

Visitors Policy

Waratah Special Developmental School



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 9474 8700

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Waratah SDS.

RATIONALE

Waratah Special Developmental School (Waratah SDS) recognizes that parental involvement in schools and strong communities are critical to children's development and learning. Community groups and agencies are also available to improve student outcomes. Interaction between schools and their communities leads to the presence of a range of visitors in the school. For the safety and welfare of all students at Waratah SDS school community recognizes that there are potential risks in allowing visitors in the school. These risks need to be managed in a way that reflects the nature and size of our school.

Waratah SDS takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all [Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order 1359](#)

Waratah SDS is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive, and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

SCOPE

This policy outlines our school's arrangements for visitors who attend school grounds when the school is open for instruction between the hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm, and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception, including parents, carers, contractors, volunteers, and service providers outside of these times, our front office is not staffed, and this policy does not apply.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*, child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online

communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Visitors (*Visitors are defined as all people other than staff members*) to Waratah SDS include but are not limited to:

- volunteers
- parents, carers, siblings, grandparents
- students undertaking placement from tertiary institutions
- secondary school students,
- work experience students
- community volunteers
- trades people
- employees of children's services agencies
- sessional instructors
- school photographers
- commercial sales people
- representatives of community and service groups
- or other as approved by the School Principal
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (e.g. Worksafe inspectors, health officers etc)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners

Waratah SDS is not a public place. The Principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds, and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with our school's ***Statement of Values, Child Safety Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, and Volunteers Policy***, which can be found on the school website.

IMPLEMENTATION

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Waratah SDS are required to report to the school office on arrival (see exceptions below in relation to parents/carers). Visitors must:

- Record their name, signature, date and time of visit in the Visitor's book.
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request.
- Produce evidence of their valid Working with Children Clearance where required by this policy (see below).
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant school policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including, Child Safety Code of Conduct,

Statement of Values and School Philosophy, as well as, Department policies such as the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#).

- Return to the office upon departure and sign out.
- If at the Satellite Unit located within Brunswick South West Primary School, report to the coordinator or teacher and sign Satellite visitors book.

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

All visitors working directly with students are required to:

- Meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal and be briefed on the nature of the school, the emergency management plan, taken on a school tour and receive copies of the 'Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines' and 'Guidelines for Cross Infection', which can be obtained in the office upon induction.
- Hold a current Working with Children Check or display a receipt to prove application for WWCC has been undertaken. The WWCC status checker can be used for verification and then entered to the WSDS registry.
- Fill out a personal detail form and read the Waratah SDS code of conduct upon induction.
- Wear a visitors pass, obtained at the front office.

Parent visitors

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick-ups and drop offs or for specific school events (e.g. parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc.), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Other visitors to the school not working with children (e.g. trades people, performers, handyman, gardening crew) are required to:

- Have permission from the Principal or Assistant Principal to be on the school premises.
- Register their arrival at and departure from the school in the visitor's book.
- Sign the WSDS code of conduct.
- Comply with all school OH&S procedures.

Working with Children Clearance and other suitability checks

For Working with Children (WWC) Check and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students, please see our Volunteers Policy.

All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) must have a valid WWC Clearance

In some circumstances, visitors to Waratah SDS, who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Clearance depending on the circumstances of their visit. For example, Waratah will require a valid WWC Clearance 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 the school during school hours or any other time where children 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 front 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 WWC Clearance.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

INVITED SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS

On occasion, Waratah SDS may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education and Training requirements, Waratah SDS will:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- ensure that any proposed visit, programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular and is consistent with the values of public education, Department policies and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic). In particular, programs delivered by visitors are to be 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, speech and association
 - the values of openness and tolerance
 - respect the range of views held by students and their families.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website

- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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

Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2024
Consultation	Via Seesaw 31/07/2024, and in newsletter Term 3 week 3 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2026