

1. Rationale:

As of the 1 January 2008, all schools are required to comply with the Working with Children Check Act 2005, and ensure that any person unsuitable to be involved in 'child related work' does not do so. The Working with Children Check (WWCC) creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. The WWCC helps to keep children safe by preventing those who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either paid or volunteer work.

2. Aims:

- To ensure students under our care are protected from being exposed to inappropriate people.
- To ensure all people engaged in 'child related work' with our students and who are required to have WWCC, do so.
- To ensure that our school complies with the relevant Acts and laws.
- To provide an environment that is safe.

3. Implementation:

3.1 As of 1 January 2008, all workers over 18 years of age in 'child related work' must have a WWCC prior to commencing work.

Workers need to apply for and pass the WWCC if they meet **all** of the following criteria:

- their duties involve contact with children in connection with one of the listed child-related occupational fields, one of which is DET settings.
- they have direct contact with children under 18 years of age and are not directly supervised.
- they do not qualify for an exemption from the need for a WWCC.

3.2 The following are required to apply for a WWCC if they are:

- a volunteer (this does not include unpaid work done for a private or domestic purpose, such as driving neighbour's children to school).
- performing unpaid community work under a court order.
- an employee (eg Education Support Staff Officer employed at a school)
- an independent contractor (self-employed person) who has 'direct contact' with children.
- an external provider who is not an employee of the school who has 'direct contact' with children.
- a minister of religion or performing duties of a religious vocation.
- a person doing practical training as part of an educational or vocational course, for example, a student teacher.

3.3 Exemptions for WWCC include:

- a volunteer whose child is participating or ordinarily participates in special school activities as nominated by the school. A parent engaging in work as a volunteer in relation to an activity in which his or her child is participating or ordinarily participates is exempt from a WWCC in respect of that activity.
- a person under the age of 18 years of age who works in child-related work.
- an adult who is 18 or 19 years of age who is a student at an educational institution is exempt from a WWCC in respect of any work engaged in as a volunteer at that institution or outside that institution under an arrangement entered into by that institution.
- a person under 20 years of age undertaking a work experience arrangement organised by your educational institution or a structured workplace learning arrangement.
- a teacher who is currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).
- a Victorian Police Officer or Australian Federal Police Officer

3.4 'Direct contact' is any contact with a child that involves any of the following:

- physical contact.
- talking face-to-face.

Direct contact does not include telephone, email or internet contact with a child.

3.5 To be considered 'directly supervised', supervision must be:

- undertaken by a person who has the role of supervising your contact with children.
- immediate and personal.

Direct supervision does not require constant physical presence. For example, a person who is directly supervising a worker may leave the room in which they are engaging in the work to make a phone call.

3.6 Volunteers at the school who will require a WWCC will include those who

- assist on a regular basis in classrooms/school activities.
- assist on excursions.
- assist at swimming lessons.
- attend overnight camps.
- are Pre-Service Teachers teachers placed at the school.
- engage in unpaid community work under a community-based order, a drug treatment order or an intensive correction order.

3.7 A WWCC is the property of the volunteer and may be used in any community circumstance it is required. Therefore volunteers must obtain it themselves. The school will assist in providing information about the process. A register of parents who have a WWCC will be kept at the reception.

3.8 Non-teaching staff employed at the school must have a WWCC. Employees must provide the office with a copy. A register of these WWCC will be kept at the office.

3.9 Volunteers must sign in at reception and are requested to wear/display their WWCC. The school will provide ID holders for this purpose.

3.10 Requirements for a WWCC will be included on relevant communication provided to parents/carers such as letter/permission note for activities.

4. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing policy and process review cycle.

References and Related Documents:

1. Department of Justice, Victoria

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren>

2. "WWC Act 2005 "

Department of Justice website

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Working+With+Children/Home/MWCC+-+Working+with+Children+Act+2005>

3. "WWC Regulations 2006 "

Department of Justice website

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Working+With+Children/Home/MWCC+-+Working+with+Children+Regulations+2006>

4. Amendments to the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act) took effect on 26 October 2014.

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/purpose/changes+to+legislation+home/>

5. Department of Education – Policy Advisory Guide

Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suitability-checks/policy>

This policy was ratified by School Council in March 2021