



St Andrews Primary School No: 0128

St Andrews Primary School
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Working with Children Check Policy

Purpose

St Andrews Primary School is committed to a child safe environment and reducing the risk of child abuse. To minimise the risk of harm to students, this policy outlines the appropriate approvals required to work with children at the school in accordance with legislation and Department policy. This applies to all positions at St Andrews including volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Implementation

St Andrews will assess and verify the suitability of staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors who will work with children. Unless an exemption applies to a person, a valid Working With Children Check (WWC Check) is the minimum standard for all adults engaging in **child-related** work, which involves:

- an adult working with under 18 years old (both paid and unpaid work);
- direct contact with children (physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact);
- work that is a usual part of the person's duties (and is not occasional or incidental to their work).

The suitability check flowchart (see Attachment 1) will be used in determining whether a person will be engaged in child-related work, and thus, whether a WWC may be required.

In addition to a WWC Check, St Andrews may also require a criminal record check. This may be considered necessary when certain offences are relevant to the duties of the volunteer or staff member, for example checking for dishonesty offences may be required for a role that involves managing finances or petty cash.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons are employed in the school. Prior to employing a person, the principal must be satisfied that the person meets the required Suitability for Employment Checks. See **Suitability for Employment Policy**:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Suitability_for_employment.pdf

To maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism in our school, St Andrews will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx>

St Andrews Primary School will adhere to the Department procedures for the conduct of criminal records checks for all school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance

of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and WWC Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

Volunteers

WWC Checks are required by all volunteers who will be engaged in child-related work as part of their duties, whether or not supervised by a teacher and whether or not the activity is on school grounds or during school hours.

For example, a volunteer who is assisting at a school camp or any other approved school activity outside of school grounds will require a WWC Check. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC Check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

A volunteer can commence work in St Andrews Primary School when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a WWC Check with the Department of Justice and have otherwise been considered by the school to be suitable.

Visitors/Contractors

WWC Checks are required where the visitor/contractor will regularly be present at the school and/or children can reasonably be expected to be present. This will be at the discretion of the principal and will be guided by the suitability check flowchart at Attachment 1.

Working with Children Check

The WWC Check is a minimum checking standard set by the *Working with Children Act 2005* for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis. It checks for serious sexual, violent and drug-related offences as well as disciplinary findings of professional agencies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

The WWC is administered by the Department of Justice and Regulation and a WWC Check Card will be issued if the applicant passes the check. This card is:

- valid for 5 years
- transferable between volunteer organizations
- free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

Note: WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

Maintaining Records

A copy of the staff member or volunteer's WWC Check Card will be kept on the file at the school.

St Andrews Primary School will implement procedures to ensure staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check card; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year.

It is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to:

- provide St Andrews Primary School with the successful WWC Check card prior to commencement

- notify the principal if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence or if their WWC Check has been suspended.
- apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.

Privacy

St Andrews Primary School will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

Exemptions

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check. St Andrews Primary School reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWC Check if the principal considers it necessary in the circumstances.

Student volunteers

A student who is 18 or 19 years of age is exempt from the WWC Check for volunteer work organised by or held at the same educational institution they attend.

Teachers

Registered teachers or teachers who have permission to teach from the Victorian Institute of Teaching under Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.

Police officers

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.

For a full list of exemptions and examples refer to: [Working with Children Check – Exemptions](#)

Links and References

School Policy Advisory Guide:

- [Volunteer Checks](#)
- [Volunteer Workers](#)

DET:

- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)

External Links:

- [Victorian Institute of Teaching](#)
- [Working with Children Check](#)

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner if necessary.

THIS POLICY REQUIRES SCHOOL COUNCIL APPROVAL	
Date Presented to School Council for Approval	15/02/2022

ATTACHMENT 1

Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools

