

VISITORS

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure schools have measures in place to effectively screen, manage and supervise all visitors.

Summary

Schools must:

- develop their own school level policies and procedures to effectively screen, manage and supervise all 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 it has policies and procedures in place to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

Details

Principals:

- are responsible for all visitors to the school
- must develop policies and procedures to manage visitors to the school
- ensure the policies and procedures address safety requirements and ascertain the appropriateness of visitors
- ensure the policies and procedures are implemented.

At a minimum, these policies and procedures must:

- 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 — refer to Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors
- meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards, including for identifying and responding to child abuse
- 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 school policies and procedures that are relevant to visitors are available/visible to the visitor, including the requirement to abide by the school's child safety code of conduct
- ensure that emergency exits and emergency procedures are available/visible to visitors
- ensure that any programs delivered by visitors are delivered in a manner that is not inconsistent with the Victorian Public Sector Values and the principles and practice of Australian democracy as outlined in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006

(Vic) including a commitment to 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

- ensure that a record of all visitors to the school is kept in the event of a school emergency or any future investigation
- align with relevant Department policies and procedures.

Types of visitors

Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- prospective parents and employees
- those who are addressing a learning or developmental need, such as:
 - parent and community volunteers
 - invited speakers
 - sessional instructors
 - representatives of community, business and service groups
- 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
- public officials (for example, ministers, members of parliament, mayor)
- Department staff including allied health practitioners (regional and central offices)
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Child Protection workers, and Victoria Police, refer to Police and Child Protection Interviews.

Visiting speakers

- Schools must:
- ensure the content of presentations and addresses contributes to the development of students' knowledge and understanding
- extend the invitation to external speakers to support its educational program, rather than allowing groups to use the school as a forum to advance their causes or beliefs, particularly if speaking on a controversial matter
- brief presenters about the nature of the school and its community
- ensure that visitors do not present information or programs that may conflict with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, policies of the Department and the school
- respect the range of views held by students and their families.

Talent scouts

Principals must consider the following when talent scouts approach a school.

Determine whether the school community:

- prefers parents or carers to privately contact talent scouts outside of school hours or
- supports the school facilitating contact with students and talent scouts, such as:
 - children's choirs
 - orchestras
 - drama groups
 - sporting associations
 - film companies looking for groups of 'extras' or undertaking individual casting
 - modelling agencies.

Other considerations include:

- allowing visits by approved organisations at negotiated, convenient times during school hours
- providing information to the parents and carers in the relevant year levels about opportunities so that, if desired, independent contact can be made, or
- planning sessions by approved organisations for interested students accompanied by their parents/carers, using school facilities and outside of school hours
- if after-hours auditions on school property are preferred, school councils will need to consider whether a fee for the use of facilities would be appropriate.

SCOPE

This policy applies to any visitors who may attend school grounds when the school is open for instruction between the hours of 8:30 am to 4:15pm and when the office is otherwise staffed. Outside of these times, our front office is not staffed and the only visitors who are permitted on school grounds are parents/carers or their delegates who are dropping off or picking up students from Outside School Hours Care, school events such as parent teacher interviews, concerts, sport or other school activities, and community and other groups who have entered into contracts or agreements with the school to use school premises outside of school hours.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: As defined by the *Working with Children Act 2005 (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 contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Rowellyn Park Primary School strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.

Rowellyn Park Primary School is not a public place. The principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds, and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with our school's *Statement of Values, Child Safe Policy, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, and Child Safe Code of Conduct.*

From time to time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school’s Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (eg Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business eg: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children’s services agencies
- Talent scouts
- Department of Health and Human Services workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (eg Worksafe inspectors, health officers etc)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Rowellyn Park Primary School are required to report to the school office on arrival (see exceptions below in relation to parents/carers). Visitors must:

- Record their name, date and time of visit and purpose of visit in the Compass Kiosk
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check where required by this policy (see below)
- Wear a visitor’s name tag with their Compass pass at all times
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including [insert relevant policies eg: Child Safety Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment Policy, Workplace Bullying Policy, Respect for School Staff, Statement of Values etc]
- Return to the office upon departure, sign out using the Compass Kiosk and return visitor’s name tag

Rowellyn Park Primary School will ensure that our school’s Child Safety Code of Conduct/Child Safety Statement of Commitment are available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

Requirements for visitors to produce a valid Working with Children Check card

For Working with Children Check (WWC Check) and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students please see our Volunteers Policy.

All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) must have a valid WWC Check.

In some circumstances, visitors to Rowellyn Park Primary School who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Check depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, Rowellyn Park Primary School will require a valid WWC Check for:

- visitors who will be working regularly with children during the time they are visiting, even though direct contact with children is not a central part of their normal duties
- visitors (e.g. contractors), who will regularly be performing work at the school and in circumstances where they will be performing their work in an area where they will be unsupervised and around children.

Further background checks, including references, may also be requested at the discretion of the principal.

Visitors who will be working in areas away from students (e.g. a visiting auditor who will be located in the front office with administration staff) or who will be supervised and accompanied by a staff member during their visit (e.g. a Member of Parliament, a journalist, a prospective parent on a school tour) will not be required to have a WWC Check.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, Rowellyn Park Primary School may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education and Training requirements, Rowellyn Park Primary School will:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- ensure that any proposed visit, programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular and is consistent with the values of public education, Department policies and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic). In particular, programs delivered by visitors are to be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to:
 - elected government
 - the rule of law
 - equal rights for all before the law
 - freedom of religion
 - speech and association
 - the values of openness and tolerance
- respect the range of views held by students and their families.

Parent visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.

If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick ups and drop offs or for specific school events (eg parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Other visitors

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on May 2019 and is scheduled for review on May 2020.

Date Implemented	May 2019
Author	
Approved By	School Council
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	
Date Reviewed	May 2022
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review Date	May 2023
References	