

COLÁISTE ABBÁIN

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VISITING SPEAKERS, FACILITATORS AND GUEST POLICY

Mission Statement

Coláiste Abbáin endeavours to provide quality education for all students in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. We aim to prepare students for life and responsible citizenship and motivate them towards the achievement of their full potential

Rationale

This policy is to provide guidelines for all visitors to the school and in so doing, provides a safe and secure environment for our students and staff. This policy also establishes protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage visitors whilst not compromising the open and inviting nature of the school.

Definitions

Visitors to the school are defined as all people other than staff members and students. Parents/guardians who regularly drop and collect students to and from school would not be regarded as visitors.

Types of Visitors

Our school has a variety of regular, planned, and unplanned visitors to the school. Such visitors may include:

1. Parents
2. Department of Education and Skills officials
3. Guest speakers
4. Paid coaches and instructors
5. Contractors/owners and employees of other businesses
6. Any other persons who arrive on the school premises (other than students and staff members)

This list is not exhaustive. The school principal shall have the authority to determine which visits are permitted as well as the discretion to set any appropriate conditions on the nature and extent of such visits. In exercising this discretion, the principal shall consider the purpose of the visit, the impact of the visitor's presence and the relationship of any visitor to the students. School personnel shall seek to assure that parents and other visitors are courteously received and that sincere efforts are made to provide them with the information as may be needed to foster a cooperative relationship between home, school and community.

General Requirements for Visitors

1. All visitors shall report to the school office when arriving or leaving the school premises.
2. All visitors (except parents/guardians and those briefly visiting the school as is the case with deliveries and enquiries) shall be requested to wear an appropriate form of identification when on school premises.

3. Whenever possible, visitors should obtain authorisation from the principal in advance. At the discretion of the principal, such prior authorisation may be required.

4. All school visitors must comply at all times with Board of Management and Department of Education and Skills' policies, administrative rules and school regulations, including Circular 0023/2010. This circular deals specifically with visitors in relation to Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). (Appendix 1).

5. Visitors should be familiar with this policy. The organising teacher can direct visitors to the school website to access this policy.

Parents as Visitors

- Parents wishing to conference with teachers or administrators are required to make arrangements in advance. Parents can contact the school office to make an appointment. Parents should not at any time, drop into the school and request an ad hoc meeting.
- Parents who visit the premises during the school day to collect students for external appointments are required to report to the school office and sign their child out and also back in if the student returns to school before the end of the school day.

Guest Speakers

- Guest speakers may be invited to the school when approved by the Principal 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 should be accompanied by a member of staff at all times during their visit unless alternative arrangements have been authorised by management.
- A checklist for the organisation of guest speakers is appended to this document. (Appendix 1)
- Please also see General Requirements for Visitors above.

Paid Coaches and Instructors

- Will work under the supervision of a designated teacher.
- Should have a recognised qualification in the activity they are to deliver.
- Must receive Child Protection training and provide evidence.
- 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.
- Please also see General Requirements for Visitors above.

Contractors/owners and employees of other businesses

Contractors and businesses who may regularly have staff on the premises during the school day will be required to provide Garda clearance reports for same through WWETB procurement system. Contractors/businesses who may occasionally visit the premises during the school day must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times or visits should be arranged outside of school time where possible.

Special Situations

Parents are requested to make the school aware of visiting rights of parent(s) should any special conditions prevail. Documentary evidence may be required. School Management has the authority to exclude from the school premises any person who disrupts or who appears likely to become a disruption to the educational program. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and law enforcement authorities shall be called if necessary.

As part of our academic school calendar we invite prospective students, families and people into our school for special events such as our School Pantomime, Craft Fair, Open Evening and Entrance tests. A different procedure is used for all events

School Policies

Other school policies may be particularly relevant to this policy. Please see our Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy. Visit our website to view school policies

www.colaisteabbain.ie

Evaluation

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all of our school policies. Specifically important to this policy are:

- Pupil feedback
- Staff feedback
- Parental feedback

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 2nd June 2021.

Review and Development

We are also committed to the review and development of our school policies. As part of our ongoing review process, this policy will be examined to reflect feedback from our evaluation practices and also to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practices.

Appendix 1

GUEST SPEAKER CHECK LIST

This checklist will be used by staff in school to support them through the stages of involving a visitor in the classroom. Before the visit

- Why is this visitor being asked into school?
- Does the visitor come with any recommendations?
- Has the school used this visitor before?
- What experience has this visitor of working with this age group?
- Have parents been informed of the session (if appropriate)?

Preparing the visitor

- Has the visitor identified the intended learning outcomes for their input?
- Have the resources and materials been reviewed for appropriateness and the maturity of the pupils?
- Is the visitor aware of the aims of their visit?
- Has the visitor been made aware of the school ethos?
- Is the visitor aware of the ability and maturity level of the young people they will be working with?
- Will the visitor make a pre visit to the school?
- Has the visitor been made aware of the relevant school policies?
- Is the visitor aware of any risks to health and safety?

Preparing the visit

- What arrangements will be made to welcome the visitor to the school and introduce them to the class?
- Is the size of the group appropriate to the activity and learning purpose?
- Is this visit part of a planned programme with preparation beforehand and follow up afterwards?
- How will the group be prepared for the visitor?
- What resources will be needed for the session?

During the visit

- Will the school be able to respond appropriately to questions or incidents that may arise after the visitor has left?
- How will the teacher support the visitor in this work?
- Will a member of the school staff be present during the session?

After the visit

- How will the outcome of the evaluation inform future work?
- Is there opportunity for feedback and discussion about the impact of the visitor's session?

Evaluation

The teacher and visitor may evaluate the session. The following questions can be used as prompts:

- What was the young people's response to the session(s)?
- Have the learning outcomes been achieved?
- What went particularly well in the session(s)?
- Which parts (if any) of the session were not successful?
- Were the resources and materials used appropriate?
- In what ways do you think that the session(s) could be improved?
- Are there any issues from this session that you think need addressing further? Pupil evaluations may be carried out to inform future planning and will focus upon:
 - What pupils have learnt in the sessions;
 - What they like about the sessions;
 - What they didn't like about the sessions;
 - What else they would like to know about.

Ratified by the BOM 2ND June 2021