

Policy Name:	Visitors to Wedge Park Primary School
Date Adopted:	September 2016
Review Date:	September 2018
Referred Documents:	

RATIONALE:

The Department encourages schools to welcome parents and families as part of the school community and supports schools in building partnerships with the broader school community. In developing such partnerships, a range of visitors will be on school premises and all schools are required to have a policy and procedures in place for having visitors to the school.

The purpose of the policy is to assist the school to utilise visitors from the wider community appropriately, safely and within Department protocols.

The Principal must ensure:

- department and school level policies and procedures are implemented
- responsibility for all visitors allowed into school
- a record of all visitors to the school is kept in the event of a school emergency or any future investigation
- visitors are required have appropriate approvals to work with children
- any programs or content delivered by visitors (other than Special Religious Instruction) complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular
- 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 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.

GOAL:

A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter the school within school hours (8:00am – 4:30pm) who is not an employee of the school or is not a current student at the school. Support/services provided by visitors **may** include (but not limited to):

- 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, local members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments, trades people, children’s services agents, talent scouts, instructors providing Special Religious Instruction or those who are conducting business such as: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Support for student health and wellbeing . For example, non-school based physiologists and counsellors, the Police.
- Non-teaching support.
- Support in ‘special categories’. Appropriate special categories include the provision of canteen services, fieldwork experiences for pre service teachers or community placements.

- Volunteers. For example, classroom helpers, interschool sports coaches, etc.
- Potential future parents/families or employees to the school
- Pre Service Teachers and people on placement.

IMPLEMENTATION:

As per Department of Education Victoria Guidelines, Wedge Park Primary School policy and procedures regarding visitors to the school must:

- require all visitors arriving and departing during school hours to use a visitors book.
- include procedures for assessment and verification of the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play. 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 support their claim to an exemption
- 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)
- The school will require all visitors to report to the main Administration Office upon entering the school premises.
- Visitors should enter the school through the gate on Cambrian Way and into the Office.
- Once at the Office, visitors will be asked who they are, the purpose of their visit and who their school contact is.
- Once a reason for the visit has been established then they will sign the Visitors Book to record their name, signature, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit and be given a Visitors Pass. This pass must be visibly displayed by the visitor.
- All Visitors working in the school require a WWC Check (Working With Children) which must be presented and photocopied by Admin staff and kept on record. All visitors who do not have a WWC must be accompanied by a staff member at all times.
- At the end of the visit, the visitor will be asked to sign out and return the Visitors Pass.
- Any person entering the school during school hours who is not willing to comply with the above mentioned visitors process will be asked to leave school grounds.
- In the event of an evacuation, the Visitors Book will be collected by the Office staff and brought out to the assembly area.
- The staff member who has brought the visitor in or is physically closest to the visitor will assist the visitor with the evacuation as they would a student.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Ensure that 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 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.
- Staff should inform the Principal and office staff of any visitors they are having come to the school, including the name, date, approximate time of the visit and a brief outline of the visit. This should then be recorded in the school diary and Compass.
- Ensure that the visitor is signed in and out and displaying a Visitors Pass.
- Assist the visitor in knowing what to do in the event of an evacuation / lock down.
- Staff must **stop** any person who is not wearing a Visitors Pass and direct them to the Office.
- The Department's requirements and guidelines relating to preparation, safety and duty of care must be observed in the organisation of all visitors. Whenever a student – teacher relationship exists, the teacher has a special 'duty of care'. As part of that duty, teachers are required to supervise students adequately. This requires not only protection from known hazards, but also protection from those that could arise (those that the teacher should have reasonably foreseen) and against which preventative measures could be taken. (as per Incursion checklist and policy).

EXEMPTIONS TO THE VISITOR PROCESS:

- Parents/guardians/relatives coming to collect students **early** (before 3:05pm) will be required to report to the front office to sign the student out.
- Parents/guardians/relatives coming to collect students for normal pick-up at home time entering the school grounds between 2:45pm and 3:05pm to wait for the home time bell will not need to follow the sign in process.
- Emergency services people attending the school as a result of a current emergency e.g. school fire; injured student requiring an ambulance will be exempt from following the policy as the first priority is dealing with the emergency call out.
- Trades people working before or after the school hours will not be expected to use the sign in process. They will, however, have to report to the Administration Office to let the Principal, Assistant Principal or Business Manager know of their presence in the school. Cleaners who are contracted by the school for the regular/daily cleaning service will be exempt from the sign in/sign out process.

Talent Scouts

- From time to time individuals, agents or representatives approach certain schools wishing to identify students who could contribute to their cultural, sporting, recreational or business activities.
- Assisting such efforts to recruit students is not a primary function of schools.
- If staff are approached by a talent scout type of person / organisation they should refer the matter directly to the Principal. Each approach will be considered on a case by case basis in conjunction with relevant stakeholders including the School Council.

Visiting Speakers

- Visiting speakers are in a particularly privileged situation in that they have the opportunity to directly influence students. Schools should ensure that the content of presentations and addresses will make a positive contribution to the development of students' knowledge and understanding.
- Decisions about whether to proceed with a particular presentation rest with the Principal or delegated staff member(s) after a suitable investigation (due diligence) has been conducted. A common sense approach is best with the welfare of students being paramount when deciding on the use of a guest speaker.

The Delegated Staff Member

- The delegated staff member can be the Leading Teacher, PLT leader, another staff member with experience in the subject area or Assistant Principal. **If there is any concern about the subject matter / content covered during a presentation then the teacher should inform the Assistant Principal / Principal as soon as possible.** If the matter / subject content is likely to cause controversy then it may be necessary to give parents prior written warning.

*This policy is written in consultation with Department of Education Victoria Guidelines.

POLICY EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's two-year review cycle.