Mansfield Primary School
Visitors to Schools Policy

BASIC BELIEF

Mansfield Primary School recognises that high levels of parental involvement in schools and strong communities are critical to children’s development and learning. Community groups and agencies, business and philanthropic organisations also have a strong interest in improving outcomes for children and young people and helping them pursue academic excellence. It is important that schools make the most of these partnerships.

Mansfield Primary School’s families are valued partners in their children’s development and learning, and the school creates strong partnerships between community services, schools, the broader community and business.

Interaction between schools and their communities inevitably leads to the presence of a range of visitors in schools. These may typically include parent and community volunteers; invited speakers; sessional instructors; representatives of community, business and service groups; prospective parents and employees; and local members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments.

Others, including employees of relevant children’s services agencies, trades people, talent scouts for sporting and arts organisations, official school photographers, commercial salespeople such as booksellers and uniform suppliers may also be present in schools from time to time over the school year.

It is acknowledged that there are potential risks that need to be managed when allowing visitors into schools, including visitors who are members of students’ families or members of the local community. Mansfield Primary School acknowledges that it is not a public place and is responsible for the safety and privacy of the students. Therefore visitors to the school will serve an educational purpose, be appropriate for children and be consistent with the values of public education.

IMPLEMENTATION

The school requires

- all visitors who work with the children to have a current “Working with Children Check”
- all visitors, during school hours, to register their arrival at, and departure from the school in a visitors’ book, including printing their name, signing, and recording the date and times and purpose of the visit. This will ensure that the school has a record of all visitors in the event of a school emergency or any future investigation.
- Visitors unknown to office staff will be accompanied by a member of the school staff
- All visitors will be required to wear a visitors badge issued at the school office
- That parents will be notified in advance about visitors who will be working with their children via notices and the school newsletter
- That parental permission for students to participate in related educational activities will be sought.
- Within the parameters of the law and Departmental advice, that the Principal has operational responsibility in relation to the visitors who are allowed into schools, for what purpose and on what conditions. If in doubt, the Principal will consult with the Regional Office and seek advice from the Legal Services Branch.
- That the practice of facilitating contact with students by talent scouts should only be carried out privately by parents and students, out of school hours, without the involvement of the school. Talent Scouts include children’s choirs, orchestras and drama groups, sporting associations, film companies looking for groups of ‘extras’ or undertaking individual casting, and modelling agencies,
- That visiting speakers will ensure that the content of presentations and addresses will make a positive contribution to the development of students’ knowledge and understanding. Where
initiatives involve external presenters speaking on controversial matters parent permission will be sought by the school. Presenters will be well briefed about the nature of the school and its community, and should be prepared to respect the range of views held by students and their families.

- Operational decisions about whether to proceed with a particular presentation rest with the Principal or delegated staff member(s) after a suitable investigation (due diligence) has been conducted.

This policy was ratified by the Mansfield Primary School Council on 4/5/2009

Review Date: 2012

Other relevant policies
Privacy Policy,
Media Policy (i.e. the photographing of students,)
Mandatory Reporting Policy