



School Visits Protocol

Date of Protocol	April 2025
Date of Review	September 2026
Trust Lead	Trust Lead Access to Learning
Signed	<i>Cathy Clarke</i>

Purpose

This protocol outlines the procedures for all visits to Gallery Trust special schools. It will ensure that visits are safe, respectful, and beneficial for visitors, pupils, and staff, while maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding and operational continuity. It will ensure consistency and quality across all Gallery Trust schools when welcoming prospective parents and visitors and will provide a structured approach to delivering informative, reassuring, and engaging tours for parents considering a placement for their child.

General Principles

- All visits must be pre-arranged and approved by the Headteacher or a designated senior leader
- Visits must always be hosted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Safeguarding and the wellbeing of pupils and staff are the highest priorities during all visits
- Visitors must respect the specialist needs of our pupils, including minimising disruption and being sensitive to communication and sensory needs
- Visits are to be group-based where possible, particularly for prospective parents
- A member of staff must accompany all visitors at all times

Types of visits

- Parent tours for families considering a place for their child (the child must either already have an Education Health and Care Plan or must have had an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment agreed by their Local Authority)
- Professional visits for professionals seeking to observe practice or build partnerships
- External agencies or inspections e.g., visits from Ofsted, Local Authority officers, health professionals, etc.

The aim of School tours

- Provide a clear and welcoming introduction to the school
- Showcase how the school makes provision for children with SEND
- Reassure all visitors about safety, well-being, and learning support
- Give an opportunity to ask questions and understand the admissions process
- Ensure all tours are consistent, professional, and parent-focused

Key principles for all visits

- Professional and welcoming
- Consistent, clear, engaging and informative – showcase the school's strengths through real-life examples and interactions
- Not focussed on challenges

Key principles for all parent tours

- Professional and welcoming – ensure all parents feel valued
- Consistent yet personalised – follow the protocol while tailoring discussions to each child's needs
- Clear and reassuring – allow opportunities to ask questions, address parental concerns with honesty and empathy
- Engaging and informative – showcase the school's strengths through real-life examples and interactions
- Not focussed on funding – this is the commissioning Local Authority's role

Booking visits

- All visit requests must be made via [email/contact form/phone] ideally 2 weeks in advance, if possible
- When booking, visitors must state:
 - o The purpose of the visit
 - o Preferred dates/times
 - o Number of attendees
 - o Any access requirements or additional needs
- Parent tours will be scheduled at designated times and conducted in small groups (maximum 6–8 parents per tour) to reduce disruption and maintain a calm environment
- Parent tours for larger groups (10+ attendees) must be scheduled outside of the school day to minimise disruption to pupils and the school's routine

Preparing for visits

- Visitors will receive an information pack beforehand outlining:
 - o Safeguarding expectations
 - o Photography and mobile phone policy (strictly prohibited without permission)
 - o Behavioural expectations during visits
 - o Emergency evacuation procedures
- All visitors must provide photo ID on arrival
- A register of visitors will be kept securely by the school office

On Arrival

- Visitors must sign in at Reception and wear a visitor badge visibly at all times.
- A brief safeguarding induction will be given if the visit is their first to the school or involves significant time in pupil areas

Visit Content

All visits should include the following elements to ensure a consistent and informative experience:

- Welcome and Introduction by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
 - Overview of the school's ethos, values, and curriculum
 - Introduction to the special educational needs the school supports to include an overview of the specialist provision that we offer in that setting e.g. routine access to therapies, specialist teaching methods, etc
 - PowerPoint presentations *could* be used to provide an introduction to the school
 - An introductory video, featuring staff and students, could be shared
- School tour – Warmly greet parents, provide an information pack and overview of the curriculum, therapies, and support strategies. FAQs on school day structure, transport, and home-school communication. Explain the structure of the tour and encourage questions throughout. Visit:
 - Classrooms, showcase unique features of the school
 - Outdoors and sports and play areas
 - Dining and life skills areas
 - Specialist facilities e.g. hydrotherapy pools, assistive technology rooms, rebound therapy areas etc
- Safeguarding and wellbeing information
 - Outline of how the school keeps pupils safe and promotes wellbeing
- Observation of learning and activities
 - Visitors *may* observe lessons or activities from a respectful distance where appropriate and with minimal disruption
- Parent engagement and support
 - How EHCPs are implemented and reviewed
 - Positive behaviour support and emotional regulation strategies etc
 - Home-school communication (diaries, apps, meetings)
 - Parent support groups, workshops, and networking opportunities
- Admissions process information (for parent tours)
 - Explanation of admissions criteria, EHCP process, and next steps
- Question and answer session
 - Opportunity for visitors to ask questions about provision, curriculum, support strategies, and wider school life
- Close and next Steps
 - Information on how visitors can follow up (e.g., requesting further information, admissions application, professional collaboration)

Note: The structure may be adapted depending on the purpose of the visit e.g., professionals or parents, but safeguarding and pupil wellbeing must always remain central.

Safeguarding and conduct

- Visitors must not take photographs or videos unless explicit prior permission is granted
- Visitors must not approach or interact directly with pupils unless invited by a staff member
- Any safeguarding concerns noticed during the visit must be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The school reserves the right to end a visit immediately if safeguarding, conduct, or pupil wellbeing is compromised

After the visit

- Visitors must sign out and return their badges
- Feedback forms may be provided for visitors to help us improve the visit experience
- Any follow-up actions, such as admissions enquiries or partnership opportunities should be directed through the appropriate school, Link Director or the Trust Consultations and Admissions Officer

Post-tour follow up

- Email thankyou message and offer a follow-up call for any additional questions
- Log key details from the tour, including any feedback and any next steps