

VISITORS IN SCHOOLS POLICY

RATIONALE:

Findon Primary School strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and caregivers 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. Findon Primary School 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 the school's policies and procedures. This policy outlines our school's arrangements for visitors who attend school grounds when the school is open for instruction between the hours of 8:30am to 5.15pm and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception, including parents/caregivers, contractors, and other visitors supporting student learning, wellbeing and school maintenance. Outside of these times, our front office is not staffed and this policy does not apply.

AIM:

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Findon Primary School.

DEFINITION:

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.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The school will adhere to any Department of Education and Training (DET) requirements relating to Covid-19.

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

- Parents/Caregivers
- Volunteers
- Prospective families, 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. uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (e.g. Worksafe inspectors, health officers etc.)
- Other Department of Education and Training (DET) staff (including internal and other allied health staff) or contractors

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Findon Primary School are required to report to the school office on arrival. Visitors must:

- Record their name, signature, date and time of visit, and purpose of visit in the sign in book or iPad, including scanning of check in QR code if required
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) where required by this policy
- Wear a visitor's lanyard/name tag at all times
- Follow instructions from school staff and abide by all relevant school policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds

- Return to the office upon departure, sign out and return visitor's lanyard/name tag
- Findon PS will ensure that our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct/Child Safety Policy and information relating to Emergency Management are available to visitors when they sign in.

Requirements for visitors to produce a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) card

For WWCC and other suitability requirements relating to parents/caregivers and other volunteers working with students please see our Volunteers and WWCC link on the school website. All visitors who are engaged in **child related work** must have a valid WWCC.

In some circumstances, visitors to Findon PS who are **not** engaged in child related work will also be required to produce a valid WWCC depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, Findon PS will require a valid WWCC 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.

Further background checks, including references, may also be requested at the discretion of the Principal.

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 family on a school tour) will not be required to have a WWCC. Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWCC, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, Findon PS may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with DET requirements, Findon 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 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:
 - elected government
 - the rule of law
 - equal rights for all before the law
 - freedom of religion, speech and association
 - the values of openness and tolerance
 - respect the range of views held by students and their families.

Parent/Caregiver visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent/caregiver 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/caregivers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

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

All parents/caregivers 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. student led conferences, concerts, assemblies as may be necessary, etc.), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Parents/caregivers who are prohibited from entering the school under a court order or direction of the Principal are not permitted to visit the school. Our school maintains and provides office staff with a list of restricted parents/caregivers which may include identifying photographs and any other information as required depending on the level of risk posed.

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.

EVALUATION:

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years as part of the ongoing policy and process review. The policy will be communicated via the school website and access through the school office. It will be communicated via staff briefing and as required.

REFERENCE:

DET Policy Advisory Guide

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/visitors/policy>

Findon School Policies

<https://www.findonps.vic.edu.au/index.php/school-policies/>

Worker Screening Act 2020

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/worker-screening-act-2020>

Findon Primary School Policies

<https://www.findonps.vic.edu.au/index.php/school-policies/>