VISITORS POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the School by telephoning 03 9376 1622.

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Mount Alexander 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 8:00am to 4:00pm., including parents,carers, guardians, contractors, prospective students and their families, as well as DET staff. Outside of these operating times, the school's general office is not staffed and the only visitors who are permitted on school grounds are Parents/Carers or their delegates who are dropping off or picking up students from school events such as parent teacher interviews, concerts, sport or other school activities, and community and other groups / contractors who have entered into contracts or agreements with the school to use school premises outside of school hours.

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

Mount Alexander 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, schools and other organisations.

Mount Alexander 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 and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, Volunteers Policy.*

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

- Parents, carers and guardians of students
- 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
- 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 staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Mount Alexander 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 and time of visit and purpose of visit using the Compass Kiosk located in the school's General Office.
- 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 and name tag at all times
- Follow instructions 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 as well as Department policies such as the Sexual Harassment Policy and Workplace Bullying Policy
- Return to the school's General Office prior to departure to sign out and return their visitor's lanyard

Mount Alexander 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/guardians 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 Mount Alexander 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, Mount Alexander 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.

Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, Mount Alexander College may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education requirements, Mount Alexander 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/Carer/Guardian visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent, r carer or guardianmay 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 and request that a message be relayed to their child and in exceptional circumstances request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

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

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

Parents, carers or guardians 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 General 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

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Mount Alexander College policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

- available online http://www.mountalexandercollege.vic.edu.au/about-mac/school-policies/

Department policies:

- Child Safe Standards
- Visitors in Schools
- Contractor OHS Management

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2025
Consultation	School Council consultation is recommended and was undertaken in January 2025.
Approved by	Principal - Dani Angelico Febrauary 2025
Next scheduled review date (the mandatory minimum review cycle for this policy is 2 years)	February 2027