



VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS POLICY

RATIONALE

Schools are educational institutions and Melba College recognises that the involvement of visitors, volunteers, parents, carers and others from the community can play an important role in children's development and learning. This policy therefore seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages visitors and volunteers to our school.

Melba College recognises our Duty of Care to all students, staff, visitors and volunteers to ensure a safe environment; and our responsibility to protect and preserve our resources against theft, vandalism and misuse.

Melba College has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to meeting the requirements of **Ministerial Order 870 and the Child Safe Standards**. The Child Safe Standards and the Melba College Code of Conduct apply to all staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work with students of Melba College.

AIM

1. To provide a safe and secure environment for all of our students, staff and resources and to establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors, whilst not compromising the open, inclusive and inviting nature of our school.
2. To outline the processes that Melba College will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.
3. To ensure that any program or content delivered by visitors or volunteers is consistent with the values of public education and the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular (apart from the provision of Special Religious Instruction, delivered in accordance with legislative and Department requirements).
4. To ensure that programs delivered by visitors and volunteers must be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian Democracy including a commitment to the following, as outlined in s 1.2.1 of the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)**:
 - elected government
 - the rule of law
 - equal rights for all before the law
 - freedom of religion
 - freedom of speech and association
 - the values of openness and tolerance.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work:

- 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 contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Closely related family member:

- parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

Volunteer

- a volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work without payment or reward.

School Work:

- carrying out the functions of a school council
- any activity carried out for the welfare of a school:
 - by the school council
 - any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
 - at the request of the principal or school council
- providing any assistance in the work of any school
- attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organization which receives government financial support.

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Volunteers and Visitors may be at Melba College for a number of reasons including:

- working with Melba College staff
- prospective parents and employees
- parent information
- those who are addressing a learning or developmental need
- parent and community volunteers
- invited speakers
- sessional instructors
- representatives of community, business and service groups
- local members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments
- working bees
- working in the classroom
- sporting events or other curricular related activities
- conducting business such as:
 - support and advisory roles with Melba College staff
 - uniform suppliers
 - booksellers
 - official school photographers
 - commercial salespeople
 - trades people
 - agents of children's services
 - Victoria Police
 - Worksafe officers.

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to speak with the Principal or Assistant Principal who will assist them in volunteering at Melba College.

VISITOR CONDUCT

Visitors and volunteers are to conduct themselves in a manner that will not cause harm or injury to themselves or others.

All visitors are required to treat our students, parents and staff with dignity and respect at all times.

IMPLEMENTATION

General Requirements for visitors and volunteers to Melba College:

1. Principals and teachers have a Duty of Care to their students. The duty requires principals and teachers to take all reasonable steps to reduce risks, including the provision of suitable and safe premises and the provision of an adequate system of supervision for visitors to Melba College.
2. At all times the student Duty of Care must remain with the teacher or Principals of Melba College. Students' Duty of Care cannot be designated to any visitor or volunteer within Melba College or whilst participating on Melba College designated business.
3. Visitors who are attending the school to deliver incursions, presentations, seminars or other activities and programs to students will be fully supervised by school staff at all times:
 - Under the **Working with Children Act 2005**, volunteers or paid workers in the school are required to have a Working with Children Check.
 - All visitors and volunteers shall report to the school office when arriving or leaving Melba College premises.
 - Visitors and volunteers are required to be electronically registered when both arriving and leaving, including printing their name and giving the purpose of the visit.
 - On arrival all visitors and volunteers shall be requested to wear a visitor's badge when on school premises. This must be returned when exiting the school.
 - All school visitors and volunteers must comply at all times with DET policies, administrative rules and school regulations.
 - Staff should inform reception of expected visitors and volunteers so that they can be directed to the correct staff member.
4. Visitors and volunteers to Classrooms or Other Instructional Areas:
 - access to particular classrooms or other instructional areas of the school may be restricted upon the recommendation of the teacher in charge or as otherwise deemed necessary by the principal
 - because classrooms and other instructional areas are the most vulnerable to disruption, specific conditions may be imposed upon visitors and volunteers, including but not limited to:
 - remaining in a designated place or seat
 - refraining from speaking to students while the class or activity is in session
 - refraining from entering or leaving the area while an activity is underway
 - limiting the duration of the visit to particular times or length of time
 - limiting the activities of the visitor to a particular purpose(s)
 - designating particular routes of travel in the building or upon the school grounds for safety reasons
 - Visitors and volunteers wishing to conference with teachers or administrators during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance.
5. Special Situations:
 - Both custodial and non-custodial parents of a Melba College student have rights to visit the child's school unless a court order exists restricting such contact. In the event that a non-custodial parent seeks permission to visit, the school shall make a good faith effort to notify the custodial parent in advance of the visit.
 - The school principal has the authority to exclude from the school premises any person who disrupts or who appears likely to become a disruption to the educational program. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and law enforcement authorities shall be called if necessary.
6. Guest Speakers / Presenters – Guidelines:
 - Incursion and presentation visitors and volunteers require prior approval from the principal or their nominee before attending the school.

- When inviting speakers and presenters into the school the following must be considered:
 - a. does their visit serve an educational or wellbeing purpose consistent with curriculum objectives and school values?
 - b. is the presentation appropriate for the age of the audience?
- Parental permission may be necessary for some presentations including those that:
 - a. are religious in nature
 - b. include explicit sexual content
- Criteria for determining the need for a particular visitor or guest speaker to attend the school:
 - a. the visit serves an educational purpose and is consistent with curriculum/wellbeing objectives, school policies, DET policies
 - b. the content is appropriate for children or young people in the relevant age group
 - c. the incursion/presentation is consistent with the values of public education
 - d. the visit has potential benefit to the school community
 - e. is there the potential for a visitor to cause controversy within the school or broader community?
 - f. weighting of the level of disruption to the functioning of the school in relation to the potential benefits to the students
 - g. appropriate use of DET resources, including teachers' time
 - h. the safety of students, staff and visitors in the event of an emergency situation at school is ensured.

7. Compensation:

- Personal injury:
 - Volunteer school workers are covered by the Department's Workers Compensation policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.
- Property damage:
 - If a volunteer school worker suffers damage to his or her property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister may authorise such compensation as the Minister thinks reasonable in the circumstances.
 - Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.
- Public liability insurance
 - The Department of Education and Training's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work and is legally liable for:
 1. a claim for bodily injury to a third party
 2. damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

- At all times visitors and volunteers must remain under the supervision of the designated teacher or the Principals of Melba College.
- Students' Duty of Care cannot be designated to any visitor or volunteer within Melba College or whilst participating on Melba College designated business.
- Visitors and volunteers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety Policy, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy.
- Visitors and volunteers within Melba College will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education and Training policies, to the extent that they apply, including the Department's policies relating to Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying.

- The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a visitor or volunteers, and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at Melba College.
- Melba College will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the visitor or volunteer will be engaged in.

REFERENCES

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/volunteerworkers.aspx>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/volunteers.aspx>

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 - sections 5.6.2, 5.6.3
- Workers Compensation Act 1958
- Wrongs Act 1958 – section 37(1)
- Working with Children Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015
- Ministerial Order 870

RELATED POLICIES

- Melba College Philosophy
- Melba College Duty of Care Policy
- Melba College Child Safety Policy
- Melba College Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Melba College Child Safety Reporting Policy
- Melba College Inclusion Policy
- Melba College Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Melba College Working with Children Check and Suitability Policy
- Melba College Staff information Registers Policy

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the Melba College's three-year review cycle.

Policy Reviewed by School Council	Person Responsible for Policy	Next School Council Review
2018	Assistant Principal Compliance	2021