

WATERPARK NATIONAL SCHOOL VISITORS POLICY

Introduction

The Board of Management of Waterpark National School 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.

The phrase “school personnel” as used in this policy is a generic term to encompass all adults who are involved in the operation of the school. It covers employees and voluntary workers, and includes Parent Association members when they are working in the school.

In light of current restrictions, visitors are limited on to the school grounds and into the school buildings. Where a school visit is necessary, it must be arranged in advance and all rules and regulations along with social distancing adhered to throughout the visit. All visitors are asked to wear face coverings when they come on to the school grounds.

Guest speakers may be facilitated through an online forum if prior arrangements are in place.

Type of Visitor

Visitors to the school may include, but are not limited to:

1. Parents
2. Department of Education & Science Officials
3. Guest Speakers
4. Paid coaches and instructors
5. Volunteers (parents, sport coaches, etc.)
6. Children’s Services Agents
7. Psychologist

8. School Nurse/Doctor
9. Education Welfare Officer
10. Contractors/Trades people
11. Couriers
12. Salespeople
13. School Photographers
14. Clergy
15. Prospective parents and employees

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 visitors presence and the relationship of any visitor to the students.

School staff 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. Email and phone calls will be used in lieu of face to face meetings where possible.

School Personnel;

shall have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students. Parents should be expected to model the standards that students are asked to respect. In order to do this, they need to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting students to behave according to these standards. The ways in which parents and teachers interact will provide students with a model of good working relationships.' NEWB: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools p.38

are especially well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. In any situation where a member of school personnel (including a registered teacher), receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the designated liaison person (DLP) who is responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedures are followed.

must have due regard to the need for confidentiality at all times when they are working in the school. *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.*

General Requirements For Visitors

1. All visitors shall report to the Principal/ member of staff when arriving or leaving the school premises. Notices shall be displayed at the entrance to each building indicating that all visitors are required to report to the Principal. All visitors must sign a contact tracing log if they have been permitted to enter the school building.
2. The school requires all visitors arriving and departing during school hours to use a visitor's book to record their name, signature, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit.
3. At all times, visitors should obtain authorisation from the principal in advance. At the discretion of the principal, such prior authorisation is required.
4. Visits may be prohibited at certain times.
5. The school requires visitors to collaborate with teachers to ensure that any programs and content delivered by them are delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the ethos of our school and are in line with the curriculum and policies of the school. This collaboration can be done remotely by email, phone or online.
6. All school visitors must comply at all times with Board of Management and Department of Education & Science policies, administrative rules and school regulations.

Parents as Visitors

- Parents wishing to meet with teachers are asked to make arrangements in advance.
- Parents who visit the premises during the school day to collect students for external appointments must wait at the orange barriers and phone the office to announce their arrival. Prior arrangements must be in place.

Guest Speakers

- Guest speakers may be invited to the school where the Principal's authorisation 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. Online meetings may be facilitated here eg Zoom, Skype etc.
- A check list for the organisation of guest speakers is appended to this document.
- Guest Speakers on subjects/areas other than the approved curriculum must be approved by the Patron prior to being invited to the school.
- May need to submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure.

Paid Coaches and Instructors

In light of current restrictions we will not be facilitating coaches and instructors. This will be reviewed each term. If coaches are permitted the following applies:

- Paid coaches and instructors will work under the supervision of a designated teacher.
- Must submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure.
- Should have appropriate experience of working with young people.
- Should have a recognized qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
- Must receive Child Protection training.
- Must have current public liability insurance.

Volunteers

- Volunteers who will be on the premises during school hours may be asked to submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure, such as an occasional/once off volunteer. The Principal's authorisation shall be sought for such volunteers.
- Volunteers should never be alone with a child or group of children.

Contractors

- Contractors will be requested to visit the premises, as far as is practicable, after school hours.
- Contractors who visit the premises during the school day will be accompanied by a member of staff.

Special Situations

Parents are requested to make the school aware of visiting rights of parent(s) should any special conditions prevail. Documentary evidence may be required.

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.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on Wednesday, 21st October 2020.

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX

GUEST SPEAKER CHECK LIST

This checklist may be used by staff in school, where appropriate, to support them through the stages of involving a visitor in the classroom.

Before the visit

- Why is this visitor being asked into school?
- Does the visitor come with any recommendations?
- Has the school used this visitor before?
- What experience has this visitor of working with this age group?
- Have parents been informed of the session (if appropriate)?
- How will you ensure that pupils are hearing a balance of opinions about the topic/issue?
- Has the visitor submitted A Garda clearance report?

Preparing the visitor

- Is the visitor aware of the context of the contributions they have been asked to make?
- Has the visitor identified the intended learning outcomes for their input?
- Have the resources and materials been reviewed for appropriateness and the maturity of the pupils?
- Is the visitor aware of the aims of their visit?
- Has the visitor been made aware of the school ethos?
- Is the visitor aware of the ability and maturity level of the young people they will be working with?
- Will the visitor make a pre visit to the school?
- Are the school's legal responsibilities to the children and young people being met?
- Has the visitor been supplied with copies of the relevant school policies?
- Is the visitor aware of any risks to health and safety?

Preparing the visit

- What arrangements will be made to welcome the visitor to the school and introduce them to the class?
- Is the size of the group appropriate to the activity and learning purpose?
- Is this visit part of a planned programme with preparation beforehand and follow up afterwards?
- How will the group be prepared for the visitor?
- What resources will be needed for the session?

During the visit

- Will the school be able to respond appropriately to questions or incidents that may arise after the visitor has left?

- How will the teacher support the visitor in this work?
- Will a member of the school staff be present during the session?

After the visit

- How will the outcome of the evaluation inform future work?
- Is there opportunity for feedback and discussion about the impact of the visitor's session?

Evaluation

The teacher and visitor will ensure that time has been agreed to jointly evaluate the session. The following questions can be used as prompts:

- What was the young people's response to the session(s)?
- Have the learning outcomes been achieved?
- What went particularly well in the session(s)?
- Which parts (if any) of the session were not successful?
- Were the resources and materials used appropriate?
- In what ways do you think that the session(s) could be improved?
- Are there any issues from this session that you think need addressing further?

Pupil evaluations will be carried out to inform future planning and will focus upon:

- What pupils have learnt in the sessions;
- What they like about the sessions;
- What they didn't like about the sessions;
- What else they would like to know about.