

## Visitors Policy

Policy prepared by:	Adam Smith, Principal
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Approved by Governors	March 2024
Date of next review:	March 2025

## Policy statement and Principles

### 1. Policy aims and Principles

The academy assures all visitors a warm, friendly and professional welcome, whatever the purpose of their visit.

The academy has a legal duty of care for the health, safety, security and wellbeing of all students and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to safeguard all students from subjection to any form of harm, abuse or nuisance. It is the responsibility of the academy to ensure that this duty is uncompromised at all times.

In performing this duty, the academy recognises that there can be no complacency where child protection and safeguarding procedures are concerned. The academy therefore requires that all visitors, without exception, comply with this policy and academy procedures. Failure to do so may result in the visitor's escorted departure from the academy site.

The academy will ensure that there is a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of external visitors to the academy which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors and parents/carers and conforms to child protection and safeguarding guidelines.

This policy seeks to ensure that staff are aware that visitors can make an important contribution to the life and work of the academy and that visitors themselves can benefit from contact with students and staff. The purpose of this policy is to help our academy use visitors from the wider community to provide relevant and high quality services directly to students or in support of students, appropriately and safely.

### Policy responsibility

Adam Smith (Principal) and Calum Hill (Designated Safeguard Lead) are the members of staff responsible for implementation and coordination of this policy. These persons will also be responsible for liaising with the site and / or reception staff as appropriate. All breaches of this procedure must be reported to the Designated Safeguard Lead.

Where and to whom the policy applies

The academy has the control and responsibility for its students anywhere on the academy site (i.e. within the academy boundary fence), during normal academy hours. The academy also has responsibility for the welfare of students during extracurricular activities that are academy organised on or off site.

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the academy.
- All external visitors entering the academy site during the academy day or for extracurricular activities
- All governors of the academy.
- All parents and volunteers.
- All students.

- Other education related personnel (advisors and inspectors).
- Building, maintenance and independent contractors visiting the academy premises.
- Independent contractors who may transport students on minibuses or in taxis.

## 2. Complaints

All complaints are dealt with under **The Edge Academy Complaints Policy**.

Complaints should be made in writing and will follow the Academy complaint procedures and set timescales. The handling of complaints may be delegated to an appropriate person.

The outcome of the complaint will be communicated as set out in the academy complaint policy.

## 3. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- as a result of any other significant change or event
- in the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Designated Safeguard Lead in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

## Roles and responsibilities

### 4. Key personnel

Designated Safeguard Lead		Calum Hill
Contact Details	email	<a href="mailto:calum.hill@theedgeacademy.co.uk">calum.hill@theedgeacademy.co.uk</a>
	Telephone	0121 533 5858
		Academy Reception
Contact Details	Email	<a href="mailto:info@theedgeacademy.co.uk">info@theedgeacademy.co.uk</a>
	Telephone	0121 533 5858

## Academy visitor procedures

Visitors are welcome to The Edge Academy. They make a contribution to the life and work of the academy in many different ways. The learning opportunities and experience they bring are encouraged and appreciated. It is the academy's responsibility, however, to ensure that the security and welfare of its pupils is not compromised at any time. The academy is equally responsible to the whole academy community for ensuring that visitors comply with the guidelines.

It is our aim to safeguard all children under this academy's responsibility both during academy time and in extra-curricular activities which are arranged by the academy. The ultimate aim is to ensure the pupils can learn and enjoy extra-curricular experiences, in an environment where they are safe from harm.

Visitors' services or activities must have a clear educational purpose, add value and relevance to student learning, complement the whole academy program, and be undertaken in accordance with this policy.

The Edge Academy will ensure that all required procedures must be adhered to / completed and all relevant forms and agreements must be in place before a visitor's activity or program commences. This will allow visits to be of the greatest benefit to the academy, its students and visitors whilst maintaining the academy's child protection and safeguarding practices. All visitors to the academy must have had the relevant security checks (DBS) as advised by the local authority.

These procedures apply to all types of visitors including those on the approved visitor list, governors and other volunteers.

The academy welcomes feedback from visitors either orally or written.

### 5. Visitors invited to The Edge Academy

Any visitor to the academy may be asked to bring formal identification with them at the time of their visit. All visitors must follow the procedure below.

- Once on site, all visitors must report to the main entrance reception before moving about the academy site. No visitor is permitted to enter the academy via any other entrance under any circumstances.
- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them. They should be ready to produce formal identification upon request.
- All visitors will be asked to sign in at the electronic sign in. This record includes:
  - Visitors name
  - Organisation (if relevant)
  - Who they are visiting
  - Time of arrival
  - Car registration (if the visitor is parked on site)
  - Visitor badge number (if applicable)
- All visitors will be required to wear an identification badge/lanyard – the badge must remain visible throughout their visit. Some visitors may also be required to wear any official identification i.e. Ofsted inspectors ID etc.
- Visitors must be given information about fire safety evacuation and child protection procedures and should read these prior to going into the academy. All visitors working with students must be made aware of the academy's confidentiality policy.
- Visitors must comply with the academy code of conduct and all other policies

- Visitors are advised that the academy is a non-smoking area and smoking is not permitted anywhere within academy grounds.

Visitors will then be escorted to their point of contact or their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site. The visitor must not be allowed to move about the site unaccompanied unless they are registered on the approved visitor list.

## **6. Visitors' departure from The Edge Academy**

On departing the academy, visitors must leave via reception. The visitor must:

- Enter their departure time on the electronic sign in/out point in main reception

A staff member should escort the visitor to the reception / exit to ensure that the visitor does not re-enter the academy site, potentially breaching security). This is also necessary for the purposes of a fire drill / emergency.

## **7. Approved visitor list**

The academy will hold an approved visitor list for visitors who frequently visit the academy site to undertake work within the academy (including contractors and supply staff).

To qualify for this list the visitor must have demonstrated, prior to the visit that:

- They have a current clear DBS check and a copy of this has been registered on the academy's central record – the type of DBS check required will depend on the nature of the visit and in accordance with the academy's general procedures for DBS checks
- The academy has a copy of the visitor's photo ID
- Confirmation that the visitor is employed by the company for which services will be provided from (if applicable) i.e. employee ID or confirmation on the name of the individual who will be on the academy site

Visitors on the approved list must follow the same procedures on entry and departure to the premises (i.e. come to reception and sign in the visitors' book). A copy of the approved visitor list will be kept behind reception at all times.

## **8. Specific rules for certain types of visitors**

### *Contractors*

Insurance details of contractors must be checked prior to working within the academy – contractors from the local authorities list have the necessary insurance cover to work in the academy.

The Principal/member of the senior leadership team (SLT) must liaise with any contractor with regard to health and safety issues, for example, where the maintenance / works might affect students' normal use of the academy facilities. The principal / SLT member will inform the contractor where students will be working, walking etc. and when (if relevant).

### *Governors*

All members of the governing body, with the exception of the principal and staff governors, will have an enhanced DBS check as per The Edge Academy's DBS policy.

With regards to the principal and staff governors, their DBS checks will be conducted in line with the academy procedures for staff DBS checks.

Governors should wear an ID badge/lanyard at all times.

Governors should sign in and out using the academy signing in system.

New governors will be made aware of the policy and familiar with its procedures as part of their induction.

All governors' formal visits should have a clear focus and should, in some way, increase the knowledge and understanding of academy policies and process. Visits should be arranged with a staff member in advance to make the most out of the time in the academy.

Following a governor visit, the governor must complete a governor visit form and submit this to the clerk to the governing body as a record of the visit and detailing any actions that are identified. This will be presented at the next available governing body meeting.

### **Visitors working with students**

Teachers or other staff members arranging visitors to the academy for educational purposes should collate all the above required information and pass this on to the academy office for the Principal's authorisation.

Visitors to classes for specific purposes of contribution to topics are to be encouraged and welcomed. In arranging such visits, teachers should consult with the principal prior to finalising arrangements, the principal must grant permission of any visitor who will be working with students or within the classroom before the activity can commence. Teachers should try to ensure that the visit causes minimum class and academy disruption.

A visitor's contribution must enhance the overall education experience for the students. It must add a dimension, which the teacher alone cannot provide.

Whilst visitors can bring a wealth of skills and expertise to the academy setting, it should be recognised that they may have no formal training in classroom management and teaching and learning strategies therefore visitors should not be left alone to work with students. The teacher and visitors need to share the experience in order to provide appropriate planning, deal with any issues that arise during the session(s) and as a result of the session(s).

The teacher must provide the visitor with any necessary information prior to the visit to ensure that the session(s) is as valuable for the students as possible and to make sure that the purpose of the visit remains focused. This may include, but not limited to, informing the visitor of the lesson plan, students previous knowledge or experience on the subject, the age, number of students and the aims / objectives of the visit.

Visitors need to provide advance notice of any resources they may want to use so that teachers can check the suitability of the materials.

## **9. Unknown / uninvited visitors to the Academy**

Individuals who would like to visit Edge Academy but are not in contact with a member of staff regarding this, should arrange their visit through the academy office, who can be contacted either by 0121 533 5858 or [info@theedgeacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@theedgeacademy.co.uk)

The office will record the date and time of the proposed visit, reason for the visit, name of the visitor(s), and the name of the organisation they belong to where applicable

Visitors who arrive at the academy without a prior appointment may be permitted to meet with the Principal /other staff members where these members of the academy staff are happy to do so. The visitor must not be allowed into the academy without the supervision of a teacher a member of reception staff or a member of the senior leadership team.

Parents are discouraged from visiting the academy during academy hours unless for an academy event, emergency or invited specifically by a member of academy staff. Where a parent arrives at the academy, they must follow the visiting procedures outlined below.

Any visitor to the academy site who is not wearing an identity badge should be challenged politely to enquire who they are and their business on site. All staff members have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is adhered to by all visitors.

Unidentified visitors should be asked to make their visitors badge / official ID visible. If they do not have one they should be escorted to reception to sign the visitors' book and be issued with an identity badge, once the visitors appointment and purpose of visit has been confirmed by the appropriate member of staff, the visitor entry procedures will then apply.

In the event that the visitor refuses to comply, they should be asked to leave the site immediately and the Principal or a member of the SLT should be informed promptly. The Principal / SLT member will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to inform the police.

If an unknown / uninvited visitor becomes abusive or aggressive, they will be asked to leave the site immediately and warned that if they fail to leave the academy grounds, police assistance will be called for.

CCTV is in operation throughout the academy premises. This is an aid in preventing uninvited people into the academy both within and outside the normal operating hours.

## **10. Emergency procedures for visitors**

In the event of an emergency, that requires the building to be evacuated, assemble at the designated place which is displayed around the academy site. A staff member will bring visitor's book to check all visitors are safely evacuated.

## **Visiting Speakers procedures**

The Edge Academy believes in encouraging the use of guest speakers and external agencies to enrich the learning experience of its pupils. However, the Academy actively scrutinises speakers and agencies to ensure that they do not contradict the ethos of the academy or conflict with the legal framework outlined in the Prevent duty.

The Edge Academy fully supports freedom of speech and is aware of the broad range of views and ideas that are needed in the course of a pupil's development. The academy will endeavour to provide pupils with a balanced view of events, ideas and beliefs.

The "Prevent" statutory guidance requires schools to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers whether invited by staff or pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised.

The protocols are:

- All visiting speakers to have a nominated point of contact at the school (the Organiser)
- Submitting a proposal for authorisation for the speaker in advance of the visit, and allow enough time to view any supportive materials prior to the visit.
- Conducting research on the person and organisation to establish whether they have demonstrated extreme views/actions.
- Maintaining a register of all visiting speakers
- Ensuring visiting speakers are accompanied at all times and are not left unsupervised with students at any point.

Any staff planning for a visiting speaker to attend the academy should complete the proposal sheet (Appendix A) prior to confirming the speaker.

## **11. Ethos**

1. The Edge Academy does not tolerate any person who intentionally or unintentionally demeans individuals and groups defined by their ethnicity, race, religion, sexuality, gender, disability, age or lawful working practices.
2. The Edge Academy does not tolerate any speech that gives rise to an environment where people experience, or could reasonably fear, harassment, intimidation or violence.
3. The Edge Academy does not accept the use of offensive or intolerant language by guest speakers.
4. The Edge Academy values freedom of speech and opinion, but recognises that, in the interest of the whole learning community, this must exist within formal guidelines.
5. The Edge Academy recognises that extremism and exposure to extremist beliefs can lead to poorer outcomes for pupils. The school aims to use the power of education to counteract extremism through the promotion of British values, such as tolerance and freedom of speech.
6. The Edge Academy is aware that pupils may sometimes express views or ideas that are discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist. All members of staff have been trained to deal with these instances appropriately and proportionally.



## 2. Assessing suitability

- 2.1. According to the Prevent duty, academies and schools have a due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism; this includes violent and non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism, and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.
- 2.2. The Edge Academy is a safe space where children can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideologies.
- 2.3. Before inviting an external agency or guest speaker, The Edge Academy conducts background research into the relevant parties, ensuring that:
  - Any messages communicated to pupils support British values.
  - Any messages communicated to pupils do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism.
  - The group or person is not attempting to narrow the views of pupils through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion, culture or ideology.
  - The subject matters being raised are appropriate for the specific age group.
- 2.4. All members of staff actively attempt to strengthen pupils' abilities to engage in informed debate. The school believes that the best way to combat extremism and intolerance is to empower pupils to challenge these views in an active and constructive manner.
- 2.5. The Designated Safeguard Lead makes the final decision as to the suitability of any guest speaker or external group.
- 2.6. The Designated Safeguard Lead has the right to request a transcript from the speaker prior to any speech being made.
- 2.7. Other than safeguarding issues, there are a number of other factors that are considered when evaluating the suitability of a guest speaker or external group. The school considers whether or not:
  - The visit will add value to the pupils' learning experiences.
  - The speaker or group has the expertise in the subject they are delivering.
  - The planned activities meet the health and safety guidelines.
  - The individual or group has the required DBS checks.
  - Relevant references have been provided and checked.
- 2.8. Before the visit, a full risk assessment may be carried out and submitted to the Designated Safeguard Lead (Appendix 1) which may be sent out to the visiting speaker in advance of their visit.

### **3. During the visit**

- 3.1. Guest speakers are made aware that their speech can be recorded or filmed.
- 3.2. No recordings or videos are made public unless written permission is granted by the speaker.
- 3.3. The **organiser** or a senior member of staff is present during the speech or group activity, to oversee that the relevant guidelines are followed.
- 3.4. Intervention is considered if the member of staff feels it is necessary.
- 3.5. Any reasons for intervention may be recorded for future reference.

### **4. Balanced presentation**

- 4.1. Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development at the school offers a balanced presentation of opposing views. This is applicable when a guest speaker is expressing overtly political or partisan views.
- 4.2. The Edge Academy ensures a balanced approach through:
  - Discussions in class.
  - Presentations by staff.
  - Extra curricular activities.
  - Assigning homework to pupils.
  - Other methods deemed appropriate by the DSL
- 4.3. The final decision as to whether the subsequent learning activities carried out after the visits have been balanced will be made by the Designated Safeguard Lead.
- 4.4. 'Partisan views' are defined as a one-sided political viewpoint.
- 4.5. 'Political views' are defined as ideas expressed:
  - To further the interests of a particular political party.
  - To procure changes to the laws of this or another country.
  - To procure the reversal of government policy or particular decisions of governmental authorities in this or another country.

## **5. Visiting Agencies procedures**

There will be occasions where external agencies, such as the police and LA children's services, visit The Edge Academy in relation to one, or more, of our pupils.

However, whilst we will meet our duties to cooperate with such agencies, we are also conscious of our obligation to protect the rights and welfare of our pupils at all times, even if they are encountered as an offender or alleged offender.

### **5. Roles and responsibilities.**

#### **5.1. The governing body will:**

- Ensure that a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is appointed from the senior leadership team, and is appropriately trained.
- Ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance.
- Work with external agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- Allow access for LA children's services to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.
- Ensure that our safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

#### **5.2. The DSL will:**

- Liaise with any visiting agents.
- Update the Principal of any contact by visiting agents with regards to child protection concerns and police investigations.
- Ensure that academy staff are aware of the contents of this policy and understand what to do if an external agent visits the school.
- Ensure that the policy is publicly available.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for school staff.
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed, and updated as required.

#### **5.3. The deputy DSL(s) will:**

- Cover the duties of the DSL with regards to visiting agencies, when the DSL is unavailable.
- Support the DSL with their work with visiting agencies.

## 6. Types of agencies

6.1. The Edge Academy may receive a request for access to a pupil from agencies including, but not limited to:

- Police
- LA children's services
- National Probation Service
- Youth offending teams
- Pastoral and mentoring agencies

## 7. What to do when they arrive

7.1. The visiting agent will be expected to report to the **school office** upon arrival, stating the purpose of their visit and offering proof of identification, as well as any supporting documents such as warrants or court papers.

7.2. The visiting agent will be turned away from the school if they are unable to provide sufficient proof of identification or supporting documentation.

7.3. Where sufficient proof of identification is received, the **school office** will summon the **DSL**, who will discuss with the visiting agent whether it is necessary to conduct the visiting agency's business on the school site. Final responsibility rests with the visiting agent to determine whether the agency business should take place at the school.

7.4. Where it is deemed appropriate for the agency business to be conducted on the school site, the **DSL** will escort the visiting agent to the **designated interview room**, where they will wait for the pupil.

7.5. Where a pupil has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), the **DSL** will consult their SEND statement, education and healthcare (EHC) plan or individual education plan, to determine if any reasonable adjustments need to be made for the pupil.

7.6. Where a pupil has English as an additional language (EAL), the **DSL** will determine whether a translator is required.

7.7. Before initiating any interview, the visiting agent will meet any legal requirements relating to advising the pupil of their statutory rights.

7.8. Where a pupil is an ex-offender, or is suspected of a new offence, they are entitled to the same safeguards and protection as any other pupil, and due regard will be given to their welfare at all times.

## 8. Emergency powers

- 8.1. The police have the power to enter the school and remove a pupil to ensure their immediate protection, if there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

## 9. Parental rights

- 9.1. In most cases, the visiting agent will seek the consent of parent/carers to contact the school before doing so; however, where there are serious concerns about the safety of a pupil, it may be necessary for the visiting agent to make contact without parental permission.
- 9.2. Where the parent/carers have consented to the visit, and wish to be present, the **DSL** will request that the visiting agent wait at least **30 minutes** for the parents to arrive.
- 9.3. If the parent is present and requests to witness the interview, the **DSL** will so advise the visiting agent.
- 9.4. If the parent is not present, the visiting agent will inform the pupil that, if requested, the **DSL** may remain in the room with the visiting agent and the pupil to witness the questioning.
- 9.5. The visiting agent may, depending on the circumstances of the investigation, disallow parents or school staff presence during the interview.
- 9.6. If the **DSL** releases the pupil to the custody of a visiting agent (e.g. if the pupil is charged with an offence, or the visiting agent is in possession of a legitimate arrest warrant or court order), immediate steps to notify the pupil's parents will need to be taken by the agency or school.

## 10. Making agencies wait

- 10.1. Visiting agents will wait (no longer than **30 minutes**) in the **school office** for the **DSL**.
- 10.2. Where it is deemed appropriate for the visiting agent to conduct their business at the school, they will wait in the **designated interview room** until the pupil arrives.

## 11. Location of conversation/interview

- 11.1. Except in an emergency, the pupil will be summoned to the **designated interview room**, so that the visiting agent's contact does not occur in the presence of other pupils.
- 11.2. The **designated interview room** will not be publicised, in order to maintain confidentiality.

## **12. Child protection enquiries**

- 12.1. Where child abuse is suspected, and if the agency officer decides to take the pupil into custody, the **DSL** will not contact the pupil's parents, but will provide the visiting agent with the address and telephone number of the parents in order to assist the visiting agent's compliance with the legal notice requirements applicable to such cases.

## **13. Recording the visit**

- 13.1. Visits by an external agency will be recorded in the Visiting Agencies Log (Appendix B).

## **14. Handling confidential information**

- 14.1. Information in relation to a pupil will be shared with external agencies, such as the police, if it enables them to undertake their duties.
- 14.2. The Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.
- 14.3. Decisions to share information will be recorded, citing what was shared and with who.
- 14.4. Any information that we receive from other agencies in relation to one of our pupils will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation, and kept only for as long as is necessary, in line with the school's retention policy.

## **15. Staff training**

- 15.1. The DSL, and any deputies, will undergo formal child protection and safeguarding training at least every two years, to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles.
- 15.2. Informal refresher training may also be provided to the DSL and any deputies, at more regular intervals, to ensure that they remain up-to-date with the latest child protection and safeguarding developments.

**Appendix A: The Edge Academy Checklist External Speaker/Guest**

<b>Proposal: Complete and submit to EDGE ACADEMY prior to confirming speaker</b>					
Organiser's Name		Guest Speaker's Name			
Session Title		Date of Session			
Aim of the session (plus year groups involved)		Intended content of session			
Name and Address of organisation represented by guest speaker:		Name and Address of Organisation Confirmed			
Resources to be used by guest speaker (to be requested in advance):		Date resources to be received:			
<b>Approval of speaker to be signed off by SLT:</b> Signature:					Date:
If not signed: concerns raised for further consideration (e.g. reference request/DBS check):					
Return to:					
<b>Resource Check: to be completed by organiser prior to speaker's visit.</b>					
Date resources to be received:	Date:	Contents checked and suitable	Yes	No	<b>If NO is ticked, you must inform a member of SLT prior to the visit.</b>
If no, actions taken:					

