

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGULATING, ACCOMPANYING AND VETTING VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Date May 2018	Review Date May 2020	Coordinator Angus Burnett	Nominated Trustee Chair of F&GP Committee
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Procedure

Arrangements for contact between children at the Mulberry Bush School and their parents, or anyone who has responsibility for them and any other significant people

The School operates a six term year in which children go home approximately every seven weeks. Such holidays are more frequent than, but not always as long as, holidays in mainstream schools, lasting from one week to five, depending upon the time of year. In addition, children return home for a weekend once a term (see school calendar for details).

Requests by parents or carers to have a child home for other occasions during term time are discussed and an agreement reached. The School makes clear its own position that, just as regular opportunities for the child to be at home are important and necessary, so too is a period of time spent at the School without interruption in order that a sufficient degree of continuity is sustained for treatment to be effective. Holidays taken in term time also require the agreement of the Placing Authority which pays the fees.

While the child is at School s/he can receive telephone calls, generally once or twice a week from parents or carers. The School also encourages letters, and especially postcards, to be sent regularly to children because they have proved to be very effective in making a child feel remembered. Should any parent or carer wish to visit the School, arrangements can be made to make this happen, including collecting visitors from Oxford Railway Station and/or ensuring the money is available from Placing Authorities to cover travel costs. This also applies for a child's Annual Educational Review or Looked After Child Review held at the School.

The School holds at least two Open Days for parents and carers. Such events are valued very greatly by all participants. While there is often a particular theme, opportunities are also made for individual discussions with senior staff, care workers and teachers.

At no time is a child refused contact with a parent or carer who wishes to speak to him or her, unless of course that adult person either requests that such contact is not made, or is prohibited by a Court Order or Social Services Department direction from doing so. In either case this fact will be noted in a child's file. This information is also displayed in household offices and on the intranet for easy reference by staff. The information is reviewed regularly.

Visits by the children's Social Workers, whether statutory or otherwise, are welcomed. These are to be arranged through the School Secretary in partnership with the relevant Family Network Practitioner to ensure that the school diary is coordinated and manageable. The Therapies and Networks Team can also facilitate contact at the School between children and their families if the child does not live at home.

All visitors must sign in using the electronic system on arrival and any unfamiliar family members must not be left unaccompanied by staff whilst on school premises. Staff should check with colleagues or Local Authority professionals about a family member's suitability to be on site if they think that they have any cause for concern.

VISITORS' BADGES & LANYARDS

All visitors must wear a Visitor's card and lanyard; all staff must ensure that visitors wear them at all times during a visit.

All professionals will be expected to arrive with, and be able to provide, appropriate photographic identification when asked. This should be a form of identification provided by their employer but, at the school's discretion, could be a recognised alternative e.g. a driving licence.

Any professional who does not provide adequate identification may be refused entry or access to children.

When a visitor lacks any appropriate identification; if a member of staff, who is on site and available, can vouch for the visitor's identity and is willing to do so, they can indicate in the Visitor's Book that they have done so. Any visitor gaining access to the school in this manner will not have unsupervised access to any child, regardless of their status or the purpose of their visit. Any visitor to The Burrow will have to sign in separately as a visitor there using the visitor's book. This book is kept in The Burrow office. Visitors to The Burrow will be issued with a red lanyard to make them immediately distinguishable by sight.

Certain visitors may be required to be on site who do not have CRB clearance, for example people contracted to undertake maintenance work. In general, these visitors will be briefed by appropriate staff and will not be left unsupervised. If it is expected that they will be working on-site for a sustained period and the work is pre-planned, they will be expected to obtain CRB clearance if they do not already have it. Any visitor who does not have CRB clearance will be expected to also use the red lanyards.

Any visitor who appears to be under the influence of drink or drugs will be refused entry beyond Reception and the referring Local Authority will be informed immediately of any such incident.

Coordinator: Angus Burnett