Guest Speaker Policy

Statement of intent:
At Burley Oaks Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Burley Oaks Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

The main priority is to prevent an emergency from occurring in the setting; however, this is sometimes, unfortunately, out of the hands of the school. In an emergency, staff members at Burley Oaks Primary School will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of pupils.
The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors.

This policy was agreed in January 2025 and will be reviewed in January 2028.

Chair of Governors **Date 30 January 2025**

Headteacher **Date30 January 2025**

Burley Oaks Primary School Guest Speaker Policy

Statement of intent

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

Burley Oaks Primary School 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. Burley Oaks will endeavour to provide pupils with a balanced view of events, ideas and beliefs.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to the following legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to the:

Legislation

- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011

Guidance

- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2013) 'Tackling extremism in the UK: report by the Extremism Taskforce'
- DfE (2024) Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2013) 'Tackling extremism in the UK'
- DfE (2014) 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'
- HM Government (2011) 'Prevent Strategy'
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation'

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (Trust)
- Prevent tackling extremism and radicalisation
- Community Cohesion Policy
- SMSC Policy
- MLT Educational Visits Policy
- MLT Educational Visits Handbook
- MLT Data Protection Policy

2. Ethos

2.1. Burley Oaks Primary 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.

2.2. Burley Oaks Primary does not tolerate any speech that gives rise to an environment where people experience, or could reasonably fear, harassment, intimidation or violence.

2.3. Burley Oaks Primary does not accept the use of offensive or intolerant language by guest speakers.

2.4. Burley Oaks Primary values freedom of speech and opinion, but recognises that, in the interest of the whole learning community, this must exist within formal guidelines.

2.5. Burley Oaks Primary 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.

2.6. Burley Oaks Primary 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.

3. Assessing suitability

3.1. According to the Prevent duty, 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.

3.2. The school is a safe space where children can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideologies.

3.3. Before inviting an external agency or guest speaker, the school 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.

3.4. 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 constructive manner.

3.5. The headteacher makes the final decision as to the suitability of any guest speaker or external group.

3.6. The headteacher has the right to request a transcript from the speaker prior to any speech being made.

3.7. 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.

3.8. Before the visit, a full risk assessment is carried out and submitted to the headteacher.

4. During the visit

4.1. Guest speakers are made aware if their speech is recorded or filmed.

4.2. No recordings or videos are made public unless written permission is granted by the speaker.

4.3. A member of staff is present during the speech or group activity, to oversee that the relevant guidelines are followed.

4.4. Intervention is considered if the member of staff feels it is necessary.

4.5. Any reasons for intervention are recorded for future reference.

5. Balanced presentation

5.1. 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.

5.2. Burley Oaks Primary ensures a balanced approach through:

- Discussions in class.
- Presentations by staff.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- Assigning home learning to pupils.
- Other methods deemed appropriate by the headteacher.

5.3. The final decision as to whether the subsequent learning activities carried out after the visits have been balanced will be made by the headteacher.

5.4. 'Partisan views' are defined as a one-sided political viewpoint.

5.5. '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.

6. Policy review

6.1. This policy is reviewed every two years by the safeguarding lead/the headteacher.

6.2. The scheduled review date for this policy is January 2027.