



# School Visitors and Communication Policy

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## 1) Policy Statement

The Governing Body and Headteacher assure all visitors a warm, friendly and professional welcome to Bishop Stopford's School, whatever the purpose of their visit. All staff follow the Code of Conduct Policy when dealing with each other or communicating with parents/carers and other stakeholders.

The School has a legal duty of care for the health, safety, security and wellbeing of all students and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to safeguard all students from subjection to any form of harm, abuse or nuisance. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher and senior staff to ensure that this duty is uncompromised at all times.

In performing this duty, the Governing Body 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 school's policy and procedures. Failure so to do may result in a visitor being asked to leave the school site.

The Governors and Headteacher also have a duty of care to ensure that staff, while carrying out their duties at work, through face to face meetings, via communication over the phone or online are not abused or harassed in any way by parents, carers or members of the public. Interaction with parents/carers is always in keeping with our home school agreement where it states that parents/carers must respond appropriately to staff and other students and never use aggressive or confrontational behaviour around, or in the vicinity of the school premises or in their communication with members of staff or students

Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or student feel threatened, humiliated or intimidated. This can be through face-to-face contact, via the telephone or in written communication (including social media)

The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Any kind of insult as attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine
- Any kind of threat
- Raising of voice so as to be intimidating
- Physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close to him/her or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- Use of foul or abusive language
- Allegations that turn out to be vexatious or malicious
- Using devices to record meetings, without permission, as this is not the common practice of this school

At Bishop Stopford's School we have adopted a zero tolerance policy for this type of behaviour.

The Headteacher may decide to bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils and it is enough for a member of staff or a student to feel threatened.

In this instance the Headteacher will inform the individual that they have been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing and following this the individual must be allowed to present their case.

The school can either:

- Bar them temporarily, until the individual has the opportunity to formally present their side
- Tell them they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side by a set deadline

After the individual's side has been heard, the school can decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision should be reviewed within a reasonable time and is decided by the school.

Should the situation be deemed unlawful the school will have no option but to inform the police of such behaviour, which could result in a criminal charge being brought against the perpetrator.

## **Policy Responsibility**

The School Business Manager is the member of staff responsible for implementation, coordination and review of this policy. This person will also be responsible for liaising with the school's site staff and Child Protection Officer as appropriate. All breaches of this procedure must be reported to the School Business Manager.

## **Aim**

To safeguard all children both during school hours curriculum and out of school hours activities which are arranged by the school. The ultimate aim is to ensure that students at Bishop Stopford's School can learn and enjoy extra-curricular experiences, in an environment where they are safe from harm.

## **Objectives**

To have in place a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of external visitors to the school to ensure they meet statutory safeguarding guidance.

To have in place a clear protocol and procedure for parents/carers and other stakeholders in relation to their communication with the school to ensure our staff and students are protected from unacceptable behaviour.

To ensure all the above objectives are understood by all staff, governors, visitors and parents and conforms to child protection and safeguarding guidelines.

## **Where and to Whom the Policy Applies**

The school is deemed to have control and responsibility for its students anywhere on the school site (i.e. within the school boundary fence), during normal school hours, during after school activities and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities. This policy therefore applies to:

- All 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. external workshops)
- All governors of the school
- All parents and volunteers
- All students
- Other Education related personnel (External Advisors, Inspectors)
- Building & Maintenance and all other Independent contractors visiting the school premises
- Independent contractors who may transport students on minibuses or in taxis.

## 2) Protocol and Procedures - Visitors to the School

All visitors to the school may be asked to bring formal identification with them at the time of their visit (unless they are named on the approved visitors list as set out below). They must follow the procedure below.

### Access to the school building

- Once on site, all visitors must report to reception first. No visitor is permitted to enter the school via any other entrance under any circumstances.
- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them. They should be ready to produce formal identification upon request.
- **All staff are asked to inform reception of visitors who will be arriving and time of arrival**
- All visitors will be asked to sign in via the electronic visitors' system, at reception.
- A photograph of the visitor's face will be taken and a photo ID pass generated. The photo ID will be placed in a plastic holder and visitor lanyard provided, which must be worn around the neck and be clearly visible to staff and students at all times while on the school premises
- All visitors working unsupervised with students will be asked to produce their DBS certificate together with photo ID, i.e. Passport or driving licence. Without this they will not be granted access. On each visit to the school visitors will be asked to sign in electronically
- **All visitors will be given a key information leaflet, detailing safeguarding and health and safety whilst on site**

### Colour Coded Lanyards

- Visitors on the approved list (see below) or who have produced a copy of their DBS certificate with approved photo ID, will be given a **Green** lanyard to validate their approved safeguarding status and will be able to move freely around the school.
- Visitors without a current DBS or formal identification will be required to wear a **Red** lanyard identification badge – the lanyard and badge must remain visible throughout their visit.
- Visitors with a **Red** lanyard will under no circumstances be allowed to meet with students on their own at any time
- Visitors with a **Red** lanyard will be escorted from reception to their point of contact OR their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site **and must stay with them at all times**
- A **Red** lanyard visitor must not be allowed to move about the site unaccompanied at any time and must be escorted everywhere if wearing a **Red** lanyard. It is the responsibility of the member of staff receiving the visitor to ensure this safeguarding procedure is followed. Anyone who is unclear of the procedures for visitors must contact the School Business Manager for further advice
- Governors are on the approved list and wear a **blue** school lanyard when on site
- Long Term agency staff and daily supply will wear a **blue** school lanyard when on site
- **Volunteers are on the approved list and wear a blue school lanyard when on site**
- Our current cleaning contractor is Lewis and Graves and all cleaning staff have a **blue** school lanyard

## **Approved Visitor List**

The School Single Central Record and the reception holds an approved visitor list for visitors who frequently visit the site, such as Governors, LBE staff, social workers, medical personnel or contractors etc.

These visitors will have already met the relevant enhanced DBS criteria to meet statutory guidance

To qualify for this list the visitor must have demonstrated prior to the visit that:

- They have a current enhanced DBS certificate and a copy of the reference number has been registered on the school's Single Central Record (SCR) (a current DBS is defined as no more than 2 years old and the original must be shown with photo ID).
- External agencies via the Local Authority e.g. social workers, catering staff, school improvement staff etc. are on the approved visitors list and official letters, which are sent to the school annually from the Local Authority are kept with the Single Central Record
- Visitors on the approved list must follow the same procedure on entry to the premises (e.g. sign in via the electronic visitors system, at reception following the requested information on screen e.g. their name, organisation, who they are visiting and car registration). A copy of the approved visitor list will be kept in reception. Approved visitors will be given a green lanyard. However, external agencies via the Local Authority will be allowed to wear their Local Authority approved lanyard
- All visitors, even if in school for a short time during the day, will be recorded on the Single Central Record (SCR) to meet safeguarding statutory guidance.

## **Supply/Agency Staff**

- Supply teachers must show a copy of their DBS certificate along with photo ID (passport or driving licence) at reception prior to gaining access to school areas
- Supply teaching agencies will also provide a vetting checklist as evidence to confirm that they have carried out the required safeguarding checks for their staff. This will be sent to the School Business Manager to who ensure the enhanced DBS number is added to the schools Single Central Record
- Supply teachers will receive a copy of the Bishop Stopford's Cover Staff Information Pack prior to arrival or on arrival where safeguarding, health and safety and other procedures are outlined.

## **Departure Procedures**

On departing from the school, visitors must leave via reception and:

- Sign out via the Visitors Registration System
- Return identification badge to reception

## **Safeguarding Guidance for Visitors to the School**

Adults visiting or working on the school site play an important part in the life of the school. Visitors can play a part in keeping students safe whilst working at, or visiting the school by observing the following guidelines:

- Do not initiate verbal or physical contact with students unless it is appropriate and a part of the agreed reason for your visit
- Do not give any personal information to students, such as your mobile phone number or address. Do not provide students with your personal e-mail address, and only provide your professional work email if it is necessary as part of the reason for your visit – a member of the Senior Leadership Team must give authorisation for any professional work email exchange
- If you have concerns that a student may be at risk of harm, report it immediately to the senior designated person for child protection (Mr G Sonuga, Deputy Headteacher) who can be contacted via the main school office. Do not discuss your concerns with a student, and do not carry out an investigation
- If a student makes a disclosure to you, do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you will need to talk to someone else. Inform the designated person for child protection (Mr G Sonuga, Deputy Headteacher) of your concerns immediately via the school office
- All visitors must be mindful of the ethos and values of Bishop Stopford's School and not to seek to indoctrinate or influence students in any way that opposes our commitment to equality, tolerance and the promotion of British values

Further guidance, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy can be found on the school website - [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)

## **Unknown and Uninvited Visitors to the School**

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 on the school site.

In the event that a visitor refuses to comply, they should be asked to leave the site immediately and the Headteacher and School Business Manager should be informed promptly. In the absence of the Headteacher / School Business Manager, please contact another member of the Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher/Business Manager will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to inform the police.

If an unknown 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.

## **Governors and Volunteers**

All Governors and volunteers must comply with the Disclosure Barring Service procedures completing the disclosure form via Heads office. Volunteers will need to complete all the pre-volunteer paperwork before commencing with the school

Governors will be issued with a blue school lanyard on commencing with the school. Governors and volunteers must sign in on the electronic visitors system on arrival to school

New Governors will be made aware of this policy and must ensure that they are familiar with its procedures as part of their induction. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Chair of Governors or the Clerk to the Governors.

## **Photographs**

Visitors are prohibited from taking photographs whilst on the school site unless they gain permission from the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team

## **Fire and Evacuation**

At reception, the receptionist will make visitors aware of the evacuation procedures and the fire evacuation assembly point and a leaflet will be given out explaining our visitors' protocol and fire evacuation. The schools fire alarm is a continuous bell. Visitors must leave the building by the nearest exit and assembly on the school field. Staff wearing a high visual jacket will be able to support visitor's evacuation during an emergency.

## **Smoking**

Bishop Stopford's School operates a no smoking policy. Please do not smoke anywhere on the school site internal or external areas

## **3) Communication via Telephone, in Writing or Online (Zoom, School cloud or MS Teams etc.)**

The expectation is that parents/carers and other stakeholders will follow the correct procedures when dealing with staff members via telephone, in writing or via an online service e.g. Zoom, School cloud, MS Teams etc.

The following is not an exhaustive list but it is hope that it will ensure clarity about what is acceptable and what is not in their communication with the school:

- Always use appropriate language and never demean, distress or offend the decency of others e.g. making degrading, suggestive or insensitive comments or remarks

- Do not make derogatory comments or seek to undermine the Governors, the Headteacher or other staff members
- Respect the rights of others and treat them with dignity. Never threaten, or intimidate anyone
- Always be polite, responsive and treat people with respect and consideration
- Use appropriate language in written communication and do not write in capital letters or use exclamation marks as this could be interpreted as shouting or aggressive communication

If the above procedures are not followed, then the school may have no option but to communicate with parents/carers or stakeholders via an intermediary from the Governing Body or/and support from the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS) and the Local Authority.

### **Linked Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related school policies including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct
- DFE guidance, Controlling access to school premises, 27 November 2018

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in March 27