



# VISITOR

## POLICY

### **Introduction**

Wodonga Federation of Government Schools (The Federation) is committed to providing an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to the school. Our member schools actively seek partnerships with external organisations and businesses to optimise the learning and development of students within The Federation. At the same time member schools recognise their duty of care to ensure a safe environment for students and staff. Member schools also recognise their responsibility to protect and preserve school resources against theft, vandalism and misuse.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is:

- 1.** To provide a safe and secure environment for our whole school community including: students, staff, families, visitors and resources.
- 2.** To establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors, creating strong and ongoing relationships with community organisations and businesses, whilst not comprising the open and inviting nature of Melrose Primary School.

### **Policy**

The Federation and Melrose Primary School will be guided by the following principles when developing any policies and procedures to provide an open, safe and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to the schools.

The Federation and Melrose Primary School recognise our obligation to ensure that any program or content delivered by visitors is consistent with the values of public education and the requirement that education in Victorian Government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction, delivered in accordance with legislative and Department requirements).

Programs delivered by visitors must be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to the following, as outlined in s 1.2.1 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic).

- Elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness and tolerance

## Responsibilities

Role	Responsible for
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementing Department and school level policies and procedures</li><li>• Visitors allowed into the school</li><li>• Ensuring as a minimum a record of all visitors to the school are kept in the event of a school emergency or any further investigation</li><li>• Ensuring that visitors where required have the appropriate approvals to work with children</li><li>• Ensuring that any programs or content delivered by visitors (other than Special Religious Instruction) complies with the requirements that education in Victorian government schools is secular</li></ul>

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Visitors	<p>All people entering school grounds other than</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff members</li><li>• Students</li><li>• Parent/guardians acting in their capacity as parent/guardians delivering or collecting children at the start and end of the school day.</li></ul> <p>Visitors can include (but not limited to) the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Teachers and Student Internships</li><li>• Prospective parents and prospective employees</li><li>• Those who are addressing a learning or developmental need such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Parent helpers and community volunteers</li><li>○ Invited speakers e.g. incursion presenters</li><li>○ Sessional instructors</li><li>○ Representatives of community, business and service groups</li><li>○ Local members of parliament</li></ul></li></ul>

- Those who are conducting business such as:
  - Uniform suppliers
  - Booksellers
  - Official school photographers
  - Commercial salespeople
- Contractors
- Trades people
- Children's services agents
- Talent scouts
- Instructors providing Special Religious Instruction (SRI).
- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers
- Victorian Police
- Persons who are authorised to enter a school premises for a specific purpose (e.g. Worksafe or Environmental Health Officers).
- Guests at school events

### **Duty of Care**

Principals and teachers have a duty of care to their student. 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.

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).

### **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;
- 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.

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.

### **Procedures**

- 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 comply with Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Code of Conduct and the schools' Statement of Values. Where possible, it is recommended that the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Code of Conduct be forwarded to visitor prior to their visit to the school.
- Visitors are required to report to the school administration office prior to undertaking any activity within the school.
- Any visitor wishing to speak to a student must do so through a school staff member.
- Visitors will be provided with appropriate induction at the Principal's discretion into the school Occupational Health & Safety Program.
- Visitors are required to sign the 'Visitors' book in the school foyer and sign out after their visit.
- Visitors will be provided with directions, and will be made aware of any construction works etc. that may impact upon their safety or comfort. School administration staff, Principal, Assistant Principal or the Teacher In Charge of organising the visit will provide this advice.
- Visitors within the school who have failed to follow this process will be monitored and reminded to do so. Uncompliant visitors may be asked to leave the school grounds.
- Salespeople and those delivering goods will be accompanied by a school staff member, where it is perceived appropriate.
- Visitors providing services that require, or are likely to involve direct contact with a child, will be asked to present their Working with Child Check (WWCC) in accordance with the Working with Children Act 2005; have signed the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Code of Conduct; observe the school 'sign in' and 'sign out' procedures and observe the school's Occupational Health and Safety procedures while on site. Please see the Federation's Working with Children Check Policy for further information.



- Parents/volunteer helpers are required to sign the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Code of Conduct; observe the school 'sign in' and 'sign out' procedures; and observe the school's Occupational Health and Safety procedures while on site. Please see the Federation's Working with Children Check Policy for further information.
- When Police and Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers are visiting a member school for the purpose of conducting an interview they need to comply with the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers and Police Interview Policy.
- Persons who are authorised to enter on to school premises, for a specific purpose (eg. Worksafe or Environment Health officers) are required to present identification at the school administration.

### **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.
- Under the Summary Offences Act 1966, the Principal reserves the right, and has the authority to prohibit any potential visitor from entering or remaining within the school, and has the authority to invite or exclude people from using or being within the school boundaries outside school operating hours.

### **Communication**

The above process for managing and monitoring visitors will be regularly published in the school newsletter, and will appear at all school administration. This policy will be published on the Federation website and Melrose Primary School's website.

### **Reviewing**

The Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Policy Development Action Group will review this policy annually in line with the Child Safety Policy Review. If any changes are made the revised version will be ratified by Melrose Primary School Council.

### **Related Policies**

- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Child Safety Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Working with Children Check Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Photographing and Filming Student Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Police and DHHS Interviews Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Requests for Information about Students Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Suitable Teaching and Learning Resources Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Supervision and Access Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools Volunteer Checks Policy

**Other references**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

School Policy and Advisory Guide

- Duty of Care
- Special Religious Instruction
- Visitors in schools
- Volunteer Checks
- Volunteer Workers

**Other Resources**

- Department of Justice and Regulation – Working with Children Check Related Legislation
- Working with Children Act 2005
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Ministerial Order 141