Visitors to School Policy

Date policy created: September 2026

Date of last review:

Date of next review: September 2028

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1. Introduction

Ashton Primary School welcomes visitors and recognises the valuable contribution that parents, carers, professionals, volunteers, governors, contractors and members of the wider community can make to school life.

At the same time, the school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and to ensure that the school remains a safe and secure environment.

This policy establishes clear procedures for managing visitors to the school site so that visitors can be appropriately welcomed while safeguarding pupils, staff and the wider school community.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- safeguard all pupils while they are on the school premises;
- ensure that visitors are appropriately identified and their presence is known;
- prevent unauthorised access to the school;
- ensure appropriate safeguarding checks or supervision arrangements are in place;
- ensure visitors understand the school's expectations while on site;
- protect confidential information;
- establish procedures for responding to unknown or unauthorised visitors; and
- ensure appropriate arrangements are in place during emergencies.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all visitors to Ashton Primary School, including:

- parents and carers attending meetings or events;
- prospective parents and carers;
- governors;
- Local Authority representatives;
- health, social care and other external professionals;
- educational psychologists, specialist teachers and therapists;
- supply and agency staff;
- volunteers and students;

- contractors and tradespeople;
- delivery personnel where they need to enter the school;
- visiting teachers and coaches;
- workshop and activity providers;
- guest speakers;
- representatives of charities, businesses or community organisations;
- emergency and public service personnel where appropriate; and
- any other individual who is not a pupil or regular member of school staff.

Additional procedures may apply to individuals who work regularly with children, volunteers, contractors or individuals undertaking regulated activity.

4. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

All visitors are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the safety and wellbeing of pupils.

Visitors must follow instructions provided by school staff and must immediately report any safeguarding concern to a member of staff.

Where a visitor receives a disclosure from a child, witnesses something concerning or becomes worried about a child's welfare, they must:

- listen without conducting their own investigation;
- not promise confidentiality;
- avoid asking leading questions;
- report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL; and
- follow any instructions given by the DSL.

Visitors must not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

5. Arranging Visits

Where possible, visits should be arranged in advance with an appropriate member of staff.

The member of staff arranging the visit should ensure that:

- the purpose of the visit is appropriate;

- relevant staff are aware of the visit;
- any necessary safeguarding checks have been considered;
- appropriate supervision arrangements are in place where required; and
- the visitor knows where and when to report on arrival.

Unexpected visitors will be dealt with appropriately by the school office before being permitted access to the wider school site.

6. Arrival at School

All visitors must normally enter the school through the designated main entrance and report directly to the school office.

Visitors must not enter the school through pupil entrances, playground gates or other access points unless specifically instructed to do so as part of an organised event.

Upon arrival, visitors may be asked to:

- provide their name;
- identify their organisation, where applicable;
- explain the purpose of their visit;
- identify the member of staff they are visiting;
- provide appropriate identification;
- provide evidence of relevant safeguarding checks where required (DBS); and
- sign in using the school's visitor management arrangements.

The school reserves the right to refuse entry where a visitor cannot satisfactorily establish their identity or the purpose of their visit.

7. Signing In and Out

Visitors who enter the main school building or remain on the school site beyond routine collection/drop-off arrangements must sign in as directed by the school.

Visitors must sign out when leaving.

Accurate signing-in records are important for safeguarding and emergency evacuation purposes.

Visitors must not allow another person to enter the school using their access or sign-in credentials.

8. Visitor Identification

Visitors will be issued with an appropriate visitor badge or identification, which must be worn visibly while on the school site. Red lanyards are for visitors who do not have a DBS, whereas green lanyards are for those with a DBS. Visitors wearing a red lanyard must not be left alone in the school. Any visitor found alone must be politely challenged by a member of staff.

School staff should politely challenge any adult found within the school who is not recognised and is not displaying appropriate identification.

Visitors must return any reusable badges, passes, keys or access devices before leaving.

9. DBS and Safeguarding Checks

Not every visitor to a school requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The school will determine the level of checking required according to:

- the purpose of the visit;
- the frequency and regularity of contact;
- whether the individual will be undertaking regulated activity;
- whether the visitor will have unsupervised access to children; and
- relevant statutory safeguarding requirements.

A visitor who does not have the appropriate checks must not be given unsupervised access to pupils where such checks are required.

Where necessary, visitors will remain under the supervision of an appropriate member of staff.

The school will follow current statutory guidance when determining whether DBS, barred list or other checks are required.

10. Visiting Professionals

Professionals visiting the school as part of their employment should normally be expected to provide appropriate identification.

Where appropriate, the school may verify the visitor's identity and role with their employing organisation.

Visiting professionals must follow the school's safeguarding, confidentiality and site-security arrangements while on the premises.

Professional status or employment by another organisation does not automatically give an individual unrestricted access to the school or its pupils.

11. Contractors

Contractors must report to the school office before commencing work unless alternative arrangements have been specifically agreed.

The school will consider:

- the nature and location of the work;
- whether pupils will be present;
- the level of contact with pupils;
- safeguarding checks;
- supervision requirements;
- site security;
- health and safety implications; and
- whether areas need to be isolated from pupils.

Contractors must not access areas of the school beyond those necessary for their work without permission.

Tools, equipment, substances and work areas must be appropriately secured to prevent access by pupils.

12. Volunteers and Students

Volunteers and students undertaking placements within school are subject to the school's safeguarding arrangements and any necessary recruitment or vetting procedures.

They must:

- follow the instructions of their supervising member of staff;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- respect confidentiality;
- comply with safeguarding procedures; and
- not undertake activities beyond those agreed by the school.

Separate volunteer, safer recruitment or placement arrangements may apply depending upon the nature and duration of their involvement.

13. Governors

Governors are valued members of the school community but remain subject to appropriate visitor and safeguarding procedures when attending school.

Governors visiting in an official capacity should follow the school's signing-in arrangements and wear appropriate identification.

Governors undertaking monitoring visits should follow the school's agreed monitoring arrangements and maintain confidentiality regarding pupils and staff.

14. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are warmly welcomed into Ashton Primary School for meetings, workshops, performances, celebrations and other organised activities.

During the normal school day, parents and carers must report to the school office unless alternative arrangements have been communicated by the school.

Parents and carers must not enter classrooms or other areas of the school without permission.

Where a parent or carer wishes to speak with a member of staff, appropriate arrangements should be made rather than entering teaching areas without authorisation.

The school's expectations regarding respectful behaviour apply to all parents and carers while on the school site.

15. Prospective Parents and School Tours

Prospective parents and carers may visit the school by prior arrangement.

Visitors undertaking school tours should normally be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff.

Care should be taken during tours to protect the privacy of existing pupils and ensure that visitors do not have unnecessary access to confidential information.

16. Visiting Speakers, Workshops and Organisations

The school welcomes external speakers and organisations where their contribution supports the curriculum, school ethos or wider development of pupils.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that visiting speakers and organisations are suitable and that their proposed contribution is appropriate for the age and needs of pupils.

Where appropriate, consideration will be given to:

- the content being delivered;
- safeguarding;
- political impartiality;
- equality and inclusion;

- age appropriateness;
- Prevent responsibilities; and
- the values and ethos of the school.

Visiting speakers should normally be supervised by a member of school staff while working with pupils.

The school reserves the right to stop a session where content or conduct is considered inappropriate.

17. Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

Visitors must comply with Ashton Primary School's Mobile Phone Policy.

Ashton Primary School operates a mobile phone-free environment.

Parents, carers and other visitors must not use mobile phones or smart devices while on the school site unless specific permission has been given by the Headteacher or another authorised member of staff for a legitimate purpose.

Phones should be placed on silent and remain securely stored in a bag, pocket or other personal belongings while the visitor is on site.

Professionals or contractors who require a device as an essential part of their work must agree appropriate arrangements with the school.

18. Photography, Video and Audio Recording

Visitors must not take photographs, video recordings or audio recordings of pupils without the express permission of the school.

This includes the use of mobile phones, cameras, smart watches and other recording devices.

Different arrangements may be communicated for particular school events, such as performances or celebrations.

Visitors must comply with any instructions given by the school regarding photography or recording.

The school reserves the right to prohibit photography or recording where necessary to safeguard pupils.

19. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Visitors may become aware of confidential information while on the school site.

Information relating to pupils, families or staff must not be discussed outside the appropriate professional context.

Visitors must not:

- photograph confidential information;
- access pupil records without authorisation;
- read documents or screens that they have no legitimate reason to access;
- disclose information about pupils to other parents or members of the public; or
- publish information about pupils or school matters on social media.

Visiting professionals who require access to information as part of their role must handle that information in accordance with relevant data protection requirements and professional expectations.

20. Contact with Pupils

Visitors must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils.

Unless specifically authorised as part of their role, visitors must not:

- be alone with a pupil;
- exchange personal contact details with pupils;
- contact pupils through personal social media accounts;
- arrange contact with pupils outside school;
- give pupils gifts without school approval; or
- photograph or record pupils.

Any unusual or concerning interaction involving a visitor and a pupil must be reported to the DSL.

21. Restricted Areas

Visitors must remain within the areas necessary for their visit.

They must not enter restricted areas, offices, classrooms, staff areas, storage areas or other parts of the school without permission.

Visitors must follow any instructions relating to access to particular parts of the site.

22. Health and Safety

Visitors are expected to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others while on the school site.

Visitors must:

- follow instructions from school staff;
- observe relevant signs and restrictions;
- report hazards, accidents or incidents;
- not interfere with school equipment without permission; and
- comply with relevant health and safety arrangements.

Contractors and other visitors undertaking work may be subject to additional risk assessments and health and safety procedures.

23. Fire and Emergency Procedures

Visitors must follow the school's emergency procedures.

In the event of a fire alarm or evacuation, visitors must:

- stop what they are doing;
- leave the building by the nearest appropriate exit;
- follow instructions from school staff;
- proceed to the appropriate assembly area; and
- remain there until instructed otherwise.

Visitor signing-in records will be used, where appropriate, to assist in accounting for individuals during an emergency.

Visitors must not leave the site during an evacuation without informing an appropriate member of staff.

24. Lockdown or Other Serious Incidents

In the event of a lockdown or other serious incident, visitors must immediately follow instructions given by members of staff.

Visitors must not attempt to leave the site, collect children, contact pupils or take photographs or recordings unless instructed that it is safe and appropriate to do so.

The safety of pupils and staff will take priority.

25. Unknown or Unauthorised Visitors

All staff have a responsibility to remain vigilant regarding individuals on the school premises.

Where a member of staff encounters an unknown individual who is not displaying appropriate visitor identification, they should challenge them politely where it is safe to do so.

For example, staff may ask:

- whether they have signed in;
- who they are visiting; and
- whether they require assistance finding the school office.

Where there is any concern about an individual's behaviour, identity or intentions, a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be informed immediately.

Staff should not place themselves at unnecessary risk when challenging an individual.

26. Refusing or Withdrawing Access

Ashton Primary School reserves the right to refuse entry to, or require the departure of, any visitor whose presence or behaviour presents a concern.

This may include an individual who:

- refuses to follow school procedures;
- refuses to identify themselves;
- behaves aggressively, abusively or threateningly;
- causes significant disruption;
- presents a safeguarding concern;
- enters restricted areas without permission;
- attempts to photograph or record pupils without permission; or
- otherwise presents a risk to pupils, staff or the safe operation of the school.

Where necessary, the police or other appropriate authorities may be contacted.

27. Conduct and Respectful Behaviour

All visitors are expected to behave respectfully towards pupils, staff, families and other visitors.

Aggressive, threatening, intimidating, discriminatory or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

The school may terminate a meeting or visit where behaviour becomes unacceptable.

Serious or repeated incidents may result in restrictions being placed on an individual's access to the school site in accordance with applicable procedures.

28. Concerns About a Visitor

Any member of staff who has concerns about the behaviour of a visitor must report them promptly to the Headteacher, DSL or another appropriate senior leader.

Where the concern relates to safeguarding, the school's safeguarding procedures must be followed.

Where an allegation relates to an adult working with children, the school will follow the appropriate allegations and low-level concerns procedures and seek advice from relevant external agencies where required.

29. Responsibility

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate visitor arrangements are in place.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for advising on safeguarding matters relating to visitors.

Office staff play an important role in ensuring that visitors are appropriately identified, signed in and directed.

Staff arranging visits are responsible for considering any relevant safeguarding, supervision or practical requirements.

All staff have a responsibility to remain vigilant and appropriately challenge unknown or unauthorised individuals.

Visitors are responsible for following the school's procedures and instructions while on the school premises.

30. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Mobile Phone Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Social Media Policy;
- Data Protection Policy;

- Health and Safety Policy;
- Fire and Emergency Procedures;
- Lockdown Procedures;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Safer Recruitment procedures; and
- Prevent arrangements.

31. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Governing Body will keep the school's visitor arrangements under review to ensure that they remain effective and reflect current safeguarding requirements.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, or sooner following:

- changes to statutory safeguarding guidance;
- a significant safeguarding or security incident;
- changes to school procedures; or
- other circumstances requiring the policy to be updated.