

Working With Children Check Policy

St Albans East Primary School



Date: August 2016

Rationale

As of the 1 January 2008, all schools are required to comply with the Working with Children Act 2005, and ensure that any person unsuitable to be involved in 'child related work' does not do so.

The Working with Children (W.W.C.) check verifies a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies. The WWC check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time the cardholder continues to be checked for new relevant offences or findings. The WWC check is administered by the Department of Justice.

You are considered to be performing 'child related work' if you work or volunteer at a school or school related activities, and you volunteer or do this work on a regular basis, and you have direct contact with children under 18yrs of age which is unsupervised, and you do not qualify for an exemption.

Aim

The W.W.C. check aims to assist in protecting children from sexual or physical harm. It is designed to complement good selection, supervision and training practices (including rigorous reference checking).

The intent of this policy is to outline which positions at the School require a WWC check and the process to be followed.

This policy applies to all positions at The School including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.

Implementation

A WWC check is required for positions that meet all of the following criteria:

- involve contact with children in connection with our school
- the contact happens on a regular (everyday) basis;
- involve direct contact with children and this contact is not directly supervised; and
- the position does not qualify for an exemption as listed under the act.

The School will:

- identify all staff who require a W.W.C.;
- ensure existing staff and volunteers are informed of the requirement to undergo the check;
- ensure prospective staff and volunteers have passed a WWC check before commencement, any queries should be directed to the Principal
- check the card's validity on the Department of Justice webpage;
- have a photocopy of the W.W.C. card with details updated in the school register (if individual is a staff member, copy to be kept on the staff member's personnel file);
- ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to confirm staff members hold a valid W.W.C. check card at all times. This will include:
 - maintaining an electronic register that will be checked monthly for expiration dates;

- providing staff and volunteers with written notification about WWC check renewal at least a month prior to expiration date;
- maintaining a hard copy register with copies of individual WWC cards.

The staff member or volunteer must:

- provide the successful W.W.C. check card prior to commencement at the school
- have a W.W.C. check card on their person at all times when working or volunteering at the school or during school related activities, unless they are exempt;
- notify the office if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence.
- apply for a new WWC check before their card expires.
- apply directly online at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

All teaching staff members are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and undergo ongoing monitoring that satisfies Working with Children check requirements, and are therefore exempt.

- The school or school council does not pay for W.W.C. checks. Note that the W.W.C. are free to volunteers. Candidates who are required to undergo a W.W.C. check as a condition of working in the school will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from the school.
- The school will maintain a record of volunteers with up to date W.W.C. checks
- The school and school council requires that all volunteers directly involved in school camps, excursions, sleep-overs, teaching of swimming lessons, transport of students without staff members present, extra-curricular activities such as school sporting teams etc, all have W.W.C. checks.
- School council will consider other activities such as incursions on a case-by-case basis.
- The school will take a copy of each WWC check and file in the administration filing cabinet.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school 3-year review cycle.

Review Year

2019