

**Mount Waverley Primary School
Visitors, Volunteers and External
Educational Program Providers in Schools
Policy**



'Achieving Excellence Together'

A Child Safe School

2018

Principal: Greg Paine

School Council President: Michael Seelig



MOUNT WAVERLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Visitors, Volunteers and External Educational Program Providers in Schools Policy

RATIONALE

Mount Waverley Primary School is committed to providing an open, friendly and safe learning environment, which welcomes and values visitors and volunteers to the school, for the purpose of enhancing the functioning of the school and learning outcomes for students. The school encourages parents/ guardians to take part in their child's development and create strong partnerships with community services, schools, businesses and the wider community.

Visitors to the school are defined as all people who enter the school premises excluding:

- MWPS staff
- MWPS students
- Parents/guardians entering school grounds during school hours in the time range of 8.45am - 9.00am and 3.30pm - 3.45pm involved in the tasks of delivering and or collecting students at the start or the end of the school day.

Parents/ guardians collecting or delivering students during school time, between the hours of 9.00am - 3.30pm are deemed as visitors.

MWPS is a Child Safe School and we recognise our duty of care and legal responsibilities to ensure we provide a safe environment for our students and staff particularly when visitors and volunteers attend the school.

PURPOSE

To establish protocols and procedures to ensure the school effectively manages, screens and monitors visitors and volunteers to the school premises in order to provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff and maintain community integrity. We also recognize our responsibilities in providing a safe environment for visitors to the school.

POLICY GUIDELINES

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 to ensure:

- there is educational merit and potential benefits of the visit
- minimal level of disruption to the functioning of the school programs and routines in relation to the potential benefits to students, staff and the school
- 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)
- 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;
- there is minimal potential for the visitor to cause controversy within the school or broader community
- 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.

The Principal will:

- approve visitors to the school
- ensure the safety and privacy of students and staff is the highest priority
- ensure visitors who are allowed into the school deliver content and programs that support and are consistent with both the DET and MWPS values, programs and procedures and follow the Child Safe guidelines
- be responsible for visitors who provide a service to the school and familiarise them with school routines, the emergency management plan, OHS and Child Safe guidelines
- inform all staff of the requirements for visitors
- ensure as a minimum a record of all visitors to the school is kept in the event of a school emergency or any future investigation
- ensure any visitor who compromises the safety or privacy of students or staff, leaves the premises immediately.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THIS POLICY

- DET School Policy and Advisory Guide – Political Activities
- Child Safe Processes and Procedures
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- DET Duty of Care
- Emergency Management Policy
- Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy

OTHER LINKS AND REFERENCES

Department resources:

This policy should be read in conjunction with: School Policy and Advisory Guide

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Visitors who are attending the school 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.

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

All visitors are required to comply with the schools Values and Child Safe Standards.

MWPS policy and procedures regarding visitors to the school must, as a minimum meet the school guidelines under the following headings; Safety and Procedures, Educational Merit, Purpose, Types of Visitors, Duty of Care:

Safety and Procedures – The school

- requires all visitors to the school to report to the administration office
- requires all visitors arriving and departing during school hours, 9.00am - 3.30pm, to 'sign in' to record their name, contact details, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit
- all visitors will wear a 'Visitors' badge while on the school premises
- includes procedures for assessment and verification of the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play
- requires all visitors to hold a current Working with Children Check or the evidence provided by the visitor to support their exemption due to their occupation such as VIT registration, Police Check
- ensures that policies and procedures are in place and available/visible to visitors including the requirement to abide by and sign the school's Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safety and implement Child Safe Standards
- requires visitors delivering programs directly to students are adequately supervised by MWPS staff
- requires parent permission for students to participate in programs or related activities delivered by visitors
- staff ensure that emergency exits and emergency management plans and procedures are available/visible to visitors. At the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and visitors will be appropriately catered for
- ensure that salespeople and those delivering goods will be directed appropriately by the school administration staff
- ensures visitors providing services to the school such as tradespeople or consultants who may work independently of school personnel will be asked to present their WWCC and observe sign in and out procedures and wear visitors badge. They will observe the OHS procedures while on site
- requires all visitors to report to the administration office at the conclusion of their visit to return their badge and sign out
- requires staff to escort prospective parents who wish to tour the school
- requires visitors must not take photos/images of students other than those in their own family without the permission of the Principal or their nominee
- requires any breach of privacy, the photography of students or their safety by a visitor will be reported to the Principal immediately
- requires parents who volunteer in classrooms, excursions / incursions / camps to have a valid WWCC and will be monitored by staff

- ensures visitors who fail to follow directions will be directed to the Administration Office.

Educational Merit – The School

- ensures the appropriate use of DET resources, including teachers' time
- minimises the reorganisation of school and/or class programs or routines required in relation to the potential benefit to the student/s
- ensures any programs or content delivered by visitors for an educational purpose is consistent with MWPS curriculum objectives and complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction)
- ensures 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 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
- ensures the content of presentations contributes to the development of students' knowledge and understanding
- extends 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
- staff brief presenters about the nature of the school and its community
- ensures 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
- respects the range of views held by students and their families

Visitors Purpose – The School

- requires visitors to present a proposal and outline of their program or services
- examines and evaluates whether the proposed visit, programs or content to be delivered is consistent with MWPS and DET values and policies
- determines whether a distinction should be made between the protocols applying to community-based, not for profit groups, visitors with commercial, advertising or marketing purposes
- determines whether the potential of a visitor or their program /presentation may cause controversy within the school or broader community.

Visitors

- Visitors such as parents/guardians and community members are actively encouraged to participate in school activities as volunteers and will be invited to do so through the newsletter, website, notices, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity. These visiting volunteers must hold a WWCC and follow MWPS sign in and out procedures and will be supervised by staff
- Visiting speakers are in attendance by invitation only. They will be briefed about the nature of the school and its community by the Principal, Assistant Principal or Teacher in charge and should be prepared to respect the MWPS values and range of views held by our students and their families

Visitors to schools 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 / incursion presenters
- sessional instructors / therapists / counsellors
- representatives of community, business and service groups
- local members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments
- 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 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.

Where necessary, the school 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 support their claim to an exemption.

Specific to election campaigns, the School /Principal will:

- ensure the school not distribute, promote or display material that may be considered political in nature
- ensure that no perceived or actual preference for any political party is generated.
- ensure that school visitors who are engaged in party political activity:
 - ensure the campaign does not interrupt regular school activity
 - ensure students are not involved, or seen to be involved, in promoting party policies or candidates
 - ensure Party political material is not distributed or promoted through school outlets such as newsletters, or promoted or displayed on school property or at school events.
- notify their Regional Director as early as possible of the details of any proposed party political activity and whether any media are likely to be present
- ensure if media are in attendance for such activity, the usual consent requirements associated with photocopying, videotaping and quoting students apply.

Unauthorised Visitors

Visitors who are not listed on school records and who wish to see a student will not be given access to them.

The Principal or Assistant Principal will explain the school's policy and then request the individual to leave the school grounds. The Principal reserves the right and has the authority to prohibit any potential visit from entering or remaining within the school, and also has the authority to invite or exclude people from using or being within the school boundaries outside operating hours.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the four-year cycle by the Leadership team, Consultative Committee and Education Sub Committee

Policy Area: Administration	Ratified by School Council: November 2018	Next Review: 2022
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