




St Augustine's Catholic High School and Sixth Form

Visitors Policy

Approved		Date
Principal G T O'Connor		31.05.22
Cycle of Review: 3 years		
Next Review Date: May 2025		



ST AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE PERSON

VISITORS POLICY

Rationale

Whatever your reason for spending time with us, we hope that you will be made to feel welcome and that your needs will be properly met. Throughout the year hundreds of people visit the school. They range from parents, supply teachers, health workers, technical support staff, and representatives of other external agencies through to salespeople and contracted workers dealing with repair, maintenance and building matters. The information below is provided to all visitors to the school. All our procedures aim to keep our pupils and staff safe and is based on Ofsted guidance relating to safeguarding.

All visitors enter the school at the discretion of the Principal and must adhere to the following measures:

- Have an agreed appointment with a member of staff.
- Any visitor entering the school who is meeting with a student/member of staff must be approved in advance by SLT. The exception to this is if a visitor is meeting with SLT or the Pastoral Team. The staff member must inform the Office Manager who will raise it with SLT.

Driving and Parking on School Premises

There is car parking on site, spaces can be reserved where possible with advance notice. Please drive as slowly as possible (under 10 mph). Some of our pupils may have sight or hearing impairments, learning difficulties or restricted mobility. Drivers of lorries or heavy vehicles should take extreme care at all times, especially when reversing. Entering and Leaving School All visitors must enter the school through the main entrance which is signposted.

Upon Arrival

Please go to the main reception desk and ensure that you sign in on your arrival and sign out on your departure. This is essential for security and safety reasons. The school office is manned from 8AM to 5PM. If you arrive at school outside of these hours, please ring the outside bell to summon the caretaker. Once you have signed in and been issued with a visitor's badge, please wait in the reception area until the person you are meeting comes for you. Under no circumstances should visitors wander around school by yourself.

Parents visiting the school must first contact Reception. No parent is allowed to take a child from school without this being recorded in the pupil 'signing in/out' book. No parent is permitted to have contact with children other than their own.

Aligned to the Keeping Children Safe in Education policy, the school does 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. The Principal uses his professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise such visitors. For visitors who are there in a professional capacity, ID is checked and the school is assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks) before they enter the school.

External Visitors/Guest Speakers – what to expect from a Catholic school

A welcome acknowledging their expertise and the enrichment it will provide for students; Informative, supportive and cooperative relationships through a working agreement.

What can the school expect from external visitors?

All programmes, teachings or activities within the school should be:

- Beneficial to pupils.
- Consistent with Gospel Values and the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- Consistent with the school's Mission Statement, goals, aims and objectives.
- Built on mutual trust, respect and appreciation of each other.

What if there is a breach/conflict of views expressed by the Guest Speaker/Visitor

Before provision is made, there should be discussion and dialogue. If a resolution cannot be achieved and the Protocol cannot be agreed then the agency or individual should be refused entry. If there is a conflict with the Catholic ethos of the school then St Augustine's reserves the right to intervene and terminate the visit or event. This should be followed up with the individual or the organisation and discussed. The Protocol should be agreed and enforced for future visits if the provider/individual is to be invited into school again.

Managing Aggressive Behaviour from Parent-Carers and Visitors

St Augustine's actively encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. From time to time it is necessary for parents and the school to deal with problems relating to particular students. It is important that discussions between parents and staff are conducted in a calm and respectful manner. In the vast majority of such situations this is what happens, but on rare occasions, aggression and verbal and or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community.

St Augustine's expects its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and the right, in an extreme case, of appropriate self defence.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community, including other parents and students, will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place in which to work and learn. There is no place for violence, threatening behaviour or abuse in our school.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff and the wider school community at all times. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and which will not be tolerated in relation to members of staff, and other members of the community are:

- shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- swearing, either in person or over the telephone/email
- constant emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation
- Inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers or students on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter or in email communication
- hitting, slapping, punching, kicking or pushing
- physically intimidation, eg standing unnecessarily close to her/him
- the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- spitting
- breaching the school's security procedures

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. Whilst the use of such behaviour is unacceptable in all circumstances, the school is particularly concerned to protect its students

from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them).

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

Parental/Visitor Access to the School Premises

Normally parents/carers (and those with parental responsibility), plus visitors, are granted what is known as "limited licence" to visit the grounds and buildings of a school. Where there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of a parent/visitor, and possible staff/student safety, the Principal may carry out the following:

- initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual
- write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating that it is unacceptable
- vary the person's "licence", say, through the addition of conditions
- warn of the possibility of a "ban" (i.e. the withdrawal of their licence) if the misconduct is repeated
- impose a ban with a review after a fixed period
- impose a ban without review

Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Principal and/or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed by the parent. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where the circumstances otherwise require it, a parent/carer or visitor may be banned by the Principal from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, eg that police involvement or an injunction application may follow
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local police
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban
4. As appropriate, arrangements for meetings at school regarding students, and arrangements for students being delivered to and collected from the school will be clarified.
5. In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the school's solicitors, and/or the Local Authority if necessary, to ensure fairness and consistency.