



BANDONBRIDGE NATIONAL SCHOOL VISITORS POLICY

A safe, welcoming and well-managed approach to visitors

Ratified by the BoM:

1. Purpose and Scope

Bandonbridge National School welcomes parents/guardians, professionals, contractors, volunteers, prospective families and other authorised visitors. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all visits are managed in a manner that supports pupil safety, safeguarding, privacy, learning and the orderly operation of the school.

This policy applies to all persons entering the school premises who are not enrolled pupils or members of staff. It should be read alongside the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, Health and Safety Statement, Data Protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Code of Behaviour and relevant emergency procedures.

2. Guiding Principles

- The safety, welfare and best interests of pupils are paramount.
- The school will be welcoming and respectful while maintaining appropriate security and safeguarding controls.
- Visitors must not disrupt teaching and learning or interfere with the work of staff.
- Access to pupils, classrooms, records and school facilities is limited to what is necessary and authorised.
- Confidentiality, privacy and dignity must be respected at all times.

3. Arranging a Visit

Where practicable, visits should be arranged in advance with the Principal, Deputy Principal or relevant staff member. Parents/guardians wishing to meet a teacher should follow the school's normal communication and appointment procedures rather than calling to a classroom during teaching time.

The Principal may refuse, postpone, limit or terminate a visit where this is necessary for safeguarding, health and safety, school security, pupil welfare or the effective operation of the school.

4. Arrival, Sign-In and Identification

- Visitors should enter through the designated main entrance and report to the school office or designated staff member.
- Visitors must sign in using the school's visitor recording system and provide their name, purpose of visit, person being visited and arrival time.
- Visitor lanyards are used, they must be worn visibly and returned before departure.
- Visitors must sign out when leaving the premises.
- Staff should challenge, in a courteous manner, any unknown person on the premises who has not followed the visitor procedure.

5. Supervision and Access

Visitors must remain in authorised areas and follow staff directions. Unless specifically authorised, visitors should not move around the school unaccompanied or enter classrooms, staff areas, offices, storage areas or pupil toilets.

A visitor must never be placed in sole charge of a pupil unless the arrangement is specifically authorised, appropriate safeguarding requirements have been satisfied, and the role permits such contact.

6. Child Safeguarding and Garda Vetting

All visitors are expected to comply with the school's child safeguarding procedures. The level of supervision, vetting and other safeguards required will depend on the nature, frequency and purpose of the visitor's role.

Where a person is undertaking relevant work or activities with children, the school will ensure that applicable Garda vetting and safeguarding requirements are met before the activity begins. A visitor who becomes aware of a child protection concern should report it immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or, in the DLP's absence, the Deputy DLP, in accordance with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.

7. Visiting Professionals, Tutors and External Providers

Professionals or external providers working with pupils must have prior approval. The school may seek confirmation of identity, qualifications, insurance, Garda vetting, safeguarding arrangements and the purpose and scope of the service, as appropriate.

External personnel must work within the agreed remit, follow school policies and staff instructions, and maintain professional boundaries. The class teacher or another designated staff member retains responsibility for the class unless a formally approved arrangement provides otherwise.

8. Contractors, Maintenance Personnel and Deliveries

- Contractors should report on arrival and comply with sign-in, identification and health and safety requirements.
- Work should, where possible, be scheduled to minimise contact with pupils and disruption to school activities.
- Tools, equipment, vehicles, chemicals and work areas must be secured appropriately.
- Delivery personnel should remain within designated delivery/reception areas unless authorised to proceed further.

9. Parents, Guardians and Family Members

Parents/guardians are valued partners in school life. For safeguarding and operational reasons, they should not enter classrooms or other pupil areas during the school day without permission. Collection arrangements, forgotten items and messages for pupils should normally be managed through the school office or via Aladdin.

At school events, parents/guardians and family members must follow staff directions and any event-specific arrangements relating to access, photography, supervision and pupil collection.

10. Photography, Video, Audio and Mobile Devices

Visitors must not photograph, film or make audio recordings of pupils, staff, school records or school activities without prior school authorisation and any required consent. Personal devices must be used responsibly and must not compromise privacy, safeguarding or the orderly operation of the school.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Visitors may become aware of information concerning pupils, families, staff or school business. Such information is confidential and must not be discussed, copied, photographed, retained or shared except where authorised or legally required. Visitors must follow the school's data protection procedures and any instructions given regarding personal data.

12. Health, Safety and Emergencies

Visitors must comply with the school's Health and Safety Statement and all reasonable safety instructions. They should familiarise themselves, as directed, with relevant emergency exits and assembly arrangements. In an evacuation or other emergency, visitors must follow staff instructions and report to the designated assembly point.

Any accident, injury, hazard or near miss involving a visitor should be reported promptly to a staff member.

13. Standards of Conduct

- Treat pupils, staff and other members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour and maintain suitable professional boundaries.
- Do not smoke or vape on school premises and do not attend the school while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- Do not bring weapons, dangerous items or unauthorised substances onto school premises.
- Do not engage in threatening, abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or aggressive behaviour.
- Follow reasonable directions from the Principal and staff.

14. Unauthorised or Inappropriate Visitors

A person who refuses to follow the school's visitor procedures, behaves inappropriately, presents a risk, or has no legitimate reason to remain on the premises may be asked to leave. Where necessary, the school may contact An Garda Síochána or other appropriate services. Any incident of concern should be recorded and reported to the Principal and, where appropriate, the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

15. Special Events and Community Use

For assemblies, performances, sporting events, meetings and other occasions involving larger numbers of visitors, the school may operate modified sign-in or access arrangements. Appropriate supervision, entry and exit routes, safeguarding measures and emergency procedures will be communicated as necessary.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate governance and review of this policy. The Principal is responsible for its day-to-day implementation. All staff share responsibility for maintaining a safe school environment and for directing visitors appropriately. Visitors are responsible for complying with this policy and with reasonable instructions from school personnel.

17. Communication, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be made available to staff and, as appropriate, to parents/guardians and visitors. Key visitor procedures may be displayed at the main entrance or reception area.

The policy will be reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and earlier where required by changes in legislation, national guidance, school circumstances or following a significant incident.

18. Ratification

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Bandonbridge National School on _____ and will take effect from that date.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal

Next review: _____