



SCHOOL VISITOR POLICY

The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Carthach N. S., Ballyfinane, wish to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and encourages visitors to the school. At the same time the Board has a legitimate interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process, protecting the safety and welfare of the students and staff, and to protect and preserve the school's facilities and resources from misuse or vandalism.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for all visitors to the school and in so doing;

- Provide a safe and secure environment for our students and staff.
- Establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors, whilst not compromising the open and inviting nature of the school.

DEFINITIONS

Visitors to the school are defined as all people who visit the school (other than teachers, ancillary staff, the pupils and parents/guardians involved in the task of delivering or collecting pupils at the start or end of the school day).

Type of Visitor

1. Parents
2. Department of Education & Science Officials
3. Guest Speakers
4. Paid coaches and instructors
5. Volunteers (parents, sport coaches, etc.)
6. Contractors
7. Members of the Board of Management
8. Principals/Teachers from local Secondary Schools
9. Couriers
10. Salespeople
11. Clergy

RESPONSIBILITIES

In Scoil Naomh Carthach N.S. teachers and staff, individually and collectively, take all responsible precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils when the pupils are on the school premises.

Teachers/staff on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the school yard and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business.

The school principal shall have the authority to determine which visits are permitted as well as the discretion to set any appropriate conditions on the nature and extent of such visits. In exercising this discretion, the principal shall consider the purpose of the visit, the impact of the visitor's presence and the relationship of any visitor to the pupils.

School personnel shall seek to assure that parents and other visitors are courteously received and that sincere efforts are made to provide them with the information as may be needed to foster a cooperative relationship between home, school and community.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITORS

1. In the interest of safety all visitors shall **report** to the Principal/ member of staff when arriving or leaving the school premises. Notices shall be displayed prominently (outside and inside the building) indicating that all visitors are required to report to the Principal.
2. Whenever possible, visitors should obtain authorisation from the principal in advance. At the discretion of the principal, such prior authorisation may be required.
3. Visits may be prohibited at certain times such as times of standardized testing and while preparations for school events are being conducted.
4. If conflicts occur because of the number of visitor requests or other circumstances, parents of currently enrolled students will generally be given preference.
5. All school visitors must comply at all times with Board of Management and Department of Education & Science policies, administrative rules and school regulations. **Garda vetting** applies where required.
6. Teachers are willing to meet visitors at an appropriate time, however, only visitors with appointments will be permitted to see a member of staff.
7. **If a visitor approaches a member of staff without an appointment, the member of staff reserves the right to defer speaking about the matter in question until a later, more convenient time.**
8. Under no circumstances will a visitor be allowed to verbally or physically attack a child or a member of staff. In this instance the person will be asked to leave the school immediately and if he/she refuses, then assistance should be sought from a colleague or the Principal.
9. **In the event of an unacceptable breach of these guidelines, the assistance of the Board of Management or outside authorities may be sought.**

Parents as Visitors

- Parents/Guardians wishing to conference with teachers or administrators during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance through the school office in the morning via email or telephone.
- Parents/Guardian who visit the premises during the school day to collect pupils for external appointments are asked to report to the school office before 12:30pm. After this time please report to the child's teacher. Parent's must sign their child out and in of the school if the child returns to school before the end of the school day.

Guest Speakers

- Guest speakers (subject to vetting) may be invited to the school where the principal teacher's authorisation has been sought and where it has been deemed that the use of such a speaker will bring specific knowledge and expertise to enrich the planned curriculum.
- Guest Speakers on subjects/areas other than the approved curriculum must be approved by the Patron/Principal prior to being invited to the school.
- A checklist for the organization of guest speakers is appended to this document.

Paid Coaches & Instructors

- Will work under the supervision of a designated teacher.
- Should have a recognised qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
- Must adhere to the Child Protection Guidelines.
- Must submit a Garda Vetting report.
- Should have appropriate experience of working with young people.
- Must have current public liability insurance.

Volunteers

- Volunteers who will be on the premises during school hours must adhere to the new Garda Vetting guidelines.
- Volunteers will only work directly alongside a member of the school staff.

Contractors

- Contractors who may regularly have staff on the premises during the school day will be required to provide Garda clearance reports for same.
- Contractors who may occasionally visit the premises during the school day must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Both custodial and non-custodial parents of Scoil Naomh Carthach N.S. pupils 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 every effort to notify the custodial parent in advance of the visit.

The 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.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on2018

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2020 or before if/when necessary.

Chairperson BOM

Principal/Secretary of BOM

APPENDIX

GUEST SPEAKER CHECK LIST

This checklist will be used by staff in school to support them through the stages of involving a visitor in the classroom.

Before the visit

- Why is this visitor being asked into school?
- Does the visitor come with any recommendations?
- Has the school used this visitor before?
- What experience has this visitor of working with this age group?
- Have parents been informed of the session (if appropriate)?
- How will you ensure that pupils are hearing a balance of opinions about the topic/issue?
- Does the Visitor comply with new Garda Vetting Guidelines?

Preparing the visitor

- Is the visitor aware of the context of the contributions they have been asked to make?
- Has the visitor identified the intended learning outcomes for their input?
- Have the resources and materials been reviewed for appropriateness and the maturity of the pupils?
- Is the visitor aware of the aims of their visit?
- Has the visitor been made aware of the school ethos?
- Is the visitor aware of the ability and maturity level of the young people they will be working with?
- Will the visitor make a pre-visit to the school?
- Are the school's legal responsibilities to the children and young people being met?
- Has the visitor been supplied with copies of the relevant school policies?
- Is the visitor aware of any risks to health and safety?
- Does the visitor comply with new Garda Vetting Regulations?

Preparing the visit

- What arrangements will be made to welcome the visitor to the school and introduce them to the class?
- Is the size of the group appropriate to the activity and learning purpose?
- Is this visit part of a planned programme with preparation beforehand and follow up afterwards?
- How will the group be prepared for the visitor?
- What resources will be needed for the session?

During the visit

- Will the school be able to respond appropriately to questions or incidents that may arise after the visitor has left?
- How will the teacher support the visitor in this work?
- Will a member of the school staff be present during the session?

After the visit

- How will the outcome of the evaluation inform future work?
- Is there opportunity for feedback and discussion about the impact of the visitor's session?

Evaluation

The teacher and visitor will ensure that time has been agreed to jointly evaluate the session. The following questions can be used as prompts:

- What was the young people's response to the session(s)?
- Have the learning outcomes been achieved?
- What went particularly well in the session(s)?
- Which parts (if any) of the session were not successful?
- Were the resources and materials used appropriate?
- In what ways do you think that the session(s) could be improved?
- Are there any issues from this session that you think need addressing further?

Pupil evaluations will be carried out to inform future planning and will focus upon:

- What pupils have learnt in the sessions;
- What they like about the sessions;
- What they didn't like about the sessions;
- What else they would like to know about.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on2018

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2020 or before if/when necessary.

Chairperson BOM

Principal/Secretary of BOM