



Board Policy Regarding Visitors to Dubuque Montessori School

The Board encourages parents and other citizens to visit DMS and believes that there are many potential benefits that can result from increased interaction with the public. At the same time, the Board has a legitimate interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process and protecting the safety and welfare of the children and staff. A balance must be achieved between the potential benefits and risks associated with the presence of visitors in our building. Limitations may be placed on visitors who are not parents or guardians of children who attend DMS.

The director shall have the authority to determine which visits are to be permitted as well as the discretion to set any appropriate conditions on the nature and extent of such visits. In exercising the director's discretion, the director 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 information as may be needed to foster a cooperative relationship between home, school and community.

Rules for Visitors to School

A. General Requirements for Visitors to Schools:

1. A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter the school building who is not an employee of the school or a student currently enrolled in that building.
2. All visitors shall report to the school office when arriving or leaving the school premises. Notices shall be displayed in each building indicating that all visitors are required to register with the school office and obtain authorization from the administrator to remain on the school premises. All visitors shall be requested to wear an appropriate form of identification when on school premises.
3. Whenever possible, visitors should obtain authorization from the director in advance. At the discretion of the director, such prior authorization may be required.
4. All school visitors must comply at all times with Board policies, administrative rules and school regulations.

B. *Exceptions to Visitor Requirements:* Parents or citizens who have been invited to visit school as part of a scheduled open house, special event, scheduled performance by a class, during drop off and/or pick up procedures, or other adult participants in organized and school approved activities are exempt from requirements in A. 1-4 above.

C. *Visitors to Classrooms or Other Instructional Areas:*

1. Access to classrooms or other instructional areas of the school may be restricted upon the recommendation of the teacher in charge or as otherwise deemed necessary by the director.
2. Because classrooms and other instructional areas are the most vulnerable to disruption, specific conditions may be imposed upon visitors, including but not limited to:
 - a. requiring that the visitor be chaperoned
 - b. limiting the duration of the visit to particular times or length of time
 - c. limiting the activities of the visitor to a particular purpose(s)
 - d. designating particular routes of travel in the building or upon the school grounds.
3. Visitors wishing to conference with teachers or director during the course of the school day are encouraged to make arrangements in advance when ever possible.
4. Supervision and Monitoring of Visitors to DMS: All visitors and parents/guardians (visitors), whether or not that visitor has been cleared for involvement with the children through the formal record check process (as outlined in the Department of Human Services rule 109.6(6) and pursuant to Iowa law) shall be supervised and monitored by the staff, teachers, or the director during the extent of the visit to DMS. Supervision is defined as having general oversight over, direction of, and regulation of the visitor's activities and interaction with the children at DMS. Monitoring is defined as watching and observing the visitor's activities and interaction with the children at DMS. Each classroom instructor or assistant shall be responsible for supervising or monitoring visitors in their classroom. All staff is responsible for supervising and monitoring visitors in their general vicinity, including the visitor activities en route to the

classroom.

5. Special Situations: Both parents and guardians of a student have rights to visit the child's school and have unlimited access to their child unless a court order exists restricting such contact.
6. Student Teachers: Student teachers are exempt from the aforementioned provisions because they are subject to record checks and background clearance from their supervising institute.

Furthermore, the director 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.

This visitor access policy shall be shared with parents, guardians, and custodians of all children who are enrolled at DMS in the Parent Handbook that is distributed each year.