Guidance on Visitors, including VIPs to Nottinghamshire schools.

1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to help schools, academies and colleges manage visitors in a way that ensures the safety of children and adults whilst on the school site.
The responsibility for this lies with the Head teacher, senior leadership team and the governing body or trust. DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 page 7 informs: ***All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.*** There will be occasions when schools and colleges have several types of visitors, those with a professional role i.e., educational psychologists, social workers etc. those connected with the building, grounds maintenance, children's relatives or other visitors attending an activity in school such as a sports day.
For visitors provided via a third party see KCSiE 24 paragraphs 292-295.

Schools and colleges should not request DBS checks or barred list checks, or ask to see existing DBS certificates, for visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day.

Headteachers and principals should use their professional judgement about the need to escort or supervise such visitors.

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).

Whilst external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help schools and colleges enrich children's education, careful consideration should be given to the suitability of any external organisations.

NOTE: KCSiE 2024 Part Three Safer Recruitment on pages 56 and 89 at paragraphs 305 to 318, provides clarity on Visitors to schools/colleges. See link Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

We offer this guidance as a framework for schools, academies, and colleges to adjust and develop to ensure it fits your learning environments profile and mirrors the individual 'safeguarding arrangements' in place. It should also be referenced within and aligned to your school, academy, or college child protection policy.

Coronavirus and other contagious infections and viruses – head teachers are responsible for ensuring that visitors to the site are effectively managed within the existing system of school control measures and risk assessments. Advice on keeping the school community safe and limiting the spread of the virus is available from Health and Safety

2. Guidance and Responsibilities

Policy statement and principles

Christ Church CoE Primary School is committed to ensuring and promoting the safeguarding and well-being of all the children in our care. We have a shared understanding that we are ALL responsible for keeping children safe and protecting them from harm, and have in place rigorous systems, processes and policies to ensure that everyone is aware of their specific roles and responsibilities. These policies and procedures reflect and detail our school's safeguarding arrangements and ensure that any actions are taken in a timely manner to ensure we safeguard and promote children's welfare should concerns arise or incidents occur through inappropriate actions by visitors, including VIPs.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors/ Trust are responsible for implementing this guidance and managing visitors to the school, which may include an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required. The day-to-day arrangements need to be understood by all staff. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that visitors to the school are properly welcomed and managed safely within school.

All staff must be made aware of this guidance and that it applies to all visitors equally, including VIPs.

It should be included within the establishment's whole school child protection policy and referenced in the school's health and safety policy and access policy.

Types of visitors

There are several different types of legitimate visitors to a school:

- Visitors who attend the school in connection with children and who have a professional role i.e., employees of Nottinghamshire County Council Children and Family Services such as social workers, SCIEO, educational psychologist, SEND officers, NCC HR officers, Officers from the Fair Access team, TETC team or other support workers or health related professionals.
- Visitors attending to work with children in roles such as peripatetic tutors, sports coaches.
- Visitors who attend the school in connection with the building, grounds, or equipment i.e. builders, contractors, maintenance staff or IT workers
- VIPs – Very Important People
- Other legitimate visitors i.e. parents, parent helpers, school governors,
- *Organisations which have input to the curriculum, learning and support, for example, such as the NSPCC, staff from the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, sports specialists/coaches, music tutors, alternative education providers and PCSO's, Early Intervention Officer's.*

Visits should be planned to ensure they run smoothly considering the need to safeguard both children, the reputation of the school and the visitor. Where required,

risk assessments should be undertaken. The head teacher or senior leadership team must be aware of visits in advance.

3. Procedures for ALL visitors

Our school requires the following procedures to be followed:

- Wherever possible, visits to schools should be pre-arranged.
- All visitors must report to reception first and not enter the school via any other entrance.
- At reception, all visitors should explain the purpose of their visit and who has invited them.
- They should be ready to produce formal identification.
- All Nottinghamshire County Council staff should show their photo ID card.
- *All visitors will be asked to sign the visitors' record book or equivalent such as an electronic recording system which may include a photograph of the visitor being taken.*
- If the visitor is part of a large group of visitors a separate register may be used
- A visitor's badge should be worn and displayed prominently.
- Visitors should wait in the reception area until an appropriate member of staff meets them to be escorted to their destination.
- A member of staff should accompany all visitors. Visitors must not be alone with pupils/children unless this is a legitimate part of their role for example a social worker seeing a child and the school has assured itself that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).
- If visitors find they are alone with pupils/children, they should report to a member of staff or reception. This should be explained to visitors.
- On departing the school, visitors should leave via reception, sign out of the building, return their visitor badge and be seen to leave the premises.
- School reception staff should check the signing in and out' records regularly to monitor compliance with these procedures.
- The Head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) along with the nominated Safeguarding Governor should also monitor compliance with the agreed specified visitor's policy procedures. Should any shortfalls be found, these should be addressed as a matter of urgency, to ensure children and visitors to the school are kept safe.

4. Special categories of visitor

4.1 VIPs

A VIP is usually an external visitor of importance or influence who commands special treatment:

- Royalty and Royal Representatives
- Government (Members of Parliament, including government ministers and politicians)
- Diplomats and Senior Public Servants
- Chairpersons/ Chief Executives Officers of major companies and organisations

- Senior Officers from Charitable Trusts
- Religious leaders
- Civic and local community leaders
- Notable academics, Olympians, Authors, high profile prize winners and those with celebrity status, in particular areas such as sport, music, the arts, media including celebrities and who are likely to inspire others.

Important considerations for VIP visits

An invitation to a VIP should be made in advance with sufficient time to enable appropriate planning for a safe and successful visit recognising how the visit will be hosted and importantly who will be escorting and supervising the visitor at all times.

In general terms VIPs should be treated in a very similar way to any other visitor but a degree of common sense should prevail e.g., it is unlikely that the King or another senior member of the Royal Family would be expected to show, or wear ID. Members of their entourage though should be expected to follow normal procedures.
All VIPs and any entourage should be accompanied at all times by a member of staff.

4.2 Nottinghamshire County Council staff

Nottinghamshire County Council staff who visit schools and who have unsupervised contact with children will have had an appropriate DBS check conducted by their employing service. If the nature of their work requires it, the service will also have applied the requirements of the Childcare Disqualification regulations In these circumstances the statutory guidance says:

Schools and colleges must obtain written notification from any agency, or third-party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school or college that the school or college would otherwise perform. In respect of the enhanced DBS check, schools and colleges must ensure that written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business. Where the position requires a children's barred list check, this must be obtained by the agency or third party by obtaining an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information, prior to appointing the individual.'

This guidance can be regarded by as the 'written notification' required by the guidance.

Schools will, of course, need to see identification from visitors to confirm that they do indeed work for NCC. All Nottinghamshire County Council staff visiting schools carry photo identification.

Nottinghamshire County Council provides written confirmation that all staff who visit school in a professional capacity have had the appropriate safer working checks completed by the council. The letter is available here for schools to download and retain with their Single Central Record (SCR).

4.3 Staff from other agencies

The same requirement as in 4.2 applies. If schools, academies, or colleges have 'written notification' from an agency that their staff have had all the appropriate pre-employment checks that the school or college would otherwise be required to perform including a DBS 'Enhanced with barred list information' check, then it is not necessary for the visitor to produce individual evidence of these checks before being granted unsupervised contact with children.

4.4 Contractors

The statutory guidance in KCSiE 24, from paragraph 296 states:

Where schools and colleges use contractors to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the school or college.

Schools and colleges should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school or college, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information).

For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required.

In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across several sites. In cases where the contractor does not have opportunity for regular contact with children, schools and colleges should decide on whether a basic DBS disclosure would be appropriate.

Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. Schools and colleges are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

If an individual working at a school or college is self-employed, the school or college should consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

Schools and colleges should always check the identity of contractors on arrival at the school or college.

For building or maintenance contractors' schools should establish a formal agreement regarding access to specific areas of the building. This is likely to require building projects maintaining physical separation – fencing off the work areas, will provide additional safeguards. Any DBS checks required should be completed before the contractor begins work in school.

4.5 Trainee teachers

The statutory guidance[4] states:
Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the school or college, the school or college must ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. If these trainee teachers are engaging in regulated activity relating to children (which in most cases by the nature of the work, they will be), an enhanced DBS certificate (including children's barred list information) must be obtained.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks, schools and colleges should obtain written confirmation from the provider that it has carried out all pre-appointment checks that the school or college would otherwise be required to perform and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

There is no requirement for the school to record details of fee-funded trainees on the single central record.

If tutors of trainee teachers do not have unsupervised contact with children, they will not require a DBS check. If they do have such contact, then it will be the responsibility of their institution to undertake the check and inform the school that appropriate checks have been made.

4.6 External organisations

School and college safeguarding policies should set out the arrangements for individuals coming onto their premises, which may include an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required. Please note the statutory guidance in KCSiE 24 paragraphs 132, 150, which details guidance for reviewing online safety provision by external visitors.
Note: The UKCIS external visitors guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors, see link Using external expertise to enhance online safety education: Guidance for education settings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Whilst external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help schools and colleges enrich children's education, careful consideration should be given to the suitability of any external organisations.

As with other visitors who have been checked by an external organisation, the school should have 'written notification' that appropriate checks have been made and have been reviewed annually and carry out appropriate risk assessments in line with KCSiE 24 in paragraphs 292 to 295.

School and college safeguarding policies should set out the arrangements for individuals coming onto their premises, which may include an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered, especially when online safety sessions or online teaching by external visitors including whether relevant checks being required.

4.7 Governors

Governors should follow the same procedures as other visitors when coming into school. If they are to have unsupervised contact with children, they will require a barred list check in addition to the enhanced DBS check that is a requirement of appointment for governors.

4.8 Parents and relatives

DfE KCSiE 2024 Part Three states: *Schools and colleges should not request DBS checks or barred list checks, or ask to see existing DBS certificates, for visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day. Headteachers and principals should use their professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise such visitors.*

4.9 Ofsted

Ofsted have provided NCC with written confirmation that all Ofsted staff who would visit a school have been through a DBS 'Enhanced with barred list information' check. They have also confirmed that all approved additional inspectors have also been through a DBS 'Enhanced with barred list information' check. Ofsted provide a list of all approved additional inspectors at:
https://www.gov.uk/search?q=additional+inspectors
Schools can regard this note as constituting 'written notification' that Ofsted staff have been subject to relevant checks, as NCC holds the 'written notification' from Ofsted.

5. Implications of the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 for 'visitors.'

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 introduced additional requirements for staff who are involved with the education or care of children under six or with the out-of-school care of children under eight. The implications of these regulations are set out in revised statutory guidance. Nottinghamshire County Council has also issued guidance to schools.

5.1 The following groups of people, who could be considered 'visitors' are NOT covered by the 'Childcare Disqualification' legislation:

1. Caretakers, cleaners, drivers, transport escorts, catering staff, catering and cleaning managers, office staff, DSO catering and cleaning staff who are not employed to directly provide childcare (Statutory Guidance).

2. Health staff, speech therapists, Educational Psychologists.

*'Anybody involved in any form of health care provision for a child, **are specifically excluded** from the statutory definition of childcare, and are therefore not covered by the legislation' (Statutory Guidance). This includes. school nurses, speech and language therapists and education psychologists*

3. School governors

'School governors and proprietors are not covered by the legislation, unless they volunteer to work in relevant childcare on a regular basis, or they are directly concerned with the day-to-day management of such provision.' (Statutory Guidance).

4. Ofsted inspectors

While not specifically referred to in the statutory guidance, Ofsted have informed NCC that in their view Ofsted inspectors are not covered by the requirements of the 'Childcare Disqualification' legislation.

5.2 The following groups of people, who could be considered 'visitors' ARE covered by the 'Childcare Disqualification' legislation:

a) Peripatetic teachers and special needs teachers who work in reception classes or in childcare settings with children under eight.

*'Where centrally employed local authority staff are deployed to work in relevant childcare settings in schools (for example peripatetic music teachers or individuals supporting children with additional need) it is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that such staff are compliant with the requirements of the legislation explained in this guidance.' (*Statutory Guidance)

Nottinghamshire County council can confirm that all NCC employed staff in such roles will be subject to the appropriate checks under the Childcare Disqualification legislation.

b) Agency, or third-party organisations, contracted to work in relevant childcare in schools. The agency must confirm that they comply with the legislation (Statutory Guidance).

c) Self-employed contractors employed to work in childcare provision (Statutory Guidance).

d) Trainee and student teachers. Again, the teacher training provider must confirm that they comply with the legislation (Statutory Guidance).

e) Volunteers and casual workers who work in childcare (Statutory Guidance).

'Volunteers and casual workers (including individuals on work experience) who are directly concerned with the management of childcare provision, or who

*work on a regular basis, **whether supervised or not**, are within the scope of the legislation and are covered by this guidance.'*

6. Raising awareness of visitor safety with children

Pupils should be reminded on a regular basis and especially prior to any VIP or celebrity visits that they should remain with a staff member and not wander off/ leave an area which is not supervised by a member of staff. They should also be reminded of any other relevant actions identified by a risk assessment relating to the visit.

7. Concerns related to a visitor

Pupils, staff, and parents should be made aware of who they should report concerns to or go to for help and advice if they have concerns about a visitor. This would normally be the head teacher or another member of the school's senior leadership team, who should then report the concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. Further details can be found in Part Four Section One and Two of KCSIE 2024.

Any issues regarding the suitability of visitors to the school should be noted by the designated person for safeguarding and promptly brought to the attention of the Headteacher. If the behaviour of a visitor causes safeguarding concerns the designated person for safeguarding should contact the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children in Education Officer (SCIEO) for advice and where the adult's behaviour has caused harm or risk to a child, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

8. Unknown, uninvited, or malicious visitors to the school

Any visitor to the school site who is not wearing an identity badge should be challenged politely by staff and escorted to reception to sign the visitor's book and be issued with an identity badge. Failure to comply should result in them being asked to leave the site and the Head teacher or other senior person informed. In extreme circumstances or if the person refuses to leave, the police could be called.

Schools, academies, and colleges should use the advice and procedures described within:

- NCC and Police 'School Safe Alert Protocol,' revised October 23, can be found in the Safeguarding section of the Schools Portal and the NSCP website: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp

- Operations Striver – Information Sharing Protocol involving a network of multi-agency professionals who can share low-level, non-emergency intelligence/information with the police, see link concernsnetworkintelligencesharingform.docx (live.com)

- Schools' Emergency Plans should include arrangements for responding to 'intruders' and 'lockdown arrangements' in the event of a 'malicious visitor.' Relevant guidance can be found at:

https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/emergencies-and-disruption/school-emergencies

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Like all safeguarding policies schools should monitor and evaluate its implementation and effectiveness on a regular basis.

10. Linked policies

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

- Whole School Child Protection Policy 2024/2025 NCC and NSCP policy template is available in NCC Schools Portal Safeguarding section and the NSCP website: https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp/resources/for-schools
- HR Safer Recruitment Guidance available on the school's portal
- School Employee Code of Conduct.
- Healthy and Safety Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: Managing allegations procedures
- KCSIE 2024 Part Four: Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors has two sections covering the two levels of allegation/concern: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
  KCSiE 24 Part Four: Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, has two sections covering the two levels of allegation/concern:
  Section 1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold.
  Section 2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns.' These procedures should be consistent with local safeguarding procedures and guidance.
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 – Statutory Guidance for Schools
- Coping with a School Emergency / School Emergency Plans
- Access Policy
- The UKCIS external visitors' guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors.

Document History

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Review Date: September 2024	As per legislative changes

Original Document produced by Dr John Bradley Independent Consultant (SCR's) In consultation with Pam Rossiter Group Manager, and Cheryl Stollery SCIEO, Safeguarding and Independent Review Service	May 2015
Document updated by HR Service (AW/FW/EC) and in consultation with Cheryl Stollery SCIEO	September 2023
Coronavirus update – Page 1, Introduction (AW)	May 2021
Paragraph 4.2 updated (AW)	August 2021
Reviewed and KCSiE 2023 referenced updated (FW) (CS) (AW) (SH)	September 2023
Reviewed and KCSiE 24 published 26/05/24 referenced (FW (CS) (AW)	September 24