



Media Handling Policy

Context

As a new school and particularly as a new 'Free' School, it is inevitable that the school has received and will continue to achieve local and national attention. Whilst most press coverage relates to positive progress, it is important to understand that there are elements of the press and other pressure groups who disagree with the establishment of the school and will seek to undermine it through the media.

Introduction

Schools are advised to build and maintain a Media strategy. The school's Media Handling Policy has 6 principle aims that are covered by a number of objectives.

Aims

- To recognise that the media has a vital part to play in disseminating good news about the school but that at a time of crisis or serious incident, attention may not be entirely supportive or positive.
- To provide a frame work whereby staff and governors of the school are well informed about how the press and broadcast media should be approached and handled.
- To have a structure in place to react to emergency situations, in line with the school's Critical Incident Policy and its instructions on dealing with Media interest.
- To be ready to address issues of controversy or of public interest.

- To have a process that establishes positions and protocols when developments at the school or in the public education domain may require a reaction from the school.
- To have pro-active relationship with the Media (local and national) and to encourage their interest in the development and successes of the school. (Look for good/ positive/ publicity)
- To understand that in the modern world, the media includes print, television and radio (local and national) and a range of social media including the internet, Facebook and Twitter

Media Training.

As an integral part of the school's policy professional development training for key staff in the handling of and relationships with the Media will be provided. Such opportunities will be identified through the school INSET management by the leadership team and will ensure all members of staff that are designated points of contact get regular skill updating.

Promoting Relationships

As Sir Thomas Fremantle School develops further, it should look for opportunities to promote the school both within its local community and further afield. Where staff feel comfortable in promoting the positive work of the school through the media they should feel happy to do so.

All promotion should first come through the school's own information sources, staff bulletin, pupil bulletin, highlights, etc. It is fair that our own stakeholders are informed first.

Press Contacts with the School.

The school will have 3 particular points of contact with the school Press enquiries should be directed to these people. Requests for press visits will be directed to the Headmaster or, in his absence, the Deputy Headmaster. The granting of permission for such visits rests with the senior leadership team.

