ALMA EDUCATION

Visitors Policy

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Statement of Intent

Alma Education welcomes visitors who add value to a young person's learning and wellbeing, while keeping safeguarding at the centre of every visit. Because Alma delivers education across home, community and hub settings rather than a single site, this policy sets out how visitors are authorised, checked, identified and supervised in each of those settings.

Every visitor to an Alma session, whether at a hub or in a home or community setting, is approved in advance by the Director of Education. This policy explains how that approval is given, how visitors are identified using lanyards, badges and posters, and how learning mentors supervise visitors so that young people remain safe at all times.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE)
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
Childcare Act 2006
Education Act 1996
Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023, updated March 2024)
DfE 'Political Impartiality in Schools'
DBS Code of Practice
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

1. Introduction and Scope

Alma Education provides 1:1 and small group education for young people who cannot access mainstream school. The majority of sessions take place 1:1, in a young person's home or in a community setting. Small group sessions take place at Alma Hubs. Alma has no single fixed premises, so this policy applies across all settings in which Alma delivers education.

This policy applies to anyone visiting an Alma session who is not a young person's parent or carer and not the learning mentor delivering that session. This includes advisory board members, consultants, professionals from a commissioning school or local authority, guest speakers, prospective staff, and any other visitor attending in a professional capacity.

Alma is commissioned by schools and local authorities, which retain full legal accountability for each young person's education and welfare. This policy sets out Alma's own visiting procedures and does not alter that accountability.

2. Authorisation of Visitors

No visitor attends any Alma session, at a hub, in a home or in a community setting, without prior approval from the Director of Education. There is no walk-in or unannounced visiting at Alma.

- Anyone wishing to visit a session must request approval from the Director of Education in advance, stating the purpose of the visit, the young person or session involved, and the proposed date.
- The Director of Education considers the educational value of the visit, its age appropriateness, whether any checks are required, and how the visit fits with the young person's plan and welfare.
- Approval is confirmed in writing to the learning mentor before the visit takes place. A learning mentor must not admit a visitor to a session who has not been pre-approved by the Director of Education.
- For home visits, the parent or carer is also informed in advance and their agreement sought, given the visit is taking place in their home.

Non-negotiable

A visitor must never be admitted to a session, at a hub or in a home or community setting, without prior approval from the Director of Education. If a learning mentor is unsure whether a visitor has been approved, the visit does not go ahead until this is confirmed.

3. Safeguarding and Checks

The Director of Education assesses the suitability of every visitor before approving a visit, including whether a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required.

- A visitor undertaking regulated activity, or who will be alone with a young person, requires an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information before the visit is approved.
- For a visitor attending in a professional capacity, such as a social worker or commissioner representative, the learning mentor checks photographic identification on arrival and seeks assurance that the appropriate DBS check is held.
- A visitor who has not undergone the required DBS check is never left alone with a young person, in a hub, home or community setting.
- The Director of Education uses professional judgement to decide whether a visitor should be accompanied throughout the visit, and this is confirmed to the learning mentor as part of the approval.

DBS checks are carried out in accordance with Alma's Safer Recruitment Policy. Alma has regard to the Prevent Duty at all times when considering visitors and guest speakers, including their compatibility with fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

4. Visiting Procedures: Alma Hubs

Small group sessions take place at Alma Hubs, where two members of staff are present. The following procedure applies to every visitor to a hub session:

- The visitor reports to the learning mentor on arrival and confirms their identity.
- The learning mentor checks photographic identification and confirms the visit was pre-approved by the Director of Education before allowing the visitor onto the hub premises.
- The visitor signs in on the hub's visitor log, recording their name, the purpose of the visit, the session or young person concerned, and their arrival time.
- The learning mentor issues the visitor with a lanyard and a name badge, following the procedure in section 6.
- The visitor is accompanied by a member of staff at all times while at the hub, unless the Director of Education has confirmed otherwise as part of the approval.
- On departure, the visitor signs out on the hub's visitor log and returns the lanyard.

5. Visiting Procedures: Home and Community Settings

Most Alma sessions take place 1:1, in a young person's home or in a community setting, with one learning mentor present. Because there is no fixed reception point or office in these settings, the following procedure applies instead of a sign-in log:

- Only a visitor who has been pre-approved by the Director of Education may attend a home or community session, and this approval is confirmed to the learning mentor in advance.
- The learning mentor checks the visitor's photographic identification on arrival.
- The learning mentor issues the visitor with a lanyard and a completed, signed name badge, following the procedure in section 6, before the visitor takes part in the session.
- The learning mentor remains present throughout the visit and does not leave the visitor alone with the young person unless the Director of Education has confirmed this is appropriate.
- The parent or carer is made aware of the visitor's presence and purpose at or before the start of the session.

6. Identification: Lanyards, Badges and Posters

Alma uses a consistent identification system for visitors across every setting, so that young people always know who is approved to be present.

- Every visitor wears a red lanyard marked 'Visitor' for the full duration of their visit, at a hub or in a home or community setting.
- Every visitor also wears a name badge, completed and signed by Melanie Steel, Director of Education, confirming the visitor's name and that their visit has been approved.
- A poster explaining what a visitor lanyard and badge look like, and what to do if a young person sees someone without one, is displayed at every Alma Hub for young people to see.
- A young person, parent or carer at a hub who sees someone without a red lanyard and signed badge is encouraged to tell a member of staff straight away.
- Lanyards and badges are returned to the learning mentor at the end of every visit.

How this keeps young people safe

The red lanyard and signed badge are the visible signal, for young people and staff alike, that someone has been checked and approved by the Director of Education. Anyone without one is treated as unauthorised, whatever they say their purpose is.

7. Unidentified or Unauthorised Individuals

- It is the responsibility of every learning mentor to politely question anyone present at a hub, home or community session who is not wearing a red lanyard and signed name badge.

- If an individual cannot confirm they have been approved by the Director of Education, the learning mentor does not allow them to remain with the young person and contacts the Director of Education immediately.
- If an individual refuses to leave, or becomes aggressive or abusive, the learning mentor removes the young person from the situation where possible and contacts the police for assistance.
- Any such incident is reported to the Director of Education the same day and recorded in line with Alma's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8. Visitor Conduct

- Visitors are expected to act in accordance with Alma's Staff Code of Conduct for the duration of their visit, including in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Visitors are briefed by the learning mentor, before the visit begins, on relevant safeguarding and health and safety information and on how to raise a concern.
- A visitor who behaves in an aggressive or threatening manner towards a learning mentor, young person, parent or carer is asked to leave immediately, and the Director of Education is informed.
- Under section 547 of the Education Act 1996, causing or permitting a nuisance or disturbance is an offence, and the police may be contacted to assist where necessary.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Director of Education

- Approves every visitor before a visit takes place, having considered suitability, purpose and any checks required.
- Completes and signs every visitor name badge.
- Decides whether a visitor must be accompanied throughout their visit.
- Is informed immediately of any unauthorised or unidentified individual.

Learning mentors

- Confirm a visitor has been pre-approved by the Director of Education before admitting them to any session.
- Check photographic identification, issue the lanyard and badge, and supervise the visitor throughout the visit.
- Complete the hub visitor log for hub-based visits.
- Challenge, politely but promptly, anyone without a red lanyard and signed badge.

Advisory Board

- Provides oversight of this policy and its application across all Alma settings.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Director of Education and the Advisory Board, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or statutory guidance. Any necessary amendments will be communicated to all staff. This policy was approved by Melanie Steel, Director of Education, in August 2026 and is due for review in August 2027.