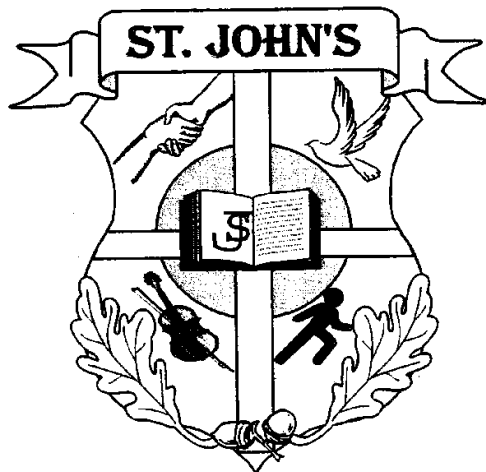


**St. John's Primary School
Bligh's Lane
Derry**

**A Policy for Visitors and Access to
Staff/Children
2026**



“Learning Together Growing Together”

Mission Statement

At St. John's Catholic, Primary School (PS), we provide a happy, nurturing, inclusive, learning, environment which delivers high quality outcomes and life-enriching experiences. We embrace diversity and encourage all to respect the environment and develop the confidence and digital skillset required to contribute to society and the local and global economy. We work collaboratively with parents/carers and community partners to promote the social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual well-being of each individual, thereby enabling our school family to 'Learn Together' and 'Grow Together.'

The Aims of this Policy

The aim of this policy and its associated procedures is to:

- Protect the children and staff from harm both during and outside of school hours when they are on our site; and
- Promote effective and meaningful liaison between school staff and the wider school community.

We have a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and a common law duty to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the school premises are safe and that visitors to school come to no harm.

We also have a duty of care to our children to ensure that they are safe from harm and therefore expect visitors to comply with the school code of conduct and child protection procedures.

The Objectives of this Policy

The key objective of this policy is to have in place a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of external visitors to the school which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors and parents/carers and conforms to child protection guidelines and prevents unsuitable people from working with or accessing children and young persons in the school setting.

We have responsibility for the safety and well-being of all of our children and staff anywhere on the school site, during normal school hours, pre-school, after school activities, and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities.

This policy applies to:

- All teaching and nonteaching staff employed by the school;
- All external visitors entering the school site during the school day or for after school activities (including peripatetic tutors, sports coaches etc.);
- Governors;
- Parents/Carers;
- Volunteers;
- Children;
- Local Authority staff; and
- Building & Maintenance Contractors.

We encourage parents/carers and other community members to visit our school and believe that there are many potential benefits which can result from increased interaction with the public. At the same time, the school must ensure children and staff are protected from harm, that the delivery of the curriculum is not disrupted and to protect the school's facilities and equipment from misuse or vandalism.

A balance must be achieved between the potential benefits and risks associated with the presence of visitors in our school buildings. Achieving the desired balance will lead to increased parent/carer involvement, a better understanding of how the school operates

and the challenges facing the school, and an increased sense of collaboration and cooperation between the community and the school.

Access to the school's premises/particular classrooms or the school may be restricted upon the recommendation by the Principal. The Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, has the authority to determine which visits are to be permitted as well as the discretion to set any appropriate conditions on the nature and extent of such visits.

The Principal will consider the purpose of any visit, the impact of the visitor's presence and the relationship of any visitor to the children.

School staff shall seek to ensure that parents/carers and other visitors are courteously received and that sincere efforts are made to provide them with information as may be needed to foster a co-operative relationship between home, school and community.

Guidelines

The school has many visitors during the course of any single day. In order to make them feel welcome and to maintain the security of children and staff, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. All visitors should report to reception on arrival;
2. For pre-arranged visits the office staff should be informed of the date of any visit, their name, their host and the purpose of the visit;
3. A visitors' book is available to record who is on the premises at any particular time;
4. visitor identification lanyards are available from the school office and must be worn by visitors;
5. A member of staff will escort all visitors to the appropriate location within the school;
6. Visitors should ensure they do not use any photographic devices or video/recording devices whilst in the building without consent; and
7. Visitors should sign out when leaving the premises.

The importance of meaningful, regular and positive liaison between parents/carers and staff cannot be overstated - this principle forms the foundation of the school's policy on liaison with parents/carers. The means of expressing this working relationship are diverse but parents/carers will appreciate that some guidelines are necessary to ensure communication is as effective as possible. All exchanges between parents/carers and staff should be conducted in a respectful and tolerant manner.

Parents/carers are asked to adhere to the school's guidelines when seeking contact with their child's teacher. The Board of Governors endorses the school's arrangements for effective parent/carer - teacher communication as set out below.

The contact between parent/carer and teacher will take the form of: -

- Meetings to discuss the child's academic progress;
- Three formal opportunities each year for parents/carers to discuss their child's progress;
- Casual or informal exchanges of information made for routine housekeeping purposes e.g. dental appointments, illness, lost property, etc; and
- Information should be sent in advance to the class teacher in written form or very briefly explained at the start/end of the school day whilst the teacher is on the playground.

In the cases of more sensitive matters that are causing concern, an appointment should be made and the issues clarified in advance to enable the parent/carer and the member of staff to make appropriate preparation. If a parent/carer requires a meeting with a

member of staff, this should be arranged in advance by letter or a phone call. This means the member of staff will be able to allocate quality time for the meeting.

Contractors on Site

When working on the school premises contractors have a duty to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the school who may be affected by their work activities. Also, they have to co-operate with our health and safety policies and procedures.

All contracted workers should report to reception on arrival and sign the record book.

The Building Supervisor assumes responsibility for all contractors on site. He will also complete a weekly record of visiting contractors on site. This will be emailed to the office manager and the principal.

We have a legal responsibility under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure that all contractors when working on the premises act in a responsible and proper manner.

NB. In line with the Education Authority and CCMMS recommendations, the Board of Governors reserves the right to put in place arrangements for addressing serious situations where the approach of a visitor might amount to harassment of staff, children or other members of the public. These arrangements include the Board of Governors seeking to put in place an injunction to restrain any such person from coming onto the school premises. Any individual causing disruption to the operation of the school or harassing children, staff or members of the public, shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and the police called if necessary. Thankfully such situations are extremely rare in our school, and we trust that adherence to this policy will minimize risk.

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff would like to thank parents/carers for their co-operation and support in this matter and look forward to working together to further strengthen the home/school partnership.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2029 or in line with new legislation/recommendations.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Kathleen McCallion
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors) (Ratified at Board of Governors' Meeting)