

# VISITORS

## POLICY

### Purpose:

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Merri Creek Primary School (MCPS).

### Scope:

This policy applies to any visitors who may attend school grounds when the school office is open between the hours of 8:00am to 4:00pm and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception. Outside of these times, our front office is not staffed and the only visitors who are permitted on school grounds are parents/carers or their delegates who are dropping off or picking up students for after hours music lessons or Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) which is open between the hours of 7.30am and 6pm.

### Definitions:

*Child-related work:* As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

### Policy:

MCPS strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations where appropriate.

MCPS is not a public place. The Principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds, and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with this policy as well as with our school's, *Child Safety Policy*, *Child Safe Code of Conduct* and *Statement of Values*.

From time to time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school's Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business e.g.: official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Talent scouts
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (e.g. Worksafe inspectors, health officers, etc.)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including corporate staff, auditors etc) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners.

## Sign in procedure

All visitors to MCPS are required to report to the school office on arrival (see exceptions below in relation to parents/carers). Visitors must:

- Record their name, date and time of visit and purpose of visit on the Compass Kiosk
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check where required by this policy (see below)
- Wear a visitor's lanyard at all times
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, Statement of Values and any relevant Department policies e.g. Sexual Harassment, Workplace Bullying etc.
- Return to the office upon departure, sign out and return visitor's lanyard
- MCPS will ensure that our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

## Requirements for visitors to produce a valid Working with Children Check card

For Working with Children Check and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students please see our Volunteers Policy (located on the school's website).

All other visitors who are engaged in child-related work (see definition above) must have a valid WWC Clearance (WWC Check). Additional suitability or background checks may also be requested, at the discretion of the Principal, including proof of identity, reference checks, qualifications and work history involving children.

In some circumstances, visitors to MCPS who are not engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Check depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, MCPS will require a valid WWC Check for:

- **visitors who will be working regularly with children** during the time they are visiting, even though direct contact with children is not a central part of their normal duties
- **visitors (e.g. contractors)**, who will regularly be performing work at the school and in circumstances where they will be performing their work in an area where they will be unsupervised and around children.

Visitors who will be working in areas away from students (e.g. a visiting auditor who will be located in the front office with administration staff) or who will be supervised and accompanied by a staff member during their visit (e.g. a Member of Parliament, a journalist, a prospective parent on a school tour) will not be required to have a WWC Check.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check, but will be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

## Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, MCPS may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education and Training requirements, MCPS will:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- ensure that any proposed visit, programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular and is consistent with the values of public education, Department policies and the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic). In particular, programs delivered by visitors are to be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to:
  - o elected government
  - o the rule of law
  - o equal rights for all before the law
  - o freedom of religion, speech and association
  - o the values of openness and tolerance
  - o respect for the range of views held by students and their families.

## Parent visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.

If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick ups and drop offs or for specific school events (e.g. parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies, class reading, etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

## Other visitors

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

## Communication:

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

## Related Policies and Resources:

*Some relevant school policies include:*

- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Child Safety Code of Conduct*
- *Statement of Values*
- *Volunteers Policy*

Relevant Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)

## Policy Review and Approval:

Policy last reviewed	July 2022
Consultation	Education Sub-Committee of School Council – August 2022 School Council – August 2022 School Community via newsletter – August 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024

This policy will be reviewed in:

**August 2024**