

Working With Children Check Policy 2017

Rationale

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and Kerrimuir Primary School Council has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all children and employees, and maintain the security of assets by requiring and maintaining high standards of professional conduct from employees and volunteers.

In meeting these responsibilities the DEECD and School Council must be satisfied that only those employees and volunteers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed.

Verification of a criminal record is achieved by ensuring the employment of new school based employees proceeds in accordance with legislative obligations pursuant to the Working with Children Act 2005 (for non-teaching employees and volunteers), and to the Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001 (for principals and teachers).

Aim

- To provide a safe environment for students
- To ensure all employees and volunteers involved in activities with direct student contact are compliant with the Working With Children Act.

Broad Guidelines

The Working with Children Act 2005 is operational and includes a Working with Children Check (WWCC), thereby creating minimum checking standards across Victoria for people who work or volunteer with children in certain capacities. The WWCC will ensure that people who are unsuitable to engage in 'child-related work' do not do so.

The Act defines 'child-related work' as work, which usually involves (or is likely to involve) regular, direct contact with a child where that contact is not directly supervised, and in any of twenty child-related occupational fields listed in the Act. 'Child-related work' may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary).

The Department has developed procedures for the conduct of criminal records checks for all school based and non-school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working with Children Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements. These procedures apply to:

- persons employed under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- persons employed under the Public Administration Act 2004
- volunteers (in school and attending excursions/events as an official helper)
- casual employees including casual relief teachers
- student teachers and interns
- contractors

There are exemptions from the Act including:

- people under 18 years of age
- sworn police officers
- teachers currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)
- visiting workers who do not ordinarily reside and perform child-related work in Victoria

Date: April 2017

Ratified:

Review: 2020

DET-CRICOS-provider code – 00861K

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Further information relevant to a WWCC can be found at the Department of Justice's internet site at www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren.

Implementation

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF (ESS)

- When appointed, an ESS member must produce their WWC Check card and a copy is kept on their personnel file.

CLASSROOM / SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

- All volunteers must present their WWCC card to the school office.
- If the card has not yet been issued, the stamped application form from the Post Office must be presented until the card arrives.
- Office staff will photocopy the WWCC card for every volunteer and keep it on file in the office.
- A list of registered volunteers is created and updated by the office staff. A
- copy of this register is kept in the office.
- Teachers are responsible for checking the register for the volunteers in their classrooms.
- Only people on the register can be invited into the classroom or on excursions.
- When in the school, all volunteers must comply with the Kerrimuir Primary School Volunteers Policy.
- Expiry dates for all WWC Cards should be checked at the beginning of each school year by the volunteer and the school office staff.

CONTRACTORS

- All contractors and trades people must report to the school office.
- the school office must sight the WWC Card before work can commence on the school site within school hours.
- Regular contractors in the school (e.g. cleaners and regularly used trades people) must present their WWCC card at the office. Office staff will copy the card and keep it on file.
- If a trade person does not have a WWCC card and is working on school grounds within school hours, the principal will supervise their work and escort them off site once the job is complete.

A Working with Children Check is not required for:

- a teacher who has current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (including Permission to Teach)

Date: April 2017

Ratified:

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-an employee under the age of 18 years

-contractors working on a building site at the school which is behind temporary fencing

Related Material

1. *Working with Children Act 2005*
2. *Working with Child Amended Act 2010*
3. Working with Children Check Application Guide and Form
4. Department of Justice Working with Children Check Information Line on 1300 652 879.
5. Department of Justice website: www.justice.gov.au/workingwithchildren
6. VIT website – www.vitonline.vit.vic.gov.au to check current status of registration

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.