



**WILD
CHERRY
SCHOOL**

For Waldorf/Steiner Education

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK POLICY AND PROCEDURES

RATIONALE

Wild Cherry School has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all children and staff, and maintain the security of assets by requiring and maintaining high standards of professional conduct from staff and volunteers. In meeting these responsibilities Wild Cherry School must be satisfied that only those staff members and volunteers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed. Such assessments may include reference or referee checks, medical assessments, qualification verification and/or a criminal records check.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

On 3 April 2006 the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act) became operational and introduced a Working with Children Check (WWC Check), thereby creating minimum checking standards across Victoria for people who work or volunteer with children in certain capacities. The WWC Check will ensure that people who are unsuitable to engage in 'child-related work' do not do so.

GUIDELINES

The Act defines 'child-related work' as work that usually involves (or is likely to involve) regular, direct contact with a child where that contact is not directly supervised, and in any of 20 child-related occupational fields listed in the Act. 'Child-related work' may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary).

STAFF

Classroom Teachers

Classroom Teachers are employed pursuant to the Teaching Service Act 1981 and are required to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching as a condition of employment. Classroom Teachers who are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching are exempt from the Working with Children Act 2005 and do not require a WWC Check. Registration of Classroom Teaching staff is checked by the Administration Leader in Term 1 and in September, when registration renewal is due, to ensure the VIT registration of all teaching staff is current.

Non-teaching Staff

Non-teaching staff will require a WWC Check. From 30 December 2007 it became an offence under the Act to engage in 'child-related work' without having applied for a WWC Check. Penalties will apply to both the employer and employee. The Administration Leader will sight and retain a record of the employee's WWC Check unique number.

Casual Relief Classroom Teachers

Casual Relief Classroom Teachers are required to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. Accordingly they qualify for an exemption from the Working with Children Act 2005 and do not require a WWC Check.

Other Casual Employees

Casual employees in schools, other than casual relief classroom teachers, are employed pursuant to the Education Act 1958 and therefore are required to demonstrate their suitability for employment by undergoing a WWC Check or a criminal records check.

Not all casual employees in schools will be required by the Act to undergo a WWC Check; it will depend on whether their duties meet the definition of 'child-related work' as defined in the Act.

Contractors

The Administration Leader will assess the duties to be performed by contractors to determine whether they constitute 'child-related work' and will therefore require a WWC Check.

Volunteers

The Act will require certain volunteers who engage in 'child-related work' in schools to undergo a WWC Check. The Act exempts parents who are volunteering in activities in which his/her child ordinarily participates from requiring a WWC Check. 'Parent' includes the spouse or domestic partner of the father or mother of the child, or a person who has custody of the child.

Volunteers will be required to present a WWC check for:

- participation in overnight excursions, incursions and camps
- participation in swimming programs
- involvement with the supervision of students who are not closely related to them as defined by Crimes(Family Violence) Act 1987
- membership of Board of Governors
- involvement in any other events where it is deemed appropriate by the Board of Governors or College of Teachers

The Administration Leader on request by College or Teachers or Board of Governors may enquire on the status of a WWC card at any time by visiting www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren and entering a WWC Check unique number, alternatively telephone 1300 652 879.

Student Classroom Teachers

As from 31 December 2007, student teachers must have applied for a WWC Check prior to commencing a practicum in a School. As student teachers do not receive payment for undertaking a practicum, a volunteer WWC Check may be accepted.

PROCEDURE FOR MAINTAINING THE WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REGISTER

- All staff are required to have a Working with Children Check. The Administration Leader will determine whether a Working with Children Check is required for volunteers or contractors.
- The applicant's Working with Children Check will be sighted prior to the commencement of their engagement by the school and a photocopy kept in the 'Working with Children Check Register' in expiry date order.
- Working with Children Check holders will be notified of the impending expiry 30 days prior to expiry date.
- Once the expiry date has been reached, a new Working with Children Check will need to be sighted and a photocopy taken prior to the applicant's continuing engagement with the School.
- The Administration Leader will be notified of any non-compliant individuals so that appropriate action can be taken immediately.