

Working with Children Policy

Purpose:

To minimise risk of harm to students by requiring staff and volunteers of Koonwarra Village School to provide evidence that they have appropriate approvals to work with children in accordance with current legislation and in-line with the Child Safe Standards in Ministerial Order 870.

Scope:

All KVS Staff & volunteers (as well as contractors attending school during school hours)

Implemented by:

School Coordinator

Approved by:

KVS Board

Definition

The Working with Children (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.

Overview

Koonwarra Village School will assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers 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 working with children. 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.

From 1 August 2017, a Check is required whether contact with children is supervised or not. Under the *Working with Children Act 2005* ('the Act'), people who are doing **child-related work** and who are not exempt need a Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers.

Child related work is work within one or more of the occupational fields defined in the Act where contact with a child is direct and part of a person's duties.

There are several situations listed in the *Working with Children Act 2005* (the Act) where people doing **child-related work** are exempt and do not need a WWC Check. The exemptions in the Act are described in the Exemptions section below:

Responsibilities

Staff

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

Teachers & Casual Relief Teachers

- Teachers must have a valid VIT registration card
- Proof of identity based on the following standard
<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/enablers/confirmation-identity>
- At least two positive reference checks completed before employment commences

Non-teaching staff

- WWC Checks are required by all employed staff at Koonwarra Village School whether or not working directly with children or supervised by a teacher.

Contractors

- WWC Checks are required by all Contractors who will be regularly working on the school grounds during school hours, whether or not supervised by a teacher.

Volunteers

It is the responsibility of the School Coordinator to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons volunteer in the school. The School Coordinator must be satisfied that the person meets the required Checks that include:

- A valid Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice.
- WWC Checks are required by all volunteers who will be working with students for school activities 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. This includes parents that are driving the school bus or driving their own car as part of a school excursion. Exemptions are listed below.
- A volunteer can commence work in Koonwarra Village 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.
- WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

Maintaining records

A copy of the staff member, contractor or volunteer's WWC Check will be kept on the file at the school and recorded on the Koonwarra Village School WWC register which is maintained by Administration.

Koonwarra Village School will ensure staff members, contractors and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check card and will add expiry dates to a central calendar to allow monitoring of their expiry; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year.

It is the responsibility of the employees or volunteers to:

- provide Koonwarra Village School with the successful WWC Check card or current VIT registration card prior to commencement
- notify the School Coordinator 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 or VIT registration has been suspended.
- apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.

Exemptions

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check. Koonwarra Village School reserves the right to require an exempted individual to have a WWC Check if the School Coordinator considers it necessary in the circumstances.

Parents volunteering in an activity with their child

Parents volunteering in an activity in which their child participates or normally participates, are exempt from needing a WWC Check except for the scenarios listed under the Volunteer section. **Example:** *Emily has volunteered to make and fit costumes for other children in her daughter's school play. As Emily's daughter usually participates in the school play, Emily does not need a Check, even if her daughter does not attend all of the play rehearsals or performances.*

Family members and people who are closely related to the child

Family members closely related to each child in the child-related work are exempt from the WWC Check.

'Closely related' to a child means:

- parent
- spouse or domestic partner
- step-parent
- mother-in-law or father-in-law
- grandparent
- uncle or aunt
- brother or sister, including half siblings, step siblings, brother-in-law or sister-in-law

The exemption does not apply for the scenarios listed under the Volunteer section.

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](#)

Related Documentation

Child Safe Standards Statement

WWC Register

Employment Terms & Conditions

Related Policies

- On-Site Supervision of Students Policy
- Off-Site Supervision of Students Policy