

Scoil Naomh Mhuire NS

Visitor to the School Policy

Introduction:

This policy was formulated by the principal and staff in consultation with parents and the Board of Management as part of our on-going school self-evaluation. It was updated in the summer term of 2017/2018 and reviewed again in 2019 in line with new Child Safeguarding Procedures and the commencement of statutory Garda vetting.

A visitor is defined as any person other than a member of staff or pupil of the school. This includes parents, Board of Management members, contractors and volunteers.

Rationale:

Scoil Naomh Mhuire recognises the contribution that visitors to the classroom can make in the implementation of the primary school curriculum. The school may from time-to-time invite visitors to speak to the children on various curricular areas.

This policy is deemed necessary to ensure that the safety and protection of the children is first and paramount in all school activities.

This policy reflects the Department of Education's guidelines on visitors to primary schools as outlined in Circular 0022/2010 and circular 31/2016 on the commencement of Statutory Garda Vetting.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

Scoil Naomh Mhuire strives to utilise the full school community resources to create a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of our pupils are identified and developed. (Mission Statement).

As such the school will from time to time invite visitors from the wider community to speak to the children on various curricular areas.

Aims

By introducing this policy Scoil Naomh Mhuire hopes

- To build a school community committed to supporting and protecting all its pupils
- To enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils by accessing the skills and talents and expertise within the wider community

Guidelines

If the school wishes to enhance or supplement the implementation of any area of the Primary School Curriculum by inviting visitors to the classroom the following criteria must apply:

- External visitors/ facilitators /tutors who contribute to any curricular area must be approved in advance by the principal and board of management (BOM). Visitors must work under the guidance and supervision of the classroom teacher, who must remain in the classroom / yard with the pupils at all times and retain the central role in the delivery of the subject matter. Interventions without the direct involvement of the teacher are not appropriate. Visitors must never replace the class teacher. To do so would undermine the integrity of the curriculum, the credibility and professionalism of the teacher and school and could compromise the safety and welfare of the pupils.
- External visitors/ facilitators /tutors who contribute to curricular areas can play a valuable role in supplementing, complementing and supporting a planned, comprehensive and established programme of education.
- Any supplementary interventions must be age and stage appropriate and should include evidence-base content and methodology and clear educational outcomes.
- All materials proposed for use must be approved in advance by the principal and BOM, be age and stage appropriate for pupils and be in line with the ethos of the school and the

principles of the Primary School Curriculum. There is a need also to take account of all relevant school policies and procedures.

- Intervention and external inputs should be evaluated by the school principal, teachers and pupils (as appropriate) in terms of the content, approach, methodology and proposed learning outcomes.
- Parents will be made aware of any visitor or agency invited to engage with pupils in the school.

Relevance to the Curriculum

The following are examples of the category of visitors that may be invited to the school:
English – Visiting Authors / Writers; Parents invited to talk to children during Book Week
SPHE – Visit from Dentist, Garda, Fireman, Vet, RSE facilitator
SESE – Visit from parent, grandparent and other members of the local community
Arts – Visiting artists or musician
PE – Experts in strand areas e.g. trainers from St Kevin's GAA
Religion – The Parish Priest or other guest speakers

Benefits of Visiting and Guests Speakers to the School

- Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.
- Visitor's skills may support and complement work already taking place.
- Community and Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.
- A wider range of activities is facilitated which will lead to a broader and more holistic education.
- Community and Parental involvement allows children to see that school is an extension of home and wider community.

Visitors

All scheduled and unscheduled visitors to the school are expected to report the office on arrival. Staff on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and direct them to the school office. A record of the drop-off/pick-up of children throughout the teaching day will be processed through the school office.

Parents as Visitors During the School Day

Parents wishing to conference with teachers or administrators during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance.
Parents who visit the premises during the school day to collect students for external appointments are asked to report to the school office and sign their child out and in if the student returns to school before the end of the school day.
Parents who have been invited to visit the school as part of an, open day, special event or scheduled school performance are exempt from the above requirements.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers 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 Board of Management prior to being invited to the school.

Paid Coaches & Instructors

Will work under the supervision of a designated teacher
Should have a recognized qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
Must have received Child Protection training.
Must submit a Garda Vetting report.
Should have appropriate experience of working with young people.
Must provide the names and contact details for two character referees.
Must have current public liability insurance.

Volunteers

Volunteers who will be on the premises during school hours must submit a Garda clearance form. Volunteers will only work directly alongside a member of the school staff.

Contractors

Visits from contractors should not take place within school hours. However should it be necessary to have contractor on the premises during the school day, they 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

Roles and Responsibility

This policy will be co-ordinated by the principal, teachers and Board of Management. Feedback is encouraged from all staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

This policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Implementation

This policy should be fully implemented by April 2017

Responsibility and Timeframe for Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, the Principal will be involved in co-ordinating the review.

The Board of Management, Principal, staff and parents will be involved in the review.

Ratification and Communication

This reviewed and updated policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **March 11th, 2019**

This policy will be communicated to all staff and the Parents Association and will be available on the school website and in the office to view.

Signed: Mary McDowell
Principal

Date: March 11th, 2019

Signed: Maeve Caldwell
Chairperson

Date: March 11th, 2019