

VISITORS POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Visitors Policy applies to all primary and secondary Catholic schools (**Schools**) managed and operated by the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (**DOSCEL**) in the Diocese of Sale, State of Victoria.

DOSCEL schools are committed to providing safe and secure learning environments for all their students. This policy reflects the direction given by Victorian's Child Safe Standards under *Ministerial Order 1359: Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to all DOSCEL Schools.

3.0 SCOPE

This Policy outlines DOSCEL School's arrangements for visitors who attend school grounds during school operating hours, and when the school office, or equivalent is staffed to monitor and receive visitors at reception. Visitors include, parents, guardians, carers and other adults.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic.), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact with a child that is a central part of that person's duties.

5.0 PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

DOSCEL Schools are committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, staff, contractors and volunteers.

DOSCEL School's strive to create open and inclusive school communities and encourage parents, guardians and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. Schools should strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.

Schools are not public places. The principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with the school's Child

Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct and Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

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

- parents, guardians and carers of students attending school
- prospective families and employees
- those who are addressing a learning or developmental need, such as:
 - invited speakers
 - sessional instructors
 - independent contractors, such as health professionals
 - representatives of community, business and service groups
- those who are conducting business such as:
 - uniform suppliers
 - booksellers
 - official school photographers
 - commercial salespeople
- trades people
- children's services agents
- public officials (for example, ministers, members of parliament, mayor)
- DOSCEL Secretariat staff
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (**DFFH**) Child Protection workers, and Victoria Police.

5.1 Sign in procedure

All visitors to DOSCEL Schools are required to report to the school office, or equivalent, on arrival (see section 5.3 in relation to exceptions to parents, guardians and carers).

Visitors must:

- record their name, signature, date, time of visit and purpose of visit via the visitors' book or online system
- produce evidence of their valid Working with Children Clearance where required under the *Worker Screening Act 2020*
- provide proof of identification to school staff upon request
- comply with the School's practice concerning identification (e.g. lanyard or name tag)

- follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant school policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including but not limited to the Schools Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- return to the school office, or equivalent, upon departure, sign out and return any identifying lanyard, or name tag.

School will ensure that their school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

All visitors who are engaged in child-related work must have a valid Working with Children Clearance (**WWCC**). In some circumstances, visitors to DOSCEL Schools 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.

DOSCEL Schools 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 unsupervised work at a school during school hours or any other time where children and young people may be, or are, present. 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 school 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 parent 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.

5.2 Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, DOSCEL Schools may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for their students.

Schools must:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to educational development and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- respect and support the Catholic identity, ethos and mission of the school.

5.3 Parent, guardian and carer visitors

All parents, guardians or carers who visit DOSCEL School's during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick-ups and drop-offs, are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office, or equivalent. This includes but is not limited to, parent-teacher interviews, assemblies and award ceremonies.

Where it is determined by a principal that it is not practicable for large groups of parents, guardians or carers to sign in as a visitor at the school office, or equivalent, principals are required to ensure that parents, guardians or carers are informed of the School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct and behavioural expectations. This may be communicated in various way, including but not limited to, newsletters, email, and parent communication platforms.

Parents, guardians or carers who are prohibited from entering the school under a court order are not permitted to visit the school. Schools are required to seek advice from the DOSCEL Secretariat Industrial Relations / Human Resources Team in relation to these matters before implementing procedures for managing these matters.

5.4 Other visitors

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors, including volunteers, attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office, or equivalent, upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

6.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Schools and families in DOSCEL Schools have a Visitor's Policy that is clear and transparent to guide them through the processes and procedures pertaining to visitors to DOSCEL Schools.

7.0 REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

- [*Australian Privacy Principles 2014 \(Cth\)*](#)
- [*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic.\)*](#)
- [*Child Wellbeing and Safety \(Information Sharing\) Regulations 2018*](#)
- [*Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic.\)*](#)
- [*Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 \(Vic.\)*](#)
- [*Ministerial Order No. 1359: Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises \(made under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic.\)\)*](#)
- [*Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)*](#)

8.0 RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- *DOSCEL Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*
- *DOSCEL Child Safety Code of Conduct*
- *DOSCEL Duty of Care Policy*
- *DOSCEL Recruitment and Engagement Policy*
- *DOSCEL Volunteers Policy*

9.0 REVIEW

Implementation Date: December 2022

Review Date: December 2024