

EXTERNAL VISITORS AND SPEAKERS IN SCHOOL

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External visitors and speakers in school

Our values and curriculum at Falinge encourages visitors and external contributors to work with our children and staff. We value the work of volunteers, particularly those who have a connection with the school, and actively encourage external speakers to contribute to our curriculum. The guidance here seeks to support staff, visiting contributors, volunteers and peripatetic colleagues in ensuring we work together to safeguard everyone in our community at Falinge Park High School.

It is essential that this guidance is seen in relation to the local Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, Prevent duty and Local Authority Guidance for Safe Working Practice.

It is essential that we are clear that any visitor/speaker/contributor understands that we are working in a space whereby the statutory guidance is clear that schools should be safe spaces in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, and learn how to challenge these ideas. Schools should, however, be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues. These duties are imposed on maintained schools by sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996. Similar duties are placed on the proprietors of independent schools, including academies (but not 16-19 academies) by the Independent School Standards. It should also be clear that as Falinge Park High School explicitly teaches Human Rights through our #SpeakTruthtoPower #RipplesofHope programme, we encourage pupils to engage in dialogue, rather than debating to win an argument.

A central record of visitors, contributors to sessions should be kept with Lisa Ripley who holds information on DBS. We do not encourage visitors into school unless they are here delivering a session and/or working with a group or an individual. If, for example, past colleagues want to visit and/or current colleagues who are on maternity leave wish to come into school then a request needs to be made to the Headteacher.

Prior to an external speaker or visitor coming to work with pupils, it is important that as a school we undertake due diligence insofar as is reasonable. This may include, exploring where they have delivered before, the feedback from other organisations, looking at links on their website. It is advised that we do not allow speakers in to school unless we have built a relationship with them first of all and we are clear of their reputation. Where an external contributor is in school for a period of time and it is appropriate for the contributor to work alone with children then all DBS requirements must be followed.¹

- We have agreed beforehand the aims, objectives and content of the session.
- Provided the contributor with appropriate information about the group.
- Arranged availability of a suitable room, ensured that resources are booked and the external contributor has everything they need.

¹ Peripatetic staff; NHS; Early Help; Counsellors; Mentors etc.

- Ensure that the member of Falinge staff stays in the classroom and is responsible for the overall classroom management/safeguarding of the pupils.
- Prepare the pupils in advance to clarify with them the content of the session and to think of relevant questions.
- Ensure there is follow-up work.