



VISITORS TO SCHOOL POLICY



PURPOSE

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 QR code linked to Pass Tab 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 Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers, and Victoria Police, refer to Police and DHHS interviews at School

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

For advice concerning the selection of lectures, speeches and performances refer to Teaching and Learning Resources — Selecting Appropriate Materials.

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

Where the school community supports school visits by talent scouts, consider whether the activity being scouted:

- is regarded by the broader community as suitable for the age group being targeted
- will enrich learning and skill development for identified students

- will complement the identified students' education
- has demonstrated an appropriate commitment to child safety and meeting duty of care obligations by the individual or organisation (for example, no prior convictions or complaints)

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

RELATED POLICIES

- Photographing, Filming and Recording Students
- Police and DHHS Interviews at School
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Requests for Information about Students
- Special Religious Instruction
- Supervision of Students
- Teaching and Learning Resources — Selecting Appropriate Materials
- Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Ministerial Direction No.145
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)

EVALUATION

Evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the Principal team, as part of the Education and Policy Committee's cyclic review process. It will be reviewed in four years' time, or beforehand if a significant issue arises.

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Signed:

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