

Working With Children Check

Policy Statement

We are complying with legislation by ensuring that those who are working with students on behalf of the school, in a voluntary or paid capacity, have a current Working With Children Check. Voluntary work includes support in the classroom or assistance on excursions or camps.

It is recognised that the WWC Check does not assess a person's suitability to work with or care for children in a particular role. It is the responsibility of our school to assess if a worker is suitable to work with children and continue monitoring their behaviour around children.

To ensure volunteers approved to work with children meet legal requirements.

Rationale

The *Working With Children Act 2005* (the Act). The *Working with Children Act 2005* requires certain people who work or volunteer with children to obtain a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) before commencing child related work. Amendments were made to the act, effective 1 August 2017.

The Working with Children (WWC) Check is one of several measures organisations should put in place to protect children from sexual and physical harm.

The Act establishes a framework to screen the criminal records and the professional conduct of people who intend to work with or care for children. This includes those who work in schools. People who are assessed as posing an unjustifiable risk to the safety of children will fail the WWC Check and the Act prohibits these people from working with children.

The protection of children is the paramount consideration for any decision made under the Act.

The Act defines the kind of work that is regulated as **child-related work** and lists the offences every applicant is screened for.

The Act also exempts a range of people from the WWC Check including teachers registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), as VIT already undertakes a rigorous check of teachers' criminal records and professional conduct.

- DET and school councils have legislative obligations under the Act to ensure certain volunteers and employees have applied for, and received a WWC Check.
- The WWC Check has the unique benefit of providing ongoing monitoring for offences. Checks are valid for five years and are transferable between jobs or volunteer organisations.
- Further information on the WWC Check, the Act and amendments can be obtained at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

Implementation

- Volunteers wishing to apply for a WWC Check, including the online form submission should visit <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/> or at the post office.
- At the start of each year, this policy will be communicated to the school community through the inclusion on the school's website.
- The school will keep a register of valid WWC cardholders, including name, registration number, expiry date and card type (employee or volunteer) and any correspondence the related to those WWC cardholders.

Croydon Hills Primary School

- Notices which seek parent helpers will make it clear that a WWC is required under the Working with Children Act 2005.
- Any person registered with the VIT seeking casual or contract employment including those working with employment agencies must provide a copy of current registration before commencing.
- All Educational Support Officers (ESO) and other Non-Teaching Staff employed must have a current Working With Children Check.
- At the school's discretion all Trades people/Contractors/Consultants employed and/or working at the school may be required to have a WWC Check.
- All employees and volunteers of Croydon Hills Primary School are responsible for acquiring and maintaining their current WWC Check and supplying a copy. The act ensures that workers can no longer do child-related work once their WWC has expired.
- All parent/guardian volunteers working on behalf of the school, regardless of whether their child is present or not, are required to have a current WWC.
- People now need to get a WWC Check if they are providing accommodation services specifically for students as part of a student exchange program under Part 4.5A of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. This includes accommodation such as home stay arrangements.
- Teachers need to check the WWC register to ensure parent helpers have current and valid checks.

Evaluation

- An accurate register will be kept in the School Office of WWC Checks and past Criminal Records Check holders.
- There will be regular and systematic checks by the leadership team of visitors to the school to ensure adherence to this policy.
- If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWC check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

References:

DET Schools Policy Advisory Guide: School Community/Volunteer Checks

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

Review

As part of the school's cyclic process