

Visiting Speakers Policy - Safeguarding and Child Protection

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Visiting Speakers Policy

This policy applies to:

Francis Holland Regent's Park Francis Holland Sloane Square Francis Holland Prep

Where there are differences between the schools these have been clearly highlighted.

Related Policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy

Related Guidance:

DfE [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), September 2025

[Prevent Duty](#)

Martyn's Law / The Protect Duty [How Martyn's Law will affect education settings - GOV.UK](#)

1. Introduction

Schools often invite speakers from the wider community to give talks to enrich our pupils' learning experience. The Trust recognises the enormous benefit gained by pupils from speakers from all walks of life. Both the School/s and their pupils greatly appreciate the time and effort that Visiting Speakers put into their presentations.

The purpose of this Visiting Speakers Policy is to set out the Trust's legal obligations when using Visiting Speakers and to set out the standards of behaviour expected from them.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. Overview

The Prevent statutory guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>) expects schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any Visiting Speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. This policy was therefore drawn up having had regard to the government's Prevent Duty guidance and the school's wider safeguarding obligations, while also balancing the right of freedom of speech against the potential use of its facilities for the promotion of extremist ideological, religious or political beliefs.

The school's responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information that they receive as to its value to themselves, and that such information is aligned to the ethos and values of the school, and to the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Martyn's Law – This act became law in April 2025, however there is an implementation period of twenty-four months. It aims to improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK. It requires that those responsible for certain premises and events must consider how they would respond to a terrorist attack and consider appropriate steps to reduce vulnerability.

It sets out a tiered approach that is based on the number of people reasonably expected to be present at an event. Schools will always be in the standard tier due to the safeguarding procedures and processes that already have to be in place there under statutory guidance.

The Government will publish statutory guidance during the 24-month implementation period, which the Trust will follow. In the meantime, the Trust will have in place preparedness plans for the safety of their pupils and staff.

3. Principles

The following principles will be followed at all times –

- No person may use the Trust facilities to express or promote extremist ideological, religious or political views, or to express an opinion or belief that is supportive of a proscribed organisation.
- No person may use the Trust facilities to express or promote discriminatory views in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- The Trust will not allow the use of its facilities by any group or organisation that is proscribed by HM Government.

These principles also apply to the use of online facilities (e.g. meetings conducted via Zoom) and electronic communications, as well as written and printed communication, buildings, facilities (including websites, IT systems and school equipment) and property.

4. School Protocol – Before the Event

- All requests for Visiting/External Speakers (be this from a pupil or school staff) must be submitted on the form (shown in Appendix 1) and must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) to secure their approval.
- **Requests must be submitted at least 3 working days before the event, to allow for any due diligence/checks required.** This includes the School doing internet searches concerning the speakers/organisations political views/affiliation (see guidance on searches in appendix 2).

The school will undertake a risk assessment before agreeing to a Visiting Speaker attending the School, obtaining an outline of what the speaker intends to cover in advance of the Visiting Speaker's visit. In some cases, the school may also request a copy of the Visiting Speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session to ensure it is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils to be in attendance and does not undermine British values or the ethos and values of the [Trust](#).

As part of this process the staff member proposing the event will identify whether the speaker has a DBS certificate or not (some may, some will not). **All Visiting Speakers to Trust Schools however are accompanied at all times while they are on school premises.** A DBS will not necessarily be a requirement, and is more a sign of reassurance in the case of representatives of larger organisations.

Self-employed Visiting Speakers may well not have a DBS, but this will not be a barrier to them entering the school as long as the rest of the due diligence, including an online search, has been carried out by school staff, a value-based approach is adopted when the proposal is being considered by senior staff, and it is clearly explained to them that they must be accompanied at all times when they are on school premises.

- Once the External Speaker Request Form has been approved, the proposer may proceed with organising the event.
- The Head/DSL/DDSL may cancel or postpone a visit if he/she has any concerns about the speaker. **The school will not use a Visiting Speaker where any link is found to extremism, such as extremist groups and movements.**
- A member of school staff will be present during the visit/talk, who will monitor what is being said to ensure that it aligns with the values and ethos of the school and Fundamental British Values (see below). In the unlikely event that the talk/presentation does not meet this requirement, Visiting Speakers will be informed that school staff have the right and responsibility to interrupt and/or stop a presentation. The member of staff will report this to the Head of the applicable School as soon as reasonably practicable after the talk/visit.

At no point will a Visiting Speaker be left unsupervised on the school site whilst pupils are [present](#).

Fundamental British Values (FBV) are:

Democracy
The Rule of Law
Individual Liberty
Mutual Respect
Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

5. School Protocol – On the Arrival of the Speaker in School

- All Visiting Speakers must report to reception first and not enter the school via any other entrance. If a visitor inadvertently arrives via another entrance, they should be escorted by a member of staff to the reception area. At reception, all Visiting Speakers should explain the purpose of their visit and who has invited them.
- Visiting Speakers will be required to show an original current identification document including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence and will be asked to sign [in on Inventry](#). Details of the ID will be noted down by the staff member on reception.
- Reception staff will contact the member of staff responsible for the Visiting Speaker and will ask them to come to reception to meet them.
- Visiting Speakers must wear a visitor's ID lanyard (displayed prominently) all the time they are on the premises.
- Reception staff will draw the Visiting Speaker's attention to the relevant safeguarding, and health and safety information about the school. There is also a leaflet in reception that they can keep with them during their visit.
- The member of staff assigned to accompany the Visiting Speaker will also draw their attention to the school's commitment to safeguarding, and stress that if they hear or see anything which causes concern during their visit, this must be immediately passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (regarding a pupil) or Head. Visiting Speakers should wait in the reception area until they are met by the member of staff to be escorted to their destination.

- All Visiting Speakers should be accompanied by a member of staff. Visiting Speakers should not be alone with pupils/children. If Visiting Speakers find they are alone with pupils/children, they should report to a member of staff or reception.

The school may also process details of the Visiting Speaker's health, where necessary, to protect their health and safety during the visit. Any information gathered will be kept in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and the Staff Privacy Notice (available to see on the Trust and Schools' websites).

On departing the school, Visiting Speakers should leave the School via reception, where they must sign out of the building, return their visitor badge and be seen to leave the premises. School reception staff will check the 'in/out' records regularly to monitor compliance with these procedures.

The school will keep a formal register of Visiting Speakers, which will include their contact details and information on the subject matter of their presentations.

6. Review

Policy author/s	RP: Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL SSq: Senior Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL Prep: Senior Deputy Head and DSL
This review	Autumn 2025
Approved by	SLTs: Autumn 2025 Safeguarding Sub-committee: Spring 2026
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Next review	Autumn 2027

The Francis Holland Schools Trust is an educational charity which manages three leading independent girls' schools in central London, across three sites.

Registered charity number: 312745

Registered office: Francis Holland Schools Trust, 35 Bourne Street, London SW1W 8JA

Appendix 1: External Speaker Request Form

FHS

Francis Holland Schools

External Speaker Request Form

All requests for Visiting Speakers to come into school (be this from a pupil or school staff) must be submitted on this form at least 3 days in advance of the proposed event and must be discussed/agreed with the DSL/DDSL.

Name of person proposing the event:	
Name of visiting speaker, and the society or group they are representing (if applicable):	
Visiting speaker's contact email:	
Contact telephone number:	
Event Details Title of Event:	
Date of event:	
Venue/Location of event:	
The Audience - expected number of attendees, and their ages:	
Will the event be...? Please state which is applicable	Member of Trust community only (staff, pupil, other internal stakeholder)? Invitation/ticket only event? Open to the general public?
About the Event Please provide a short description of the event	

<p>About the Speaker</p> <p>The subject they will be speaking about and any other information you think we need to be aware of.</p>	
<p>Confirm any external speakers' affiliations (specifically where they are religious or political)</p>	
<p>Declaration of any knowledge of controversy attracted by the speaker or topic in the past</p>	
<p>Confirmation of website details (where relevant) that you have seen/investigated, providing further information on the speaker</p>	
<p>Are you happy that the content you have seen is not in any way contrary to the Trust's Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy, the ethos of inclusion of the Trust, British values or any concern in relation to the Prevent Duty?</p>	
<p>Is the event and speaker likely to attract media interest - if so why?</p>	
<p>Name of person responsible for supervising the Visiting Speaker when they are on site</p>	
<p>Is any further Risk Assessment required before the Event be agreed?</p>	

IMPORTANT:

At no point will a Visiting Speaker be left unsupervised on the school site whilst pupils are present.

Before the Visiting Speaker can come into any Trust/school property:

- The Visiting Speaker Policy must be sent to the Visiting Speaker.
- The Visiting Speaker must be briefed on the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Visiting Speaker has had the appropriate DBS check, or a Close Supervision Agreement has been signed

Authorised by the Head:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2: Procedure for vetting a visiting speaker

Stage 1 - Gather information

Gather information by conducting checks on the speaker / organisation.

Carry out online checks and, if appropriate, liaise with other organisations/schools.

Check the list of proscribed organisations and confirm that the speaker is not part of/affiliated with/promoting any such organisation.

Considerations when checking online material:

- *Use more than one internet search engine to minimise search engine bias.*
- *Where possible find primary source information (e.g. a group's manifesto on their website; You Tube videos of a person speaking or band's music; an individual's personal writing on their blog).*
- *Is the information detailed enough for what you need?*
- *Does the webpage give sources for the information – does it say where it came from? What other sources can you find to check the information against? Try to find a different type of source, like a report from a well-known body, or published statistics.*
- *If the webpage is clearly giving someone's opinion on an issue, how much weight should you give to their opinion?*
- *Can you easily tell who the person or organisation behind the webpage is?*
- *Can I trust the person or organisation behind this webpage? Are they likely to be biased? Are they an authoritative source?*
- *Is the author taking a personal stand on a social/political issue or is the author being objective? Bias is not necessarily "bad," but the connections should be clear.*
- *With what organisation or institution is the author associated? Is there a link to the sponsoring organisation, a contact number and/or address or e-mail contact? A link to an association does not necessarily mean that the organisation approved the content.*
- *If you found the page through a link or a web search, and are not sure where it comes from, look for the home page, or an "About Us" or similar link.*
- *Does the page author give a real-world postal address and phone number?*
- *Given how quickly information on the web can change and how long some websites have been around, always try to check how up-to-date the information is. Does the page say when it was last updated? If not, try checking the Properties or Page Info options in your Web browser for a date.*
- *Is the website generally being maintained – do all the links still work?*
- *Can you check against sources you know are up-to-date for comparison?*
- *If there are a number of out-of-date links that do not work or old news, what does this say about the credibility of the information?*
- *As far as possible, social media accounts should be checked.*

Stage 2 - Assess information

Assess the information gleaned in Stage 1

- Consider if there is evidence that the speaker/group has promoted messages of intolerance and hate towards any groups under the protected characteristics identified within Equalities Legislation?
- Identify whether the speaker/organisation has behaved in a way contrary to the **Principles** outlined in (4) above
- Identify if the speaker/group has been banned elsewhere previously
- Consider any risks to cohesion, equality, community safety and the potential for public disorder
- Seek further advice from external organisations (e.g. police) to understand information if necessary

Stage 3 - Consult

Consult SLT, identifying any risks / concerns

- Consider views of and impact on relevant group(s) that may be affected (e.g. as outlined by Equality Act 2010)
- Review identified risks to cohesion, inclusion, community safety and the potential for public disorder