

Hamilton North Primary School Statement

Our Commitment to Child Safety -

Hamilton North Primary School is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers and are guided by our **True North Values of Respect, Responsibility, Cooperation, Empathy and Integrity.**

Hamilton North Primary School at all times will fully comply with Departmental management and the associated Guidelines published and amended by the Department from time to time.

Purpose of this policy

To ensure schools effectively screen, manage and supervise visitors to the school.

Policy

The Hamilton North Staff and School Council have developed the policies and procedures to manage visitors to the school.

The Principal is required to:

- implement the policies and procedures devised by the school council
- be responsible for visitors allowed into school
- ensure a record of all visitors to the school is kept in the event of a school emergency or any future investigation
- ensure that visitors where required have the appropriate approvals to work with children, see [Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#) (previously 'Volunteer Checks')
- ensure that the school has policies and procedures in place to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards, including for identifying and responding to child abuse
- ensure that any programs or content delivered by visitors (other than Special Religious Instruction) complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular
- 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 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.

Types of visitors

Typical visitors to schools include:

- prospective parents and employees
- 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
- those who are conducting business such as:
 - uniform suppliers
 - booksellers
 - official school photographers
 - commercial salespeople
 - trades people
 - children's services agents
 - talent scouts
 - instructors providing approved Special Religious Instruction (SRI), see [Special Religious Instruction](#)

Other visitors may include:

- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers, and Victoria Police, see: [Police and DHS Interviews](#)
- persons who are authorised to enter on to the school premises, for a specific purpose (e.g. Worksafe or Environmental Health officers). In such cases school procedures should set out:
 - the process for checking the identification and authorisation of such persons
 - the process for recording their attendance
 - who should facilitate their entry on to the school premises in a manner consistent with the authorisation.
- Department staff including allied health practitioners (regional and central offices)
- public officials (e.g. Ministers, Members of Parliament, Mayor)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Therapists and other allied health or health practitioners that are not employees of the Department or school council.

School Procedures

Hamilton North Primary School staff will ensure all visitors to the school adhere to the following procedures:

- all visitors arriving and departing during school hours must use a visitors book to record their name, signature, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit. This book is located at the front office reception.
- Staff must assess and verify the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play, as per the [Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- 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](#))
- ensure that policies and procedures are in place and available/visible to visitors including the requirement to abide by the school's child safety [Code of Conduct](#)
- ensure that emergency exits and emergency management plans and procedures are available/visible to visitors
- 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 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.

This policy and associated procedures have been developed collaboratively by Hamilton North Primary School staff and school council on behalf of the school community and address the following considerations:

Considerations

The principal should consider:

Safety needs

- schools are not public places and all visitors to the school should be accompanied by a staff member when progressing to a classroom or in the school grounds
- the safety of students and staff is of high importance and visitors to the school should report to the administration office, state the purpose of the visit and seek permission to carry out the visit
- Unannounced visitors to a school can be seen as a potential risk and will be approached by the Principal or senior staff member to clarify their purpose for being on the premises
- the requirements for paid or volunteer workers to have a Working with Children Check.

When a person requests to visit the school, the Principal will ascertain the purpose of the visit and make a decision based upon consideration of the following options:

Visitors purpose

- potential benefits of different types of visits
- whether the proposed visit is appropriate for young people (in the relevant age group)
- whether the proposed visit is consistent with the values of public education
- whether a distinction should be made between the protocols applying to:
 - community-based, not-for-profit groups
 - visitors with commercial, advertising or marketing purpose
- the potential for a visitor to cause controversy within the school or broader community.

The Principal will make a decision concerning the educational merit of a visit based upon whether the proposed visit is:

Educational merit

- for an educational purpose
- consistent with curriculum objectives
- the level of disruption to the functioning of the school in relation to the potential benefits to students
- the appropriate use of Department resources, including teachers' time.

Legal requirements

The Principal will take into account the legal considerations and Department policies concerning:

Considerations

- privacy
- photographing of students
- mandatory reporting
- Children First - promoting and protecting the rights and well-being of children.

The principal should consider:

Working with Children Check

- the suitability of visitors who will be in a location where children move freely about, learn and play
- whether an exemption to the Working with Children Check applies to a visitor
- the evidence provided by the visitor to support their exemption due to their occupation

The Principal will:

Procedures

- outline the policies and procedures to staff, visitors and to the community in a respectful, cooperative, empathic and purposeful manner that will maintain the safety of the students and the staff
- manage and maintain a written record of all visitors
- ensure visitors are accompanied by a member of staff where the principal deems this as appropriate
- ensure that visitors delivering programs directly to students are adequately supervised by teaching staff at the school, in order for the school's duty of care to be discharged to those students
- ensure visitors are familiar with school routines, including the emergency management plan, required for regular visitors
- decide when parents will be notified in advance about visitors to the school
- make decisions about the requirements for parental permission for students to participate in related activities delivered by visitors

Talent scouts

This table outlines the considerations the Principal and the school council should consider when talent scouts approach Hamilton North Primary School.

Stage

Description

The school has made the following guidelines with regards to Talent Scouts:

- the school prefers parents/guardians to privately contact talent scouts outside of school hours so as not to detrimentally impact the education of the student.

Visiting speakers

Schools should:

- ensure the content of presentations and addresses contributes to the development of students' knowledge and understanding and aligns to the curriculum
- ensure external speakers support Hamilton North Primary School's educational program. Visiting speakers will not be permitted to use the school as a forum to advance their causes or beliefs, particularly if speaking on a controversial matter
- brief presenters about the nature of the school and its community
- ensure that visitors do not present information or programs that may conflict with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, policies of the Department and the school
- respect the range of views held by students and their families.

Note: for advice concerning the selection of lectures, speeches and performances see: [Suitable Teaching and Learning Resources](#).

Related legislation

- [Photographing and Filming Students](#)
- [Police and DHS Interviews](#)
- [Requests for Information about Students](#)
- [Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Suitable Teaching and Learning Resources](#)
- [Supervision and Access](#)

Department resource

- [Registration requirements for schools](#) - Visitors in Schools sample policy
- [DET School Policy and Advisory Guide](#) - Visitors in School Policy

Other resources

- [Department of Justice and Regulation - Working with Children Check](#)

Related legislation

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Ministerial Order 145
- Working with Children Act 2005

Policy reviewed and ratified by School Council: October 2019