



St. Mary's College & Preparatory School

External Visitors and Volunteers Policy

2023/2024

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This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of The College and Prep and with due regard to the school’s mission statement:

Our Mission is to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 0-18; to provide individual challenge towards holistic and balanced development, service and achievement for life and beyond; and to try to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

Statement of Intent

St Mary's College assures all visitors/volunteers of a warm, friendly and professional welcome to the school, whatever the purpose of their visit.

The school has a legal duty of care for the health, safety, security and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to safeguard all pupils from subjection to any form of harm, abuse or nuisance.

In performing this duty, the school recognises that there can be no complacency where child protection and safeguarding procedures are concerned. It is therefore a requirement that **ALL VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS** (without exception) comply with the following policy and procedures. Failure so to do may result in the visitor's/volunteer's escorted departure from the school site.

Policy Responsibility

The school's Safeguarding Team, comprising of a Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer for each site is responsible for the implementation, coordination and review of this policy. All breaches of this procedure must be reported to a member of the school's Safeguarding Team and to the College Principal.

Aim

The ultimate aim is to ensure that students at St Mary's College can learn and enjoy curricular and extracurricular experiences in an environment where they are safe from harm.

Objectives

To have in place a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of visitors/volunteers to the school which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors/volunteers and parents and conforms to child protection and safeguarding guidelines.

Where and to whom the policy applies

The school is deemed to have control and responsibility for its pupils anywhere on the school premises, during normal school hours, during after school activities and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities.

The policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the school
- All external visitors/volunteers/people entering the school site during the school day or for after school activities (including peripatetic tutors, parent supervisors, sports coaches, and topic related visitors/volunteers e.g. authors, journalists).
- All governors of the school
- All parents (excluding those collecting pupils from school)
- Independent contractors who may transport students on minibuses or in taxis

- Other education related personnel
- Building/ Maintenance /Deliveries and all other independent contractors visiting the school premises

Protocol and Procedures Visitors/Volunteers to the College and EYD

To comply fully with the College's GDPR policy and the school's child protection policy, the following procedures for visitors to the College site must be upheld at all times.

Staff responsible:

- **Reception Staff** - Jo Forrest/Alex Albert
- **Services Manager** - Tracey Gogarty
- **SLT Responsible for GDPR** - Steve Gray & Alice Haigh
- **Safeguarding Lead** - Suzanne Bartolo/Julie Thomas & Alice Haigh/Safeguarding Deputy

Entering the School Premises: Sign-In Procedure

1. Visitors/volunteers must report to the College Reception and record the following details in the Confidential Visitors Book:
 - a. Date of visit
 - b. Full name and name of company, if relevant (PRINT)
 - c. Name of person in school they are visiting (PRINT)
 - d. Arrival time ('Time In')
2. If the visitor/volunteer is required to access the secure area beyond the reception area or the school site, the visitor must be issued with a **visitor badge** by reception staff.
3. Reception staff must **record the visitor badge number in the Confidential Visitor Book** in the space next to 'Visiting'
4. Reception staff must notify the relevant member of staff of the visitor's/volunteer's arrival **before** allowing the visitor/volunteer access to the secure area and/or the school site.

Leaving the School Premises: Sign-Out Procedure

1. When the visitor/volunteer is ready to sign out, reception staff must check the visitor badge number against the visitor's/volunteer's name in the Confidential Visitor Book:
 - a. If correct, record with a 'tick' alongside the badge number.
 - b. If the number is incorrect, ask the visitor/volunteer for an explanation and record the details for the Site Manager's information
2. The visitor/volunteer must record the time leaving the school premises ('Time Out'), alongside their name in the Confidential Visitor Book and write their initials to confirm signing out.

3. The visitor/volunteer must hand back the visitor badge to the reception staff before leaving the school premises.

Procedure for the non-return of Visitor Badges

1. Reception staff must check the Confidential Visitor Book at the end of each day:
 - a. If a visitor has not signed out and/or has not returned the visitor badge, Reception staff must **immediately** notify the contact at the College for the visitor's/volunteer's contact details (telephone/email address) to contact the visitor to confirm their departure from the school and to request the return of the badge as a matter of priority.
 - b. Reception staff must notify the Site Manager, SLT staff responsible for GDPR and the Safeguarding Leads the **same day** of an incident with the non-return of a visitor badge with the following details:
 - Name of visitor/company
 - Contact number
 - Visitor Badge number
 - c. Reception staff must follow up with the incident and update the Site Manager/SLT/Safeguarding Leads as and when the visitor badge has been returned to the school.

Procedure for the Allocation of School Visitor Badges

- It is the responsibility of Reception staff to ensure that the College's visitor badges are kept in a **secure place**.
- The Reception staff must keep a **log of the visitor badge numbers** and to **maintain a regular audit** of the visitor badges in circulation in the College.
- Any visitor badge that has been identified as lost must be **notified to the Site Manager/SLT for GDPR and Safeguarding Leads**.
- All visitor badges allocated to teaching/non-teaching staff **must be allocated by the Reception staff** and a record of the badge number recorded accordingly.
- The timescale as to how long the member of teaching/non-teaching staff require the visitor badge must also be recorded and followed up accordingly by Reception Staff.
- The Reception staff must carry out a **daily check on the allocation of visitor badges at the end of each day**.
- Any discrepancy to these procedures must be notified immediately to the Site Manager/SLT responsible for GDPR/Safeguarding Leads.

Volunteers to the School (Events)

Volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children at any time during an organised event.

A member of staff will always be present to supervise volunteers and the children involved.

All volunteers will be required to wear an identification badge. This badge must remain visible throughout their visit.

All volunteers will be made aware through an induction process of the need to turn off and not use their mobile phone whilst on site, including the use of cameras and recording devices.

Volunteers are asked to sign the Visitor Book before making their way to the designated area of the school.

Parents and visitors/volunteers use of mobile phones, smartwatches and social networking

Whilst we recognise that there may be emergency situations which necessitate the use of a mobile telephone, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the children in our care and share information about the children, parents and visitors/volunteers are kindly asked to refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst in the schools or nursery setting or when collecting or dropping off their children.

We promote the safety and welfare of all staff and children and therefore ask parents and visitors/volunteers not to post, publically or privately, information about any child on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok (or similar platforms as they emerge). We ask all parents and visitors/volunteers to follow this policy to ensure that information about children, images and information do not fall into the wrong hands.

Parents/ visitors/ volunteers are invited to share any concerns regarding inappropriate use of social media through the official procedures (please refer to the Complaints Policy)

Visitors/Volunteers' Departure from School

On departing the school, visitors/volunteers MUST leave via reception at the College and the respective offices at The Mount and the EYD and:

- enter their departure time in the Visitors/Volunteers' Book alongside their arrival entry
- return the identification badge to reception/ office.

Unknown/Uninvited Visitors/volunteers to the School

Any visitor to the school site who is unaccompanied by staff and not wearing an identity badge should be:

- challenged politely to enquire about their identity and the reason for their visit.
- escorted to reception to sign the visitors' book and be issued with an identity badge.

The procedures under *Visitors/volunteers to the School*, above, will then apply. In the event of the visitor refusing to comply, they should be asked to leave the site immediately and the Principal (or any Senior Leader should the Principal be unavailable) informed promptly.

The Principal / Senior Leader will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to inform the police.

If an unknown/uninvited visitor becomes abusive or aggressive, they will be asked to leave the site immediately and warned that if they fail to leave the school grounds, police assistance will be called for.

Visits by outside agencies (Visiting Speakers)

Any member of staff wishing to invite someone into the school to work with our students must:

- confirm the visit in writing to the outside agency with dates and times and contact details and give a copy of all correspondence to the safeguarding officer of the site and also to the Principal's PA at the College, the Headteacher at The Mount and the Head of Early Years Department.
- The content of their presentation/input is agreed in advance to ensure that what is delivered is in line with school policy/protocol and also provides a balanced view of the topic.
- ensure the purpose of the visit is included in all communications
- make a request from the appropriate external agency evidence of their accreditation if necessary.

Staff Development

This policy will be presented to staff at their policy training sessions and placed on the T-Drive and 'Every' platform for reference by staff throughout the year.

As part of their induction, new staff will be made conversant with this policy for External Visitors/Volunteers and asked to ensure compliance with its procedures at all times.

Linked policies

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with other related school policies, including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Dress Code
- Staff E-Safety Policy