

## Scoil Naomh Cárthach

Ballyfinane, Fries, Cill Áirne, Co. Chiarraí  
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## Ballyfinane N.S.

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# School Visitor Policy

### Introduction

The Board of Management of Ballyfinane NS seek 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 schools 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 other than staff members, students, and parents/guardians involved in the task of delivering or collecting children at the start or end of the school day.

The phrase “school personnel” as used in this policy is a generic term to encompass all adults who are involved in the operation of the school. It covers employees and voluntary workers, and includes Parent Association members when they are working in the school.

### Type of Visitor

Visitors to the school may include, but are not limited to:

1. Parents
2. Department of Education & Science Officials
3. Guest Speakers
4. Paid coaches and instructors
5. Volunteers (parents, sport coaches, etc.)
6. Members of the Board of Management
7. Children’s Services Agents / Psychologist
8. School Nurse/Doctor
9. Education Welfare Officer
10. Principals / Teachers from local secondary schools
11. Contractors/Trades people
12. Couriers
13. Salespeople
14. School Photographers
15. Clergy
15. Prospective parents and employees

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### Responsibilities

Ballyfinane 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;

- hold 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 students.

### School staff 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.

### School Personnel;

- shall have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students. Parents should be expected to model the standards that students are asked to respect. In order to do this, they need to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting students to behave according to these standards. The ways in which parents and teachers interact will provide students with a model of good working relationships.' NEWB: Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools p.38 are especially well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. In any situation where a member of school personnel (including a registered teacher), receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the designated liaison person (DLP) who is responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedures are followed and must have due regard to the need for confidentiality at all times when they are working in the school in line with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.

### 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 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 standardizing testing and while preparations for school events are being conducted.

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4. The school requires visitors to collaborate with teachers to ensure that any programs and content delivered by them are delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the ethos of our school and are in line with the curriculum and policies of the school.

5. If conflicts occur due to the number of visitor requests or other circumstances, parents of currently enrolled students will generally be given preference.

6. 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 requirements must be met where required.***

7. Teachers are willing to meet visitors at an appropriate time, however, only visitors with an arranged appointment will be admitted to see a member of staff.

***8. 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.***

9. 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.

***10. 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 wishing to meet with teachers during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance through the school office in the morning via Aladdin, telephone or email.
- Parents who visit the premises during the school day to collect students for external appointments are asked to send a message to the class teacher/principal on Aladdin. Parents who have been invited to visit the school as part of an, open day, special event or scheduled school performance are exempt from requirements 1 to 5.

### Guest Speakers

- Guest speakers may be invited to the school where the Principal's authorization 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 prior to being invited to the school.
- Guest speakers must submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure.

### Paid Coaches and Instructors

- Paid coaches and instructors will work under the supervision of a designated teacher.
- Must submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure and adhere to Child Protection Guidelines.
- Should have appropriate experience of working with young people.
- Should have a recognized qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
- Must have current public liability insurance.

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### Volunteers

- Volunteers who will be on the premises during school hours may be asked to submit a Garda Vetting Disclosure and follow the schools Garda Vetting Policy.
- Volunteers should never be alone with a child and will only work directly alongside a member of school staff.

### Contractors

- Contractors will be requested to visit the premises, as far as is practicable, after school hours. Contractors who may regularly have staff on the premises during the school day will be required to provide Garda vetting.
- Contractors who may occasionally visit the premises during the school day will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

### Special Situations

Parents are requested to make the school aware of visiting rights of parent(s) should any special conditions prevail. Documentary evidence may be required. Both custodial and non -custodial parents of Ballyfinane N.S. pupils have rights to visit the child's school unless a court order exists restricting such contact. In the event of 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.

**If the form is not completed correctly it will be returned to you for further completion/ verification. Please note that this could significantly slow your appointment/ Garda Vetting process.**

### Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_**

Date of Review	Date of Review	Date of Review	Date of review

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mike Carroll**  
**Chairperson of B.O.M.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Catherine O'Shea**  
**Principal**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_