

# **St Joseph's NS, Castlemaine**



# **School Visitors Policy**

The Board of Management of St Joseph's NS seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and encourages visitors to the school. At the same time the Board has a legitimate interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process, protecting the safety and welfare of the students and staff, and to protect and preserve the schools facilities and resources from misuse or vandalism.

## **AIMS**

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for all visitors to the school and in so doing;

- Provide a safe and secure environment for our students and staff.
- Establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors, whilst not compromising the open and inviting nature of the school.

## **Definitions**

Visitors to the school are defined as all people other than staff members, students, and parents/guardians involved in the task of delivering or collecting children at the start or end of the school day.

## **Type of Visitor**

1. Parents
2. Department of Education & Science Officials
3. Guest Speakers
4. Paid coaches and instructors
5. Volunteers (parents, sport coaches, etc.)
6. Contractors

## **Responsibilities**

The school principal shall have the authority to determine which visits are permitted as well as the discretion to set any appropriate conditions on the nature and extent of such visits. In exercising this discretion, the principal shall consider the purpose of the visit, the impact of the visitor's presence and the relationship of any visitor to the students.

School personnel shall seek to assure that parents and other visitors are courteously received and that sincere efforts are made to provide them with the information as may be needed to foster a cooperative relationship between home, school and community.

## **General Requirements for Visitors:**

1. In the interests of safety all visitors to the school should enter through the front door and check into the office or Principal. A door security system is in place.
2. Teachers are willing to meet visitors at an appropriate time, however, only visitors with appointments will be permitted to see a member of staff.
3. If a visitor approaches a member of staff without an appointment, the member of staff reserves the right to defer speaking about the matter in question until a later, more convenient time.

4. All school visitors must comply at all times with Board of Management and Department of Education & Science policies, administrative rules and school regulations.
5. Under no circumstances will a visitor be allowed to verbally or physically attack a child or a member of staff. In this instance the person will be asked to leave the school immediately and, if he/she refuses, then assistance should be sought from a colleague or the Principal. Unacceptable breaches of guidelines will be referred to the Board of Management or other outside authorities if required.

### **Parents as Visitors**

- Parents wishing to conference with teachers or administrators during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance.
- Parents who visit the premises during the school day to collect students for external appointments are asked to make this known to their child's teacher in advance via a message to the school office / secretary or child's homework diary. Parents who are collecting their child are to call to the child's classroom. Children will not be permitted to leave unaccompanied,
- Parents may from time to time be invited to visit the school as part of parent teacher meetings, an open day, special event or scheduled school performance.

### **Paid Coaches & Instructors**

- Will work under the supervision of a designated teacher.
- Should have a recognized qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
- Must submit a Garda Vetting Cert as per circular 00031/2016 and have received Child Protection training.
- Should have appropriate experience of working with young people.
- Must have current public liability insurance.

### **Guest Speakers**

- Guest speakers may be invited to the school where the principal teacher's authorization has been sought and where it has been deemed that the use of such a speaker will bring specific knowledge and expertise to enrich the planned curriculum. Teachers are to remain with their class for the duration of the guest speaker's visit.
- Guest Speakers on subjects/areas other than the approved curriculum must be approved by the Patron prior to being invited to the school.

### **Volunteers / Work Experience Personnel**

- Volunteers/ Work Experience Personnel who will be on the premises during school hours must submit a Garda Vetting Cert as per Circular 0031/2016 (Volunteers/ Work Experience Personnel under age of 16 will not be permitted as they are unable to provide Garda Vetting).
- Volunteers/ Work Experience Personnel will only work directly alongside a member of the school staff.

### **Contractors**

- Contractors who may regularly have staff on the premises during the school day will be required to provide Garda clearance reports for same.
- Contractors who may occasionally visit the premises during the school day must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

### **Special Situations**

- Both custodial and non-custodial parents of students have rights to visit the child's school unless a court order exists restricting such contact. Parents are requested to make the school aware of this and provide any

documentary evidence. In the event that a non-custodial parent seeks permission to visit, the school shall make every effort to notify the custodial parent in advance of the visit.

- The principal has the authority to exclude from the school premises any person who disrupts or who appears likely to become a disruption to the educational program. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and law enforcement authorities shall be called if necessary.

**Implementation:**

- This policy has been ratified on \_\_\_\_\_ by the Board of Management.
- It will be reviewed regularly and the Board aims during its term to explore installing a door entry system for the school.

Signed:

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Chairperson, BoM

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Principal

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