

Visitors Policy

Ratification Date: Update by RNS Principal 02/2023 RNS Board 15/03/2023	Next Review: By 1 July 2024 or after an event or changes to the minimum standards as advised by the VRQA	Availability: <table><tr><td>Web</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Office</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>On Request</td><td>X</td></tr></table>	Web	X	Office	X	On Request	X	Actions:
Web	X								
Office	X								
On Request	X								

SCHOOL CONTEXT

River Nile School (RNS) is a specialist reengagement senior-secondary school for young women who are Humanitarian refugees and new arrivals to Australia. In general, our school's students are highly vulnerable with backgrounds of complex trauma in their lives. Most RNS students live as independent young adults, and those with parents/carers commonly have parents/carers who are also new to Australia, with low levels of English oracy and literacy and which are not yet well informed about child safety expectations and obligations in Australia. Some RNS students have significant responsibilities as young parents or carers/guardians of younger siblings.

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to River Nile School.

SCOPE

This policy outlines our school's arrangements for visitors who attend school property when the school is open for instruction during school terms between the hours of **10 am to 3.15 pm**, and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception (**8.30 am to 4 pm**), preferably by prior arrangement, including parents/carers, contractors, volunteers or members of the school community. Outside of these times, our front office 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

River Nile School strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents/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.

River Nile School 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 Policy*, *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and *Volunteers Policy* which are available publicly on the school's website <http://www.rivernileschool.vic.edu.au/policies>.

From time-to-time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents/carers/guardians
- Volunteers – see our school's Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees and staff or students from prospective referral schools and agencies.
- Invited speakers, facilitators and others addressing learning, development and pathway needs.
- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business e.g.: booksellers, school photographers, commercial salespeople

- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies including allied health professional and refugee settlement service professionals
- 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 River Nile School are required to report to the school reception or office 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 visitors log book in the reception foyer
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce evidence of their valid Working with Children Clearance where required by this policy (see below)
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant school policies relating to appropriate conduct on school property including Child Safety Code of Conduct, School Values and School Philosophy and Bullying Prevention (including Harassment prevention).
- Return to the office upon departure and sign out.

River Nile School will ensure that our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.

For further information, refer to:- [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

Working with Children Check clearance and other suitability checks

For Working with Children Check (WwCC) and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students, please see our Volunteers Policy.

The *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic) requires all people engaged in 'child-related' work (see definition on this policy), to hold a WwCC Clearance. The Department of Education and Training (DET) has a useful flowchart to assist schools in relation to making decisions about suitability checks-

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/community/WWCCflowchart.pdf>.

All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) must have a valid WwCC Clearance. Additional suitability checks may also be required such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

It is **at the discretion of the principal** as to whether to require a WwCC Clearance for those not engaged in child-related work. In general, we ask that visitors have a WWC Clearance if they will be **regularly present at the school at times when children can reasonably be expected to be present**.

In some circumstances, visitors to River Nile School who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WwCC Clearance depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, River Nile School will require a valid WwCC Clearance for:

- **visitors who will be working regularly with children/students** 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 regularly be performing unsupervised work at the school during school hours or any other time where children/students 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 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 WwCC Check, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing **proof of identification**.

Invited speakers, presenters and facilitators

On occasion, River Nile School 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, River Nile School 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 our school is secular and is consistent with the values of our school, school 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/carer visitors

We ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day. If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents/carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

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 (e.g. parent-student-teacher interviews/meetings, graduations, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school reception.

Parents/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 and office 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.

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
- Made available in hard copy from the school office upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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

These are available publicly on the RNS website at this link:

<http://www.rivernileschool.vic.edu.au/policies>

Department of Education and Training (DET)policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)

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