VISITORS POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Principal.

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Gisborne Secondary 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 3:30pm, and when Reception is staffed to monitor/receive visitors between the hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm, including parents, contractors, prospective families, guest speakers/presenters. Outside of these times, our reception 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

Gisborne Secondary 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.

Gisborne Secondary 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
- 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
- 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 Gisborne Secondary College are required to report to Reception 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 in the online kiosk or the hard copy visitors book
- Provide proof of identification to reception 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
- 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 as well as Department policies such as the Sexual Harassment Policy and Workplace Bullying Policy
- Return to reception upon departure, sign out and return visitor's lanyard

Where the visit is outside school hours and the online kiosk is not accessible, the staff member in charge of the event must ensure a hard copy sign-in sheet is available e.g., when parents are assisting with constriction of Production sets.

Gisborne Secondary 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 Gisborne Secondary 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, Gisborne Secondary College will require a valid WWC Clearance for:

- **visitors who will be working 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 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, Gisborne Secondary 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, Gisborne Secondary 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 or for specific school events (eg parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at reception.

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 reception 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. Our facilities and maintenance manager will manage workflow across the school to ensure minimal disruption to student learning, and that all child safety protocols are followed.

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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Gisborne Secondary College policies:

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

Department policies:

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	10/09/2025
Consultation	School Council 10/09/2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	10/09/2027