



**ALL SAINTS
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**
BIRMINGHAM
GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION

Media Handling policy

All Saints Multi Academy Trust

Approved by:	Trust Board	Date: 15.05.2023
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Contents	Page
1. Overview	3
2. Aims	3
3. Principles	3
4. Links to other policies	4

Mission Statement

Teach children in the way they should go and when they are older, they will not depart from it

Children are at the heart of everything we do. Through Christian values, relationships, living and learning together we celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of everyone in our family. We nurture a sense of self belief, mutual respect and belonging to build the foundations for happy and successful lives

1. Overview

This policy sets out the principles all staff and volunteers, including trustees, central staff, school staff and governors should follow when dealing with the media.

The policy covers both proactive and planned press activity and reactive media in response to an incident and / or emergency.

In the case of an incident or emergency this policy should be read alongside the relevant Trust or School Business Continuity Plan.

2. Aims

To ensure that clear lines of communication and accountability are observed between the Trust, schools and media when dealing with an incident or emergency.

To ensure that requests for information from the media are handled properly and professionally.

To ensure that the principles of data protection and confidentiality are observed.

To ensure families whose students are on the 'no publicity list' have their privacy protected.

To ensure that only those who have the Trust's permission to speak to the media do so.

To ensure all schools are supported in handling the media and gain maximum publicity for positive news coverage.

To ensure the Trust reputation and ethos is consistently communicated and protected.

3. Principles

Reactive media handling in response to an incident, emergency or press enquiry.

All media enquiries should be directed to the Executive Headteacher or Head of Operations.

In the event of an incident or emergency all press enquiries should be managed through the Head of Operations who will manage the media response in conjunction with the Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the chair of trustees/governors.

Any staff member or volunteer who receives an enquiry from the media should report the incident to the Executive Headteacher who will in turn notify the Head of Operations. Staff or volunteers receiving the initial communication should take a note of the date, time and contact details of the media enquirer, a summary of the query and any information on timing for a response. Staff and volunteers should not comment on individual media enquiries or promise a response.

The Head of Operations will then agree whether a response to the media is appropriate. Responses may include a media statement, to be party to an interview or no response.

It will be at the Executive Headteacher's discretion who should be involved in the response, but routinely the chair of the board, or other trustees will be informed as appropriate. In the case of a school level query all responses will be agreed and coordinated by the Head of Operations in consultation with the Executive Headteacher and chair of governors as appropriate.

The decision on whether to seek legal or professional advice will also be determined by the Executive Headteacher and / or Chair of trustees and will be coordinated by the Head of Operations.

All other school staff, volunteers and governors should not enter into discussion with the media and should refer the media to the Executive Headteacher in the first instance. Failure to comply appropriately with this guidance may be a disciplinary offence for staff and volunteers.

All statements/interviews regarding events or activities related to the school should only proceed once the permission of the Head of Operations is obtained. If permission is granted details of students/staff addresses and personal details should not be released to the media. The full name of the student and their age can be released, providing the student does not appear on the 'no publicity list' held in the school office and only with the explicit consent of the child's parent/carer. All staff and volunteers must ensure that no student on the list is included in a media photograph, video or in any form of communication with the media.

Reactive media handling in response to a school closure

In the event of the closure of the school e.g. in case of snow, lack of heating, the Executive Headteacher or Head of School should follow the school processes for informing parents (text and phone trees etc). The school website will be main first point of reference. The Executive Headteacher should be notified of a decision to close and the reason.

Proactive media handling

At times the Trust or school may wish to proactively seek media coverage to advertise or promote a school opportunity, success or event. This is very much encouraged and should be managed by the school.

If a school is aware of a positive news opportunity and would like support drafting press statement or engaging with the media, please contact the Head of Operations.

4. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies:

- Data protection policy
- Staff code of conduct