

# Visitors in School Policy

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff.
- 1.2 To establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors without compromising the open and inclusive nature of the college.

## **2. Policy Statement**

- 2.1 The college seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to the school. At the same time we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff.
- 2.2 The college also recognises our obligation to ensure that any program or content delivered by visitors is consistent with the values of public education.

## **3. Implementation**

**3.1 Visitors who are attending the school for any student-related activities must seek the prior approval of the College Principal (or their nominee) prior to attending the school.** Where appropriate, the school will first obtain parental consent for students to participate in specific programs delivered by visitors.

**3.2 The HR Manager must sight the visitor's Working With Children Check card or VIT registration prior to attending the school if they are to be engaged in child-related work.**

As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*, child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

**3.3 Staff who arrange for visitors to attend the school for the purposes of meeting with staff must advise the College Principal prior to the visit taking place.**

**3.4 All visitors are required to report to the administration office prior to undertaking any activity within the school. They are required to sign in as a visitor using the Compass kiosk which is located at the office. They must keep their visitor's slip with them at all times within the school. At the end of their visit, the visitor must sign out using the Compass kiosk.**

**3.5 All visitors are required to comply with the College's Statement of Values and Child Safety Code of Conduct.**

**3.6 Visitors who fail to follow directions will be directed to the Administration Office or the Principal on site.**

**3.7 The College's emergency management procedures will ensure that visitors within the school at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and be appropriately catered for.**

**3.8 The College Principal has ultimate responsibility for any person who is on school grounds during school hours.**

## **4. Types of Visitors**

**4.1 Visitors to the college are defined as all people entering school grounds during school hours [8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday] other than staff members, students and parents/guardians acting in their capacity as parents/guardians delivering or collecting children at the start or the end of the school day.**

**4.2 Visitors can include (but are not limited to) the following:**

- preservice teachers
- prospective parents and prospective employees
- parent and community volunteers

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- invited speakers e.g. incursion presenters
- sessional instructors
- representatives of community, business and service groups including unions
- local members of parliament
- uniform suppliers
- booksellers
- official school photographers
- commercial salespeople
- trades people
- children's services agents
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons who are authorised to enter a school premises for a specific purpose (e.g. Worksafe or Environmental Health officers)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners.

## **5. Duty of Care**

5.1 Principals and teachers have a duty of care to their students. The duty requires principals and teachers to take all reasonable steps to reduce risk, including the provision of suitable and safe premises and the provision of an adequate system of supervision. The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.

5.2 Visitors who are attending the college to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students will be fully supervised by school staff at all times.

5.3 Where necessary, the college will assess and verify the suitability of visitors who will work with children. The evidence required is generally a working with children check (WWC Check). However if a visitor's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to the school to support their claim to an exemption.

5.4 The school's WWCC and Police Records Check Policy provides more detailed information about visitors who must show evidence of a current Working With Children Check prior to or upon their arrival to the school.

## **6. Approvals**

6.1 On the basis that schools are not public places, but are public educational institutions, the Principal has ultimate discretion to approve or not approve a potential visitor. The Principal also has the authority to exclude people from being on school grounds outside of school operating hours.

6.2 When deciding to approve a visitor, the Principal will consider the visitor's suitability, purpose and the benefit provided to the students and staff from the visit, specifically:

- the educational merit and potential benefits of the visit;
- the level of disruption to the functioning of the school programs and routines in relation to the potential benefits to students;
- whether the proposed visit is consistent with the values of public education including the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from Special Religious Instruction,

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delivered in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*, Ministerial Direction 141 and policy);

- whether the content of presentations and programs facilitated by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives;
- whether the proposed visitors will be delivering content that is appropriate having regard to school policies, Department policies and the principles and practice of Australian democracy including the elected government, the rule of law, equal rights for all before the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association and the values of openness and tolerance;
- the potential for the visitor to cause controversy within the school or broader community.

6.3 The principal should consider the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play and whether a Working With Children Check is required or exemptions apply.

6.4 Parents or carers who are prohibited from entering the school grounds under a court order, trespass order or direction of the Principal are not permitted to visit the school.

## **7. Communication**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Provided to staff in the staff handbook and via Sharepoint
- Included in the induction process for staff
- Available to parents and the general community on the school website.

## **8. Related Policies and Resources**

- VUSC Statement of Values
- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

Department Policies:

- Child Safe Standards
- Visitors in Schools
- Contractor OHS Management

## **9. Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school review cycle or as required by changes to DET guidelines.