

Protocol for hosting external speakers & visitors at GAA 2022 - 2023

Through hosting external speakers and visitors, the Academy provides a safe space for students to engage with a variety of issues and hear and debate different perspectives. Great Academy Ashton has a responsibility to ensure that the people it invites to speak are suitable and that all safeguarding procedures are followed.

All external speakers invited to GAA should be of the highest quality and school leaders are responsible for ensuring that they have enough information about the content to be delivered by any external speaker to enable them to determine whether the content will be pitched at the right level for the age and level of maturity of the young people to whom the external speakers will present.

Academy staff should be aware that 'partisan political views' are not limited to just political parties. They may also be held by campaign groups, lobbyists and charitable organisations. Where partisan political views – or material which promote these – are covered as part of teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, Academy staff should ensure that these are presented with the appropriate context, which supports a balanced presentation of opposing views. However, in the legal duties, it is prohibited to promote partisan political views to students.

Staff should consider the following points before agreeing for an external organisation to use the Academy's premises or hold an event on site:

- The topic and purpose of the event
- Whether it would be appropriate for our students (and the likelihood of students attending the event if held outside normal school hours)
- The reputation of the organisers and any speakers
- Who might attend
- Any risks to the Academy's reputation and ethos
- The potential or likelihood that the visit will stir up hatred or incite violence
- The views of the community safety team, local police or local Prevent coordinator if you have any concerns.

The content and materials used in any engagement with students should be:

- reviewed and agreed in advance of any session
- age-appropriate
- aligned to the developmental stage of students

Staff should not hesitate to explicitly request that external agencies avoid covering certain partisan political views, where they are not deemed relevant or appropriate. Where partisan political views are relevant, the Academy should take practical steps to ensure they are not promoted to students and that students still receive a balanced account of the political issues in question.

Academy staff are responsible for ensuring that speakers, tools, and resources do not undermine the fundamental British values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

The Academy will not under any circumstances work with, or use materials produced by, external agencies that take extreme political positions on these matters. This is the case even if the material itself is not extreme, as the use of it could imply endorsement or support of the organisation.

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Examples of extreme political positions include, but are not limited to:

- promoting the adoption of non-democratic political systems rather than those based on democracy, for any purpose
- a publicly stated desire to abolish democracy, to end free and fair elections, or violently overthrow capitalism
- opposition to the right of freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly or freedom of religion and conscience
- engaging in or encouraging active or persistent harassment or intimidation of individuals in support of their cause
- the use or endorsement of racist language or communications, including antisemitic
- promoting divisive narratives that seek to justify serious criminal activity, including violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime or terrorism
- selecting and presenting information, in a biased or unbalanced manner, to make unsubstantiated accusations against state institutions to justify serious criminal activity, including violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime or terrorism
- the encouragement or endorsement of serious criminal activity, including where organisations fail to condemn criminal actions that have been committed in their name or in support of their cause, including violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime or terrorism
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Hosting external agencies

The Academy expects that its staff will follow the guidance below taken from *DfE guidance, published 17th February 2022: Political Impartiality in Schools.*

It is good practice for a teacher to be in the room whenever an external agency is presenting. This is so they know what was discussed and can follow up with students.

Teachers can intervene during a session, and in extreme cases stop a speaker. In most cases, this will not be necessary, unless the views expressed are dangerous to students and pose a safeguarding risk.

Where an external speaker has expressed partisan political views or failed to provide a balanced account of a political issue, and this is not made clear to students, teachers should use their judgement to determine what reasonable and proportionate steps should be taken to ensure that this is rectified. This might be through further teaching to help them understand other views on the issue.

Where external agencies have failed to meet the standards the Academy expects, for instance by failing to stick to an agreed plan or attempting to engage students in political activity, the Academy will share this information with the local authority, academy trust and any wider school network. This will allow other schools to be alert to these risks and consider carefully whether they wish to work with the agency in question.

When inviting speakers, GAA staff are expected to use the following checklist.

Once completed, the checklist should be shared with the relevant member of SLT for discussion and approval - the civil burden of acceptance will be applied in judgement, i.e. that if on the balance of probabilities, it is not appropriate, then it is not appropriate. Ultimately, the Principal will hold the final decision. There is no right of appeal against this decision unless it is felt that the decision is breach of the equalities act.

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Name of Speaker		
Question	Answer	Actions needed/Comment
Will the Speaker be supervised at all times during their visit? If not, why not? – Has a DBS been received and approved?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you carried out safeguarding checks (if appropriate) for the Speaker and have these been recorded in accordance with the Academy's safeguarding procedures?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the Speaker understood and confirmed that their communications in the Academy will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful towards all areas of the Equalities Act: age, gender, race, disability, religions and beliefs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity status • Not be prejudicial or detrimental to the Academy's ethos and GREAT values of Genuine, Respect, Excellence, Achieve and Together • Not engage students in political activity and • Not cover certain partisan political views which are not deemed relevant or appropriate (provide details if applicable) • Be delivered in accordance with the requirements set out in the DfE's guidance on political impartiality in schools (if appropriate) 	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you reviewed the resources/materials that will be used by the Speaker?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you reviewed other resources produced by the Speaker (and by any	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	

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organisation the speaker represents) even if they will not form part of the speaker's activities at the Academy?	NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you conducted a general internet search using the Speaker's name (eg. a Google search)? If parents and/or young people conducted a similar search, are any concerns likely to arise?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you confirm that the political views espoused by the speaker/speaker's organisation are in compliance with British values and do not involve taking an extreme political position?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have the Academy's policies and procedures applicable to the speaker been explained to and understood by the Speaker?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any other outstanding issues or concerns with the Speaker and/or their suitability?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Will the Speaker deliver content of a high quality that is appropriate to the age and maturity of the students in the audience?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FURTHER COMMENT <input type="checkbox"/>	

If you have any concerns regarding the suitability of this Speaker, you should contact a member of SLT to seek further clarification.

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Approved for booking

SLT Staff member Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____