

Ensuring safety and welfare of students with external providers policy and procedures



Overview

The school's program enables students to further their learning by complementing classroom lessons with experts and resources from outside the immediate school community. In school visits (an activity that involves school visitors who provide a performance, lesson or service for students) and external providers (i.e. instrumental music) complement, and are an important aspect of the educational programs offered at our school.

AIMS

- To reinforce, complement and extend the learning opportunities beyond the classroom
- To develop an understanding that learning is not limited to school and teachers, and that valuable and powerful learning is often achieved with other people and experiences.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION - IN SCHOOL VISITS

- All in school visits must be approved by the Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Staff wishing to organize an in school visit must complete a proposal form and lodge this for approval. All in school visits must be approved at least two weeks prior to running. Where an in school visit approval form has not been submitted, that incursion will not run, unless special circumstances are pending. This decision will be made by the Principal or Assistant Principal who will consider the educational outcome of the visit as well as the impact on the school for the proposed date.
- The Principal or Assistant Principal must approve visits / external providers to ensure there are cost neutral and that they complement the curriculum and comply with all DET requirements.
- All in school visits will be attended by school staff to ensure appropriate supervision of students at all times. In the event of an accident or emergency the teacher in charge will be responsible for the administration of first aid, and will contact parents as appropriate. In the event that parents cannot be contacted, the teacher in charge will follow first aid and emergency policies as set out by the school.

- All efforts will be made not to exclude students simply for financial reasons. Parents experiencing financial difficulty, who wish for their children to attend an incursion, are invited to discuss alternative arrangements with the Business Manager. Decisions relating to alternative payment arrangements will be made by the Business Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff, on an individual basis.
- All families will be given sufficient time to make payments for incursions. Parents will be provided with permission forms and incursion information clearly stating payment finalization dates. Student payments not finalized prior to the incursion will not be allowed to attend unless alternative payment arrangements have been organized with the Business Manager.
- Office staff will be responsible for managing and monitoring the payments made by parents and will provide organizing teachers with detailed records on a regular basis.
- A designated “Teacher in Charge” will coordinate each in school visit.
- The Teacher in Charge must provide the General Office with a final student list. This list must also include the location of students not involved in the in school visit.
- Students not attending the in school visit will be provided with suitable alternative activities.
- Where applicable, students must have returned a signed permission note and payment to be able to attend the incursion.
- Only students that have displayed sensible, reliable behaviour at school will be permitted to participate in school in school visits. Parents will be notified if their child is in danger of losing the privilege to participate in an incursion due to poor behaviour at school. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the Principal, Assistant Principal or Director of Wellbeing in consultation with the organizing teacher. Both the parent and student will be informed of this decision prior to the incursion.

DUTY OF CARE - IN SCHOOL VISITS

- Be aware that students are usually less constrained and more prone to accident and injury than in a more closely supervised classroom.
- Be aware that an in school visit with an external provider does not absolve supervision duties of the teacher, including first aid duties. A teacher must be present at all times and remain the person designated with duty of care responsibilities.
- Be aware that in school visit requires the teacher to fully comply with DEECD guidelines and brings with it an increased duty of care. It is a teacher’s responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with duty of care.
- Be aware that incursions require the teacher to ensure that the venue adheres to DEECD guidelines.
- Be aware that school policy is for students to be counted and at other times on a regular basis whilst participating in the incursion.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION - External Providers

External providers may be engaged to deliver activities, training, instruction or a whole program. They may provide expertise in a certain activity and can form a valuable addition to a program.

Clear and open communication that occurs well in advance of the planned program is the key to an effective and well-informed relationship between a school and an external provider.

Before an external provider is selected to assist with the delivery of a program, a thorough check should be completed by the school to ensure that they are appropriate for the program.

Prior to commencement of a program the school should ensure that the external provider has:

- a current public liability insurance certificate (minimum \$10 million) provided by an APRA approved insurer
- demonstrated that staff have the correct qualifications and/or experience for their specific role/s
- ensure that supervision of students is overseen at all times by a staff member of other individual that has a completed Working with Children Check
- discussed with the school who will be responsible for emergency procedures and first aid
- been provided with our Child Safe Guidelines and have provided the school with a signed declaration

DUTY OF CARE – External Providers / Visitors

Principals must:

- ensure that any programs or content delivered by visitors (other than Special Religious Instruction) complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular.

Types of external Providers

May include, but are not limited to:

- parent and community volunteers
- invited speakers
- sessional instructors
- representatives of community, business and service groups

- official school photographers
- instructors providing Special Religious Instruction (SRI), Instrumental Music, Specific Sport Instructors
- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers, and Victoria Police
- Para professionals – i.e. speech therapists, psychologists, optometrists, occupational therapists, School Nurse, Dentists ...

Policy and procedures

School policy and procedures regarding visitors to the school must, as a minimum:

- require all visitors arriving and departing during school hours to use a visitors book to record their name, signature, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit.
- include procedures for assessment and verification of the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play. 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 support their claim to an exemption
- ensure that any programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction)
- ensure that any programs delivered by visitors are delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to 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.

External Providers Guidelines / Considerations:

Educational merit

whether the proposed visit is:

- for an educational purpose
- consistent with curriculum objectives
- the reorganisation of school programs or routines required in relation to the potential benefits to the students
- the appropriate use of Department resources, including teachers’ time.

Legal requirements

- legal considerations and Department policies concerning:
 - privacy
 - photographing of students
 - mandatory reporting
 - Children First - promoting and protecting the rights and well-being of children.
 - delivery of Special Religious Instruction

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

- the suitability of visitors who will be in a location where children move freely about, learn and play
- include procedures for assessment and verification of the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play. 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 support their claim to an exemption
- the evidence provided by the visitor to support their exemption due to their occupation

Procedures

- manage and maintain a written record of all visitors
- visitors will be required to wear a distinguishing badge
- visitors accompanied by a member of staff
- visitors delivering programs directly to students are adequately supervised by teaching staff of the school, in order for the school's duty of care to be discharged to those students
- familiarisation with school routines, including the emergency management plan, required for regular visitors
- parents will be notified in advance about visitors to the school
- parental permission required for students to participate in programs or related activities delivered by visitors.
- ensure that any programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction)

- ensure that any programs delivered by visitors are delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to 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.