



## Visitors to the School

### 1. Rationale or Purpose

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This policy is concerned with people who visit the school.

There are potential risks in allowing visitors into schools, including visitors who are members of students' families or members of the local community. These risks need to be managed in a satisfactory manner. This document attempts to outline our procedures we use to minimise these risks.

### 2. Policy Statement

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A school is a focal component of every community. It is a place of learning where students feel safe and valued. High levels of parental involvement in schools and strong communities are critical to children's development and learning. Community groups and agencies, business and philanthropic organisations also have a strong interest in improving outcomes for children and young people and helping them pursue academic excellence. It is important that schools make the most of these partnerships. We recognise a duty of care to ensure a safe environment for students and staff, and recognise the responsibility to protect and preserve the school's resources against theft, vandalism and misuse.

This visitor protocol policy describes the procedures and guidelines which are to be applied by staff and the School Council in relation to visitors entering the school site when the school is in operation.

Visitors are defined as all people other than staff members, students and parents/guardians involved in the task of delivering or collecting children at the start or end of the school day.

The school welcomes past students in returning to reconnect with their primary years. Teachers are happy to have visitors to their classes but these visits need to be pre-planned, consistent with the school's Code of Conduct and productive for all concerned.

We aim to:

- support the strong links between students and their primary school.
- ensure that school visits occur at appropriate times.
- ensure that school visits fit well with classroom practice.
- ensure that staff have been consulted about student visits and are then prepared for the extra students in their classrooms.
- ensure the safety of all students.

### 3. Implementation

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- When the school is in operation all visitors to the school apart from permanent staff must obtain and wear a Visitor's Badge whilst on school property. ( See Working with Children Check Policy)
- Signage at entry points and other key locations will direct all visitors to the office on entry to the school site. On reporting to reception, visitors must sign in, noting name, time of arrival, and reason for being in the school. Visitors will be issued with a Visitor's Badge

their Working With Children's Check card will be inserted in the visitor lanyard while at the school.

- Prior to leaving the school, badges must be returned to the Office and visitors must sign out.
- Regular support staff such as music teachers, casual relief teachers, speech pathologists, guidance officers, etc. will register at the beginning of each year and be identified with a personalised Identification Badge.
- All parent helpers/ canteen helpers will sign in each time they visit and collect a visitor badge.
- All staff encountering a visitor without a badge should both direct the visitor to Reception and at the same time report the matter to the Office.
- Students who encounter a visitor without a visitor's badge are encouraged to immediately alert a member of staff.
- Visitors who have contact with children on a regular and unsupervised manner eg canteen volunteers, must hold a current "Working with Children Check" (See Working with Children Check Policy.)
- The potential benefit of a visitor's attendance must also be considered in light of the possible disruption to the effective functioning of the school.
- The use of DEECD resources, including teachers' time should also be considered in light of the benefits to the students.
- All legal considerations and DEECD policies concerning privacy, the photographing of students and mandatory reporting will be adhered to.
- When possible parents will be notified in advance about visitors to the school. Eg incursions, special speakers, etc.

#### **School policy Past Students Visiting**

- Past students wishing to visit the school need to contact the school at least one day prior to the visit.
- Past students visiting the school need to specify who is coming and the duration of their visit.
- Past students visiting the school can only organise these visits on their current school's Curriculum Days.
- Past students who have obtained permission to visit the school must sign in before proceeding to classes.
- Whilst here, past students will be expected to follow the school's Code of Conduct

#### ***Principal's Discretion***

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to vary this program.

#### **School policy on Visiting Community Groups**

- The school supports visits to the school by children's choirs, orchestras and drama groups, sporting associations, clubs (scouts/guides), etc but special consideration should be given to whether:
  - the activity conducted by the persons or bodies concerned would be regarded by the broader community as suitable for young people, and specifically for the age group of the target students
  - student involvement will lead to experiences that enrich learning and skills development and complement their school education, and
  - the individual or organisation has an appropriate record in terms of their 'duty of care' for young people.
- Visits by approved organisations should be negotiated to occur at convenient times.
- Sessions by approved organisations for interested students accompanied by their parents, using school facilities, outside of school hours will also be considered providing real benefit can be shown to students.
- Where possible information will be provided to the parents of students in the relevant year levels about opportunities so that, if desired, independent contact can be made.

### **Visiting speakers**

- Visiting speakers are in a particularly privileged situation in that they have the opportunity to directly influence students. The school will ensure that the content of presentations and addresses will make a positive contribution to the development of students' knowledge and understanding.
- Where initiatives involve external presenters speaking on controversial matters, invitations should generally come from the school, in accordance with its educational program, and not from groups wishing to use the school as a forum to advance their causes.
- Presenters also need to be well briefed about the nature of the school and its community, and should be prepared to respect the range of views held by students and their families.
- Operational decisions about whether to proceed with a particular presentation rest with the Principal or delegated staff member(s) after a suitable investigation (due diligence) has been conducted.

### **4. Evaluation and review**

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This policy will be reviewed according to the School Council Calendar Policy Review

### **5. Definitions**

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Nil

### **6. References**

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Further information can be obtained at the following sites :

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/visitorsinschool.aspx>

The schools "Working with Children Check" Policy.

#### **Contact**

Community and Stakeholder Relations Branch  
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
[community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au)

### **7. School Council Ratification**

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This policy was ratified by School Council on 21/11/2017