

VISITORS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact our office on 03 5158 0254.

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Mallacoota P-12 College.

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 4:00pm, and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception, including parents, contractors, presenters and support personnel. 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.

POLICY

Mallacoota P-12 College strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, and other schools and organisations.

Mallacoota P-12 College 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 and School Philosophy*, *Child Safety Policy*, *Child Safety Code of Conduct and Volunteers Policy*.

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

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school's *Volunteers Policy* for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development

- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business e.g.: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Former students
- Talent scouts
- 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

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Mallacoota P-12 College 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, time and purpose of visit using our Compass Kiosk
- 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)
- Wear a visitor's lanyard at all times whilst onsite
- 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, Respect for School Staff, Statement of Values and School Philosophy etc. as well as Department policies such as the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#)
- Return to the office upon departure, sign out and return the visitor's lanyard.

Mallacoota P-12 College will ensure that our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

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. Additional suitability checks may also be required such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

In some circumstances, visitors to Mallacoota P-12 College who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Clearance depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, Mallacoota P-12 College 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.

See appendix 1 for additional information on WWCC requirements.

Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, Mallacoota P-12 College 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, Mallacoota P-12 College 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 for the range of views held by students and their families.

Parent visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.

If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school 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.

Parents or carers who are prohibited from entering the school under a court order or direction of the Principal are not permitted to visit the school. Our school maintains and provides office staff with a

list of restricted parents/carers which may include identifying photographs and any other information as required depending on the level of risk posed.

Other visitors

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

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
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Mallacoota P-12 College policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

[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	October 2024
Consultation	October 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2026

Working With Children Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools

Is the person working or volunteering at the school or in a school activity when children are present or reasonably expected to be present (online or face-to-face)?

Yes

No

The contact with a child is indirect and occasional or incidental to the work performed

For example: fete/fundraising activities, tradespeople, working bee, parents and friends clubs, etc.

This is **child-connected work** defined as:

- work authorised by the school and performed by an adult in a school environment (including online and offsite school activities, such as school camps) while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

It is the responsibility of the principal to determine if a Working with Children Clearance is required, considering the child safety risks relevant to the person's role.

In assessing what suitability checks should be undertaken, schools must consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role and the school's visitors and/or volunteers policy.

For further information see the [Working with Children Checks and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors Policy](#)

The contact usually involves direct work with a child (face to face or online)

Examples of child-related work activities

- Attendant care
- School camps
- Excursions (including swimming)
- Literacy and numeracy support
- Homework clubs, breakfast clubs, lunch clubs, leadership or cultural workshops and other student support activities
- Distance education
- an Early Childhood Education and Care service on school grounds (e.g. kinder or playgroup)

Examples of child-related work roles

- Classroom or library assistant
- Sporting, musical or other extracurricular coaches
- Canteen and uniform shop assistant
- Allied health or NDIS therapists
- Department staff who are working with children
- Special Religious Instruction instructors
- Chaplains
- School camp or excursion support
- Mentors and guides from partner organisations
- Volunteering in the classroom (in any capacity)

This is **child-related work** defined as work that:

- involves an adult working with children under 18 years old (both paid and unpaid work)
- usually involves direct contact with a child or children, including physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact and
- the contact with the child or children is a usual part of the person's duties and is not occasional direct contact which is incidental to their work.

Working with Children Clearance are legally required for child-related work unless an exemption applies

Schools must **also** consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role in assessing what **other** suitability checks should be undertaken.

A Working With Children Clearance is not legally required but the school should consider the child safety risks and any other suitability checks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role (e.g. qualifications, identity, criminal record check if working with finances etc) and the school's visitors and/or volunteers policy.

Is the person exempt from a Working with Children Clearance?

A person is exempt from needing a Working with Children Clearance if they are any one of the following:

- a registered teacher in Victoria
- a parent volunteering in an activity with their child
- under the age of 18
- a student who is 18 or 19 years old volunteering or on placement, organised by an educational institution
- closely related to all the children they are undertaking the activity with
- a Victoria Police or Australian Federal Police officer

Even if a person is legally exempt they may still be required to get a Working with Children Clearance if the school requires it as part of their Visitors Policy or Volunteers Policy.
This ensures that volunteers and visitors are adequately screened, considering the child safety risks relevant to the person's role.

The department **recommends that schools require anyone who volunteers regularly or who assists with excursions, camps or similar events** obtain a Working with Children Clearance given the contact volunteers may have with other students in these situations.