


# Visiting Speaker Policy

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**C**  **MPASS**  
PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

## Monitoring, evaluation and review

This Policy will be reviewed by the Standards Committee on 3-yearly annual cycle or sooner if statutory guidance changes or safeguarding learning indicates the need for review.

Adherence to the policy will be monitored by the Local School Committee.

Policy adopted:	Spring 2026
Other related policies:	Safer Recruitment Safeguarding Staff and volunteer codes of conduct Prevent Data Retention Complaints
Next Review:	Spring 2029

## **1. Purpose**

The Compass Partnership of Schools believe visiting speakers play an important role in enriching the school curriculum by bringing learning to life and offering children opportunities to engage with real-world experiences beyond the classroom. The purpose of inviting visiting speakers is to broaden pupils' understanding, inspire curiosity, and deepen learning by hearing from individuals with specialist knowledge, skills, or lived experience linked to key topics. Through carefully planned visits, speakers can support curriculum objectives, promote positive role models, develop pupils' cultural capital, and help children make meaningful connections between their learning, their community, and the wider world, while ensuring all content is age-appropriate and aligned with the school's values and safeguarding expectations.

This policy sets out a simple, proportionate framework to ensure visiting speakers:

- Make a positive educational contribution
- Are appropriate for the age and context of the audience
- Meet the Trust's safeguarding and legal responsibilities.

The policy is designed to safeguard children, support professional judgement and avoid unnecessary administrative burden.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all visiting speakers and external visitors invited to speak to pupils during the school day or as part of school-organised activities, whether in person or online. It covers all year groups, staff, governors, volunteers, and external organisations involved in arranging, approving, or hosting visiting speakers. The scope of the policy includes assemblies, classroom sessions, workshops, enrichment days, and special events, and sets out expectations for safeguarding, supervision, content suitability, and compliance with the school's values and statutory duties. It also applies to any materials, resources, or digital content shared by visiting speakers and outlines the responsibilities of school staff to ensure visits are appropriately planned, risk-assessed, and monitored.

This policy should be read alongside each school's safeguarding and child protection policy, Prevent arrangements and visitor procedures.

## **3. Definition of a visiting speaker**

A visiting speaker is any individual invited into school, or engaged remotely, to speak to pupils in a planned or structured context such as an assembly, lesson, workshop or enrichment session.

## 4. Principles

The principles of engaging with visiting speakers are:

- **Clear purpose** / educational value– visits are planned with a defined educational aim linked to the curriculum or pupils' wider development.
- **Safeguarding and duty of care** – pupil safety and wellbeing are prioritised, with appropriate checks, supervision, and risk assessment in place.
- **Appropriateness** – content, language, and activities are suitable for pupils' age, understanding, and context.
- **Transparency and preparation** – the speaker's background, session content, and any resources are shared and agreed in advance.
- **Balance and neutrality** – pupils should not be exposed to biased, political, or extremist views.
- **Professional boundaries** – visiting speakers understand and adhere to the school's behaviour, safeguarding, and conduct expectations.
- **Balance and objectivity** – sessions avoid indoctrination, bias, or promotion of personal, political, or commercial agendas.
- **Inclusion and respect** – engagement promotes equality, diversity, and respectful dialogue, reflecting the school's values.
- **Staff responsibility** – school staff remain present, actively supervise, and intervene if necessary.
- **Evaluation and reflection** – visits are reviewed to ensure they met their intended purpose and supported pupils' learning safely.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### Headteacher (or delegated senior leader)

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for enabling the safe, effective, and purposeful use of visiting speakers within the school. This includes:

- ensuring there are robust procedures in place for approving and monitoring visiting speakers,

- ensures that safeguarding duties are upheld, including appropriate risk assessment, supervision, and compliance with statutory guidance.
- Promoting a culture of transparency, educational integrity, and inclusion, ensuring that visiting speakers align with the school's values and curriculum aims.
- addressing any concerns arising from visits, and ensuring that engagement with visiting speakers contributes positively to pupils' learning, wellbeing, and development.
- Share positive and effective experiences across the Trust to enable a wider pool of pupils to benefit
- ensures this policy is implemented consistently.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

- advises on safeguarding, suitability and risk including risks relating to Prevent
- reviews visits that involve sensitive or potentially contentious content.
- considers pupils for whom the session may cause distress or trauma for, depending on content

### **Organising member of staff (host)**

- completes the Visiting Speaker Request (Appendix A)
- ensures approval from Headteacher is secured before the visit
- **Identifies the purpose** of the visit and ensures it aligns with curriculum objectives or pupils' development.
- **Conducts background checks** on the speaker, including verifying identity, qualifications, and references where applicable.
- **Ensures safeguarding compliance**, including DBS checks if required and adherence to school safeguarding policies.
- **Reviews and approves content** to ensure it is age-appropriate, balanced, and inclusive.
- **Coordinates logistics**, such as timing, venue, resources, and technology needs.
- **Communicates expectations** clearly to the speaker regarding behaviour, professional boundaries, and school policies.
- **Supervises the session** in collaboration with other staff, ensuring pupils are safe and engaged.

- **Provides pre-visit guidance** to pupils, including context for the session and appropriate behaviour.
- **Monitors and evaluates the session** afterward, gathering feedback and identifying any follow-up actions.
- **Reports concerns** to the Headteacher or safeguarding lead if any issues arise before, during, or after the visit.
- **Briefs the speaker** on expectations and safeguarding arrangements

## **6. Approval and checks (proportionate approach)**

The Partnership uses a two-tier approach to visiting speakers.

### **Tier 1: Routine, low-risk speakers**

Examples include careers speakers, authors, artists, sports people, local community representatives and mainstream public services.

Minimum requirements:

- completion of the Visiting Speaker Request form – (Appendix A)
- confirmation of the speaker's identity and organisation
- confirmation of content, audience and format
- staff supervision throughout the session.

### **Tier 2: Speakers or content requiring additional consideration**

Examples include sessions that may address:

- relationships or sex education
- online safety, exploitation or criminality
- substance misuse or mental health
- faith, belief or political issues
- other sensitive or potentially contested themes.

Additional requirements:

- review and agreement by the DSL before confirming the visit
- discussion of content and approach in advance and sight of materials where appropriate
- clear boundaries agreed for questions, discussion and staff facilitation.

Where concerns cannot be satisfactorily addressed, the visit must not proceed.

## **7. Safeguarding arrangements during visits**

For all visiting speakers:

- speakers must sign in and follow the school's visitor procedures
- a member of school staff must supervise at all times
- speakers must not have unsupervised access to pupils
- speakers must not take photographs or record pupils unless explicitly agreed and compliant with school policy
- personal data must not be accessed or shared
- any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the DSL.

## **8. DBS and suitability checks**

The Trust applies proportionate safeguarding checks:

For visitors who are there in a professional capacity, schools and colleges should check ID and be assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks. Schools and colleges should not ask to see the certificate in these circumstances).

Where a visiting speaker is supervised at all times and not undertaking regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check is not normally required.

Schools should not request DBS evidence unnecessarily.

If the nature of the visit changes, professional judgement must be applied by the Headteacher and DSL.

Official photographic identification will be checked at the School prior to entry beyond the reception area.

Supervision and clear expectations remain the primary safeguarding controls.

### **9. Prevent, extremism and unsuitable content**

The Compass Partnership of Schools will not permit visiting speakers where there is reason to believe they may:

- promote extremist views or organisations
- encourage unlawful behaviour
- promote hatred, intolerance or discrimination
- use school premises to pursue a personal, political or ideological agenda.

Where suitability cannot be confidently established, or where concerns remain following review, the visit must be declined.

### **10. Political impartiality**

Where content has political dimensions:

- schools will ensure balance and impartiality appropriate to pupils' age and understanding
- visiting speakers must not engage in party-political campaigning
- staff will actively facilitate sessions to maintain neutrality and educational purpose

### **11. Online and remote speakers**

For virtual sessions:

- a member of staff must be present throughout
- access links must be shared securely
- recording is only permitted with prior approval
- chat, Q&A and interactive functions should be moderated by staff.

### **12. Right to refuse, stop or cancel**

Schools retain the right to:

- refuse a visiting speaker where suitability or safeguarding cannot be assured
- cancel a visit if concerns arise before the session
- stop a session immediately if conduct or content gives rise to concern.

This applies regardless of prior approval.

### **13. Record keeping**

Each school will maintain a light-touch record of visiting speakers, including:

- completed Visiting Speaker Request
- date, speaker, organisation, topic and audience
- any concerns or actions taken.

Records should be retained in line with existing safeguarding and information management arrangements.

### **14. Concerns / Complaints**

If concerns, complaints, or safeguarding allegations arise regarding a visiting speaker, the school will act immediately to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed and statutory safeguarding procedures followed. The school will investigate the matter appropriately, involve external authorities if required, and provide support to any affected pupils or staff. Detailed records will be maintained, and the school will review its policies and procedures to prevent recurrence. Parents and carers will be informed where appropriate, while maintaining confidentiality and prioritising pupil protection.

## Appendix A: Visiting Speaker Request

**School:**

**Date and time:**

**Organising member of staff:**

**Speaker name and organisation:**

**Contact details:Topic and purpose:**

**Audience (year group/number): Format:** assembly / lesson / workshop / online

**Does the session involve sensitive themes?** Yes / No

If yes, outline briefly:

**Checks completed (tick):**

### Before the Visit

- Confirm the educational purpose and curriculum link of the visit.
- Check the speaker's identity, qualifications, and references.
- Confirm social media postings are in keeping with the views and intentions of the school
- Ensure safeguarding compliance (DBS checks if required).
- Review and approve content for age-appropriateness, balance, and inclusivity.
- Agree expectations with the speaker (behaviour, professional boundaries, school policies).
- Plan logistics: date, time, venue, resources, and technology needs.
- Inform pupils about the visit and set expectations for conduct.

### During the Visit

- Ensure adequate staff supervision at all times.
- Monitor the speaker's content and interaction with pupils.
- Be prepared to intervene if content or behaviour is inappropriate.

### **After the Visit**

- Gather feedback from pupils and staff.
- Report any concerns, complaints, or safeguarding issues to the DSL.
- Document the visit and any incidents.
- Review the visit to identify improvements for future engagements.
- Share any positive experiences across the Trust to support other schools and provide secure recommendations

### **Approval:**

Name and role:

Signature:

Date:

## Appendix B: Visiting Speaker expectations

Visiting speakers are expected to ensure sessions demonstrate:

- not photograph, record or collect data from pupils
- accept staff supervision and intervention where required
- **Purpose and Relevance** – Sessions must have a clear educational purpose and support the curriculum or pupils' development.
- **Age-Appropriate Content** – All material, language, and activities must be suitable for the age, maturity, and needs of the pupils.
- **Professional Conduct** – Speakers must behave professionally, respect school policies, and follow instructions from staff at all times.
- **Safeguarding Compliance** – All speakers must have appropriate background checks (e.g., DBS) and comply with safeguarding requirements.
- **No Promotion of Personal or Political Agendas** – Speakers must avoid political, religious, or commercial indoctrination.
- **Respect and Inclusion** – Content and delivery must promote equality, diversity, and respect for all pupils and staff.
- **Supervision** – Speakers must remain under the supervision of school staff throughout the visit.
- **Transparency** – Session content, materials, and resources must be agreed with staff before the visit.
- **No Contact Outside School** – Direct contact with pupils outside school hours or platforms is prohibited unless agreed and supervised by staff.
- **Reporting Concerns** – Any incidents, complaints, or safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to a member of school staff.