



St Louise's

Comprehensive College, Belfast

A Specialist College

VISITORS' POLICY



Mission Statement

"In partnership with parents, guardians, staff, governors and students St Louise's promotes excellence in learning and teaching within a Catholic, Vincentian, Comprehensive ethos"

Rationale

St Louise's College assures all visitors 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 students and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to safeguard all students from any form of harm, nuisance or abuse. 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 and volunteers (without exception) comply with the following policy and procedures.

Policy Responsibility

The school's Safeguarding Team, comprising the Principal, a Designated Teacher and two Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection, 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 Principal.

Please note that visitors will be given passes at reception during the hours of 7.30 am and 4.30 pm. At all other times it is responsibility of the member of staff who has invited the visitor to attend the school to ensure that the policy is adhered to.

Aim

The ultimate aim is to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff on site so that St Louise's College is a school where students 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 students/visitors/volunteers to the school which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors 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 students anywhere on the school site (i.e. within the school boundary fence), 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 entering the school site during the school day or for afterschool activities (including peripatetic tutors, parent supervisors, sports coaches, and topic related visitors e.g. authors, journalists).
- All governors of the school
- All parents, guardians and volunteers
- Other education related personnel including students and substitute teachers
- Building/ Maintenance /Deliveries and all other independent contractors visiting the school premises
- Independent contractors who may transport students on minibuses or in taxis

Protocol and Procedures

Visitors to the School

All visitors/volunteers to the school must follow the procedure below.

- Once on site, all visitors must first report to the main reception/pastoral reception.
- No visitor should enter the school by any other point.
- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them.
- All visitors will be asked to sign the Visitors' Book which is kept in reception at all times, making note of their name, organisation, point of contact in school, time of arrival, car registration number.
- All visitors will be required to wear an identification badge issued by the receptionist (Main Reception).
- This badge must remain visible throughout their visit.
- Visitors will be alerted to information regarding Fire Safety Evacuation and Child Protection procedures within the school.
- Visitors will then be escorted to their point of contact OR their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. Where students escort the visitor, there must be two students.
- The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site.

Visitors'/Volunteers' Departure from School

In departing the school, visitors/volunteers MUST leave via the main reception/pastoral reception and:

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

Unknown/Uninvited Visitors to the School

Any visitor to the school site, who is unaccompanied by staff and not wearing an identity badge, should be approached politely to establish their identity and reason for their visit. They should then be escorted to reception to sign the visitors' book and be issued with an identity badge.

The procedures under "Visitors 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 member of the Senior Leadership Team should the Principal be unavailable) informed promptly. The Principal/Member of the Senior Leadership Team 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.

A summary will be presented to the Board of Governors on an annual basis.

Visits by outside agencies

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

- confirm the visit in writing to the Principal
- liaise with the Designated and Deputy Designated teachers to ensure that the appropriate vetting arrangements have been put into place
- request from the external agency evidence of their accreditation if necessary and a copy of their Mission statement, if applicable.

Linked policies

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

- Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy