

Abbey Community College

Visitors to School Policy

Abbey Community College assures all visitors a warm, friendly and professional welcome.

Rationale

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure the safety of all students and staff. During any school day there are many people who visit the school on business and to communicate with staff and students. It is essential that there are procedures in place to ensure that the school knows who is on the premises at any time and that these people are immediately recognisable for the protection the students, staff and visitors themselves.

A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter a school building during school hours who is not an employee of the College or a student currently enrolled in that building.

General requirements for visitors

Whenever possible, visitors should make contact and agree arrangements in advance of arrival at the College.

Notices shall be displayed indicating that all visitors are required to register with the College office and obtain authorisation including reading a summary of emergency procedures and signing a visitor's book.

All visitors:

- will report to the main college office when arriving or leaving the College premises.
- will sign the visitor's book.
- shall be requested to wear an appropriate form of identification when on the College premises. Badges are available for those who do not have clear identification of their own.
- Upon completion of the visit, the visitor shall return to the office to return materials and enter departure time in the visitor's book.

Contactors and providers of services to the college will discharge their duties with the minimum interference to the workings of the school and will be under the supervision of a staff member whilst on the College premises.

If a member of staff contacts or is contacted by an outside agency or any individual requesting permission to visit lessons, observe teaching, attend assembly etc., permission must be obtained from the Principal/Deputy Principal before any agreement is made.

Specific Guidance/Checklist for members of staff organising visits from external agencies are outlined in Appendix 1.

All College visitors must comply at all times with the Abbey Community College's policies, administrative rules and regulations.

Collecting data including photography is covered by legislation and thereafter at the discretion of the Principal.

All regular volunteer helpers must undergo a Garda clearance to ensure that the students are protected. (Exceptions can be made, after consulting the Principal, for those who visit the school for a short period only and are supervised by a member of staff at all times).

Special School Events

There are a number of times through the school year when very large groups of parents and friends are invited onto the school grounds during the school day when students may be present. This can occur at school assemblies and special whole College events such as on these occasions visitors are not required to sign in and out.

Staffs are available by appointment only.

To keep class interruptions to a minimum, messages to students will be delivered at a convenient time.

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with other related College policies together with the appropriate legislation.

The Principal reserves the right to terminate the access previously enjoyed by a visitor(s).

Appendix 1

Specific Guidance/Checklist for members of staff organising visits from external agencies

- Be considerate and sympathetic of other activities both curricular and co-curricular when planning and arranging visitors.
- Ensure the visitor/external agency complements the College's policies and planned programme or scheme of work.
- Be confident that the visitor/external agency has expertise in the subject they are delivering and the experience and skills in delivering sessions to children and young people.
- Before the visit, discuss with the visitor how the session fits in with the school's programme/scheme of work.
- Discuss and agree aims of session, professional boundaries, including responsibility for classroom discipline and fees, if applicable before the session.
- Inform visitor/external agency of: number, age and gender ratio of students, background, ethnicity and culture of students, special education needs (if applicable).
- Provide access to relevant school policies, e.g. Child Protection, RSE and Risk assessments.
- Inform relevant people of presence and remit of visitor: e.g. School Reception, Principal, and Deputy Principal.
- Inform students in advance of the activity.
- Communicate arrangements to staff by means of Friday flyer and or White board.
- Provide visitor with named contact.
- Organise, meet and greet arrangements and provide hospitality where deemed necessary.
- Arrange for classroom/assembly lay out.
- Ensure relevant staff member (i.e. class teacher) is present during session and responsible for class discipline.
- Ensure the activity meets Health and Safety guidelines.
- Visitor/external agency thanked for their contribution and where applicable fees paid.
- Students given time to reflect on what they have learned.
- Students, teacher and visitor carry out and record agreed evaluation method of visit.