



RATIONALE

Mill Park Primary School seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to our school. At the same time we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe learning environment for our students and staff by being aware of all visitors and participants involved in whole school or sub-school events. We recognise our responsibility to protect and preserve our resources against theft, vandalism and misuse.

AIMS

- To provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students, staff and resources.
- To establish protocols and procedures which effectively monitor and manage visitors, whilst not compromising the open and inviting nature of our school.

TYPES OF VISITORS

Visitors to the school are defined as all people entering school grounds during school hours (8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday) other than staff members, students and parents/guardians acting in their capacity as parents/guardians delivering or collecting children at the start or the end of the school day. Visitors 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
 - visiting DET employees
 - 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

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).

PARENTS

- Parents should only attend at the school to deliver and collect their children at the commencement and conclusion of the school day.
- If parents need to attend at the school due to an emergency, they should attempt to contact the school prior to attendance and advise that they are coming.
- All parents attending at the school must present at the office and sign in on Compass.

- Parents should only be at the school for pre-arranged meetings with staff and pre-arranged volunteer duties, with the exception of emergency situations.
- The school is not the venue for parents to visit with children and separated parents should not attempt to use the school as a place to spend time with their child.

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.

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 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 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 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.

- All visitors are required to report to the administration office:
 - prior to undertaking any activity within the school. They are required to sign in on Compass and will be assigned a "Visitor" lanyard which they must wear at all times within the school.
 - at the end of their visit, to return their badge and sign out on Compass.
- 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 Code of Conduct.
- Visitors who fail to follow directions will be directed to the Administration Office.

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

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, and at times when our emergency management procedures are under review.