



VISITOR AND VOLUNTEER POLICY

AIMS

- To provide a safe and secure environment for our students and staff
- To establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitors and manages visitors and volunteers, whilst not compromising the open and inclusive nature of our school.

POLICY STATEMENT

We seek to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors and volunteers to the school. At the same time we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff.

We also recognise our obligation to ensure that any program or content delivered by visitors and volunteers is consistent with the values of public education and the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction, delivered in accordance with legislative and Department requirements).

Programs delivered by visitors and volunteers must be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to the following, as outlined in s 1.2.1 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic):

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

TYPES OF VISITORS

Visitors to the school are defined as all people entering school grounds during school hours (8.30am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday) other than staff members, students and parents/carers acting in their capacity as parents/carers delivering or collecting children at the start or the end of the school day.

Visitors and volunteers can include (but are not limited to) the following:

- prospective parents and prospective employees



- those who are addressing a learning or developmental need, such as:
- parent and community volunteers
- invited speakers e.g. incursion presenters
- sessional instructors
- representatives of community, business and service groups
- local members of parliament

Those who are conducting business such as:

- uniform suppliers
- booksellers
- official school photographers
- commercial salespeople
- trades people
- children's services agents
- talent scouts
- instructors providing Special Religious Instruction (SRI).

Other visitors may include:

- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons who are authorised to enter a school premises for a specific purpose (e.g. Worksafe or Environmental Health officers).

DUTY OF CARE

Principals and teachers have 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.

Visitors and volunteers who are attending the school to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students will be fully supervised by school staff at all times. The school will assess and verify the suitability of visitors and volunteers 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 support their claim to an exemption.



APPROVALS

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.

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, delivered in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic), Ministerial Direction 141 and policy);
- whether the proposed visitors and volunteers 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.

The Principal should consider the suitability of visitors and volunteers 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

Visitors and volunteers who are attending the Principal to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students need to seek the prior approval of the school 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 and volunteers.

All visitors and volunteers are required to report to the general office:

- prior to undertaking any activity within the school. They are required to sign in using the Compass Kiosk and will be assigned a "Visitor" badge which they must wear at all times within the school.
- At the end of their visit, to return their badge and sign out using the Compass Kiosk.

This process will be published in school communications and will be displayed at school entrances.



All visitors and volunteers are required to comply with the schools Statement of Values.

Visitors and volunteers who fail to follow directions will be directed to the General Office.

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

Volunteer programs where parents can directly participate in school activities at Mount Waverley Secondary College include helping in the school canteen, helping in the Library and at official school events and participation in committees and cultural groups.

OTHER LINKS AND REFERENCES

[Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

[Suitable Teaching and Learning Resources](#)

[Photographing and Filming Students](#)

[Police and DHS Interviews](#)

[Requests for Information about Students](#)

[Suitable Teaching and Learning Resources](#)

[Supervision and Access](#)

[Department of Justice and Regulation-Working with Children Check](#)

RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
- Ministerial Order 870
- *Working with Children Act 2005*

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated June 2018 and will be reviewed in 2021.