

Where adults, including teachers, from outside the School will be visiting the School to take part in an event and/or working with pupils as part of a one-off session or a series of workshops, they will complete the risk assessment at Schedule 2 and upload it to Evolve. The visiting speakers' rolling spreadsheet will also be updated to evidence due diligence checks have been completed.

Advice in respect of this process may be sought from the DSL.

#### **vii. Governors**

School Governors must undertake safeguarding checks similar to those for members of staff. The type of check will depend on whether the Governor is engaging in regulated activity or not. Further information can be found in KCSIE and the School's Safer Recruitment Policy. All Governors are required to sign into the School at reception and wear an ID badge when on the School site. New Governors will be provided with a copy of this Visitors' Policy as part of their induction.

#### **viii. Online Guests**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way visitors arrive at the School. The School makes use of digital platforms to facilitate pupil access to speakers, workshops, and educational events. When organising online events, risk assessments, ID checks and supervision must be carried out in accordance with this Visitors Policy and details must be uploaded to Evolve.

Events will take place over Google Meet, Zoom or Teams.

The member of staff leading the event is responsible for setting up the invites to all concerned, taking care to conceal visiting speakers' email addresses and data, and ensuring pupils cannot send the link outside the designated group or the School community.

The member of staff leading the event must follow all other aspects of the Visiting Speakers'

Protocol including: a risk assessment, adding the speakers' name to the rolling list of speakers and uploading details onto Evolve.

The member of staff leading the event, or a delegated member of staff who is sufficiently trained and briefed to manage online events, must be present online to guide, compere or lead the talk. They must also establish the ground rules for the talk at the beginning as well as any relevant 'trigger warnings' as appropriate for the age, stage, and content of the talk. They may also be required to facilitate dialogue through the 'chat' function of these platforms in a way they would not ordinarily do in a face-to-face setting.

As with any talk or workshop, a discussion should take place with the visiting speaker ahead of the event regarding tone, content, aims, delivery, and key issues. The member of staff leading the event must also review any materials which will be shared with pupils in advance. The visiting speaker must be directed to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the School's website. The visiting speakers' attendance at the event is taken as consent they have read and agreed to abide by this to comply with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

***ix. Coaches, paid club leaders, parent-teacher association members and outdoors education workshop leaders***

These members of visiting staff may attend the School more regularly (e.g. once per week or in concentrated intervals per term). The inspection expectation (as set out in paragraph 609\*+>(\*check) of the ISI Commentary) is that if the person is engaged in regulated activity in the school, they should normally be treated as 'staff' and should be included on the SCR.

It might not be appropriate, therefore, for these visitors to have a risk assessment and be added to the visiting speakers list each time they attend the School. They must, however, sign in to the relevant reception and the member of staff leading the event should ensure that the arrangements for their activity on/offsite are widely shared and known amongst members of staff.

## **DBS Checks**

For visitors who are at the School in a professional capacity, the member of staff in charge of the event must be assured that all such visitors have had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitors' employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks. The School will not ask to see the certificate in these circumstances). This is a legal requirement under KCSIE 2023.



## **Time of Day**

If the event begins before 5pm, all visitors must sign into the School Office and they should be briefed by the member of staff leading the event. The member of staff in charge of the event will escort pupils from other schools attending rehearsals or smaller departmental events to the correct location. This member of staff is also responsible for ensuring visitors are properly supervised and for knowing the names and number of pupils present in case of evacuation. They are also responsible for ensuring the visitor signs out at Reception when the event concludes.

If the event takes place or runs beyond 5pm the member of staff leading the event is responsible for ensuring a full visitor list, sign in and escorting the visitor to the correct venue in the School. If prefects are used, they should be in pairs. The member of staff is also responsible for ensuring visitors leave from the School via a signposted exit point at the end of the event.

## **Protocol for dealing with intruders on site**

An individual who has not followed the established visitors' procedure may or may not pose a threat to safety, but in any event should be questioned politely to establish the purpose of their visit.

Any member of staff who observes an individual who appears suspicious, out of place, unfamiliar or lost should take the following action:

- Ask them who they are on site to see and explain that visitors must report to the School Office. Escort them to the School Office.
- If the person appears agitated or refuses to leave, staff should ensure the area is clear of children and alert the School Office immediately, who will contact senior staff.
- If the person poses a clear threat, staff should not put themselves or pupils in danger and inform the School Office immediately, giving a description of the person and their location on site.

The **Head** will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to contact the police, unless there is an emergency (i.e. an immediate risk of danger) in which case the police must be contacted immediately.

School staff are reminded of the arrangements for visitors and this policy annually. Any concerns about a visitor should be reported to the DSL or one of the Deputy DSLs immediately.

## **Schedule 1**

### **Visiting Speakers' Protocol**

#### **Aims**

The aim of the Visiting Speakers' Protocol is:

- To ensure all visiting speakers to the School deliver successful, effective sessions with clear learning outcomes
- To ensure that all speakers have been risk-assessed by the School
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all stakeholders and to comply with KCSIE

#### **Protocol**

The Prevent statutory guidance ([https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty\\_guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty_guidance)) expects schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. This Visiting Speakers' Protocol was therefore drawn up having had regard to the Government's Prevent Duty guidance and the School's wider safeguarding obligations.

The School's responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they 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.

Visiting speakers could be one off, workshop-leaders, annual visitors, new speakers from a well-known company, parents, alumni, or others who are delivering content to pupils.

The aims of the talk or workshop must be agreed in advance and all speakers must be directed to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the School's website and any intended materials for use with children must be seen by the member of staff leading the event, with deferral to the DSL if appropriate.

#### **The following protocol must be followed:**

i. Initial checks on the speaker must be conducted by the member of staff responsible for organising the event as a way of assessing the risks to those in the School community. Staff should refer to the visiting speakers' risk assessment and set out a Schedule 2 below to ensure thorough checks have taken place. This may include, for visitors in a professional capacity, receiving an assurance that the

visitor has had the appropriate DBS check. The name of the visiting speaker must be added to the rolling spreadsheet of speakers annually. This also evidences appropriate checks have taken place.

**ii.** An outline of the talk, including aims, age group, staff concerns and a copy of the presentation will be requested in advance by the member of staff leading the event. The name of the speaker and title of the talk will be recorded as an event on Evolve.

**iii.** The School will not use a visitor or speaker where there is found to be any inappropriate, out of date or harmful materials or their internet or social media presence is deemed unsuitable; including anything which can be linked to extremism, undermining British Values, extremist groups and movements. The DSL may decide to cancel or postpone an event if they have any concerns about the speaker.

**iv.** On arrival at the School, visiting speakers will be required to show current photographic identification, asked to sign into the visitors' book, wear their visitor's badge prominently at all times and wait at the School Office until the event organiser arrives.

**v.** A member of staff will be present throughout the session, and the event organiser must know where the speaker will be in the School building at all times. The member of staff observing the session must be vigilant to ensure that what is said is in-keeping with the School ethos, the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and British values.

**vi.** In the unlikely event that the talk fails to meet requirements in the professional judgement of the member of staff observing, they have the right to interrupt and stop a presentation. The member of staff will report this to the DSL as soon as possible.

**vii.** Staff leaders should record an evaluation of the event and/or speaker on Evolve.

**viii.** If planning a series of speakers, for example in Sixth Form General Studies, or academic speakers programmes, a list of the term's speakers should be uploaded onto Evolve and shared with the School Office in advance.

**ix.** If planning to invite external schools and guests to listen to the visiting speaker, the event leader should follow the School's Educational Visits Policy, ensure permission for this has been granted by the Head and that sufficient planning and resources are in place for a larger event of this variety.

Any information gathered pursuant to the Visitors' Policy will be kept in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy.

## **Issues when using visitors in School**

When event organisers have identified potential speakers, they should firstly consider whether there is anything that could place a member of the audience at risk or harm.

The event organiser needs to ensure the context of the talk is 'safe', even when the content may be challenging, and that child protection and safeguarding policies, including confidentiality and reporting, are effectively reported to the DSL.

## **Dealing with sensitive or controversial issues**

Thought and care is needed when planning an educational speaker or workshop surrounding sensitive issues.

Staff should be alert to the pupils' individual needs in the audience and special care is needed when dealing with topics which are potentially sensitive or controversial. Members of staff should not share individual details with visiting speakers which would identify a child, however they should make the visitor aware of potential concerns broadly and discuss how best to manage this.

To ensure pupils feel safe, staff and pupils will be involved in the establishment of 'classroom rules' which set the tone for the lesson and make it clear how everyone is expected to listen and behave throughout the session. This may also involve 'trigger warnings' in advance, and plans made for pupils to leave if they need to. This is also why another member of staff should accompany talks to facilitate this and other events such as medical issues requiring attention, behaviour management etc.

Part of planning should include how pupils will deal with the information learned in the session once they leave the classroom, so thought should be given to how they will revisit materials in tutor time, RSE, PSHE or similar sessions in school. Thought should also be given to how pupils might as a result of a session avoid gossip, malicious comment and sharing information intended only for that session and not for public consumption. This applies to staff, pupils, and visitors.

## **Confidentiality**

Visitors must be made aware of and abide by the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and disclosure/confidentiality policy.

Visitors, pupils, and staff observing the session must be alert to the difference between providing advice and providing a learning opportunity for groups of pupils.

Sometimes, a visitor's day job may involve giving and/or providing confidential advice and support to individual pupils. However, the speaker must understand the distinction between doing this and the School's expectation of them delivering a talk to pupils in a professional, objective capacity. The talk leader or delegated member of staff should continue to be present at the end of talks to manage this. Pupils, likewise, should be made clear about this distinction, with appropriate support and signposting of information given as needed to follow up.

## **Teacher Involvement**

A member of staff will be in the talk at all times and the degree of their involvement should be discussed and agreed beforehand.

The teacher observing will be required to give feedback to the relevant staff about the content/outcomes of the session.

The member of staff observing may 'step-in' at various points to add to, clarify understanding or deal with an issue that it is not appropriate for a visitor to deal with.

Visitors should not be left alone with young people: a member of staff in the room will also ensure that appropriate follow-up work is planned in School and that appropriate safeguarding measures have been taken in case a child makes a complaint or allegation against the visitor.

In any talk, large or small, there should always be another staff member present.

## **Schedule 2**

### **Visiting Speakers' Risk Assessment**

This checklist will be used by all staff to support all stages of planning and hosting a visiting speaker.

**To be completed by the Event Organiser and uploaded to Evolve.**

**Add the speakers' name, confirming checks to the rolling Google spreadsheet for the relevant academic year:**

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PK9QQmQLFahOoOpK9ffGuK1wBwPcAw14izxYtHcXmdA/edit#gid=2087132834>

**Name of organiser:**

**Date and name of Event:**

**Speaker name and contact details:**

**Audience details:**

### **Researching a speaker/visitor**

- the DSL aware of any concerns I have
- I am clear what the rationale is for bringing in this speaker, and that there will be clear outcomes from the session, in line with School aims and policies.
- I am confident that the external speaker can bring something to the educational setting that a member of staff cannot, such as their professional background and/or experience and that they are an appropriate role model.
  - I have checked the speaker's online presence beyond their own website, by the use of standard internet searches on an internet search engine, including their digital footprint and whether they come recommended from other schools. I have also made arising from this.
  - I am able to explain how this session will be used to support development of the key skills/messages/ School learning plans.
- The speaker has the necessary or relevant qualifications (e.g., teaching qualifications, e-safety training, child protection qualifications) and should provide evidence of this.
- For visitors who are at the school in a professional capacity, I am assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitors' employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks. The school should not ask to see the certificate in these circumstances).

### **Making contact with the speaker**

- I have agreed on a date, time, year group, focus and outcome and have recorded details of the event on Evolve.
- The speaker is aware of the school's expectations regarding learning outcome and compliance with the School Visitors' Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Completing paperwork**

- I will only formally book the event once the relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily.

## **Planning the event**

- I have booked school rooms and spaces/organised staff in accordance with the planned events and trips policies.
- I have asked the speaker to provide the school with materials that will be used during the session plus suitable follow up content from the session; I have 'screened' these beforehand if necessary. I am satisfied that the materials are not in any way contrary to the School's Equality Policy, the ethos of inclusion of the School, British values and do not raise any concern in relation to the Prevent Duty.
  - The speaker has been made aware that a copy of presentations will be required in advance, acknowledging third party sources and they also know that these will be screened by the event organiser.
  - The speaker knows that they should bring in a photo I.D. on the day of the talk and that records of all visiting speakers will be retained for reference by the school, in line with the School's Data Protection Policy.
  - I have made our speaker aware of our specific School settings/context/local/ year group trends and have forwarded a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, or will make it available on the day.

## **On the day**

- I have informed the School Office about the event and the name of the speaker and their name is on the visiting speakers rolling list.
  - I have briefed any staff observing the session.
  - I know that staff running both the session and follow up sessions are trained to deal with any disclosures or problems pupils bring to them as a result of this session.
  - I have updated the speaker with any new specific needs of the pupils in line with the school's confidentiality policies.

## **After the visit**

- I have evaluated the speaker on Evolve or provided feedback directly onto the visiting speakers rolling spreadsheet, advising colleagues including the DSL if there are safeguarding concerns.