**Wheelers Hill Secondary College**

Visitors to School Policy



Wheelers Hill Secondary College aims to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and staff, whilst at the same time seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors to the school. At the same time, we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff.

# Guidelines

* Wheelers Hill Secondary College has protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors, without compromising the open and inclusive nature of the school.
* Wheelers Hill Secondary College recognises the obligation to ensure that any program or content delivered by visitors is consistent with the values of public education and the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction, delivered in accordance with legislative and Department requirements).
* Programs delivered by visitors must be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to the following, as outlined in section 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
* Visitors to the school are defined as all people entering the school grounds during the school hours of 8.30am and 4.00pm, other than staff members, students and parents/guardians acting in their capacity as parents/guardians delivering or collecting children at the start or end of the school day.
* Visitors can include (but are not limited to) the following:
* Prospective parents and prospective employees
* Those who are addressing a learning or developmental need such as:
* Parent and community volunteers
* Invited speakers e.g. incursion presenters
* Sessional instructors
* Representatives of community, business and service groups
* Local members of parliament
* 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 Special Religious Instruction (SRI)
* Other visitors may include:
* Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers
* Victoria Police
* Persons who are authorised to enter a school premises for a specific purpose (e.g. WorkSafe or Environmental Health officers).
* Principals and teachers have a duty of care to their students. The duty requires principals and teachers to take all reasonable steps to reduce risk, including the provision of suitable and safe premises and the provision of an adequate system of supervision. The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.
* Visitors who are attending the school to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students, will be fully supervised by staff at all times.
* When necessary, the school will assess and verify the suitability of visitors who will work with children. 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 or teachers, they must provide evidence to the school, to support their claim to an exemption.
* On the basis that schools are not public places, but are public educational institutions, the Principal has ultimate discretion to approve or not approve a potential visitor. The Principal also has the authority to exclude people from being on school grounds outside of school operating hours.
* When deciding to approve a visitor, The Principal will consider the visitor’s suitability, purpose and the benefit provided to the students and staff from the visit, specifically:
* The educational merit and potential benefits of the visit;
* The level of disruption to the functioning of the school programs and routines in relation to the potential benefits to the students;
* Whether the proposed visit is consistent with the values of public education, including the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from Special Religious Instruction, delivered in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), Ministerial Direction 141 and policy);
* Whether the proposed visitors will be delivering content that is appropriate, having regard to school policies, Departmental policies and the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including the elected government, the rule of law, equal rights for all above the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association of values of openness and tolerance;
* The potential for the visitor to cause controversy within the school or broader community.
* The Principal should consider the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play and whether a Working with Children Check is required or exemptions apply.
* Visitors who are attending the school to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students, need to seek their approval of the school principal (or their nominee), prior to attending school. Where appropriate, the school will first obtain parental consent for students to participate in specific programs delivered by visitors.
* **All** visitors are required to report to the general office:
* Prior to undertaking any activity within the school. They are required to sign in retain the lanyard provided.
* At the end of their visit, they must sign out using the number found on their lanyard.
* Visitors who fail to follow directions will be directed to the General Office.
* All visitors are required to comply with the School’s mission statement and underlying values.
* The School’s emergency management procedures will ensure that all visitors within the school at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and appropriately catered for.

**Endorsement by Education Sub-Committee: Not Required**

**Date of ratification by School Council: Not Required**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School’s four-year review cycle or when appropriate.