



Visitors and Outside Agencies in School

Principles

The use of visitors is one from a variety of teaching strategies that can be used to engage pupils. Inviting a visitor into school should serve to complement other teaching carried out by teachers in the school. However, if visitors are used to deliver any aspect of the curriculum it is important that their contribution has been well planned and is part of an overall programme. Visitors should not be used as isolated 'one off' inputs or as a replacement for a planned programme delivered by teachers.

Some advantages of using visitors are:

- specialist knowledge and up-to-date information about an aspect of the programme of study;
- to promote links between school and local agencies and organisations, for example, the council, police, citizens advice bureau and religious communities;
- provide opportunities for pupils to become more involved in local communities;
- they provide an extra dimension and variety for pupils;
- they offer different points of view on local and national issues.

Ensuring a balance of views, schools should, over-time, arrange visits by politicians over a school year so that the views of all the main parties are heard as well as those of the local MP.

Aims

1. To meet the safeguarding of children requirements by ensuring that visitors comply with school protocols, do not have unsupervised access to pupils (most especially if they have not undergone an enhanced DBS check and understand the parameters within which they must operate when working with young people;
2. To enhance the understanding and educational experience of pupils by bringing specific topics and issues to life through input from those whose direct expertise/experience is real and relevant;
3. To support the work of the teacher;
4. To engage more effectively with the local and wider community;
5. To forge genuine links with other organisations.

Practice

1. Before involving visitors schools should consider:
 - Why is the visitor's input being sought and is that particular visitor the most appropriate source of that input?
 - Is the visitor's contribution an integrated part of the curriculum?
 - What planning, preparatory and follow-up work needs to take place?
 - What experience does the visitor have of working with young people?
 - Does the visitor understand the emotional and intellectual levels of the young people and can s/he communicate at the appropriate level?
 - What teaching and learning strategies is the visitor planning to use?

- Are resources being used appropriate for young people?
 - Is the school aware of the legal implications of having and using visitors in school, with respect to child protection and The Children Act 1989?
2. Visitors must not be left alone to work with young people. It is essential that the teacher is part of the experience so that appropriate follow up work can be provided. It also acts as a safeguard should a parent or child make a complaint regarding the visitor.
 3. Before agreeing to take part, the teacher or senior manager of the school should discuss with the visitor the following issues:
 - Information about the group to be taught - numbers, ages, time available, where it takes place, resources.
 - What are the aims of the session?
 - How does the visitor's input fit into the overall programme?
 - Why is the agency's/visitor's involvement relevant?
 - What will be the follow up work?
 - How can we evaluate the session with the young people?
 - The school policy on confidentiality.
 - Classroom management issues - who does what?
 4. The visitors' input should be followed by feedback from the teacher after the session. Where appropriate, pupil feedback may also be sought.

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To be reviewed every three years: next review September 2019