



Working With Children (WWC) and Suitability Check Policy

Rationale

The Working with Children (WWC) Check policy assists Hesket Primary School in the protection of our students and maintains a safe environment by ensuring any person engaged in child-related work (paid or unpaid) is compliant with the *Working with Children Act 2005*.

Aims

The intent of this policy is to outline which positions at Hesket Primary School require a WWC Check and the process to be followed.

Definitions

Child - a person who is under the age of 18 years.

WWC Check - the WWC Check verifies a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies. The WWC Check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time the cardholder continues to be checked for new relevant offences or findings. The WWC Check is administered by the Department of Justice and Regulation.

Requirements

A WWC Check is required for positions that:

- involve direct contact with enrolled students of Hesket Primary School on a regular everyday basis
- involve direct contact with children that is not directly supervised by a Hesket Primary School staff member
- does not qualify for an exemption as listed under the *Working with Children Act (2005)*.

Further information about the application process is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation webpage (<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>).

Actions

The candidate must:

- complete a Working with Children Check application form. The forms are available online (<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>) or at Australia Post outlets in Victoria
- Note: Under the section marked 'Details of Organisation', candidates should ensure they state Hesket Primary School.**
- not undertake 'child-related work' at Hesket Primary School if their application is deemed unsuccessful
- if the applicant passes the Check they will be sent a successful Assessment Notice, followed by a WWC Check card two to three weeks later
- supply a receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC Check card before commencing work/volunteering at Hesket Primary School
- direct any queries to the Principal
- cover any associated costs of the WWC Check card.

The school must:

- identify all staff/volunteers who require a Working with Children Check
- ensure existing staff and volunteers are informed of the requirement to undergo the check
- ensure prospective staff and volunteers have passed a WWC Check before commencement
- check the card's validity on the Department of Justice and Regulation webpage
- photocopy the WWC card with details updated on the school register (if individual is a staff member, copy to be kept on the staff member's personnel file)
- ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWC Check card at all times.

Staff members must:

- provide the successful WWC Check card prior to commencement of employment
- notify the office if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence
- apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.

A staff member or volunteer is required to undertake a WWC Check even if they have already completed a police records check.

Information gathering for the purposes of assessing suitability

Under legislation schools must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record information about a person who they are proposing to engage in child-connected work, in accordance with legal requirements and the school's own policy. This may include:

- confirming identity e.g. drivers licence or other photo identification
- WWC Check
- VIT teacher registration
- confirming professional qualifications
- National Police Record Check
- personal references that address the persons suitability for the job and working with children.

Evaluation

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

References

Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

- Further information is available from the Department of Justice and Regulation Working with Children webpage (<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>) or the Working with Children Information Line on 1300 652 879

What is the difference between a WWC Check and a Police Records Check?

A Police Records Check gives information about a person's past criminal record and is only valid at the time of issue. The WWC Check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time, cardholders continue to be checked for new relevant offences or disciplinary findings from professional bodies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching. In addition, not all criminal offences are relevant to the WWC Check. Broadly, the WWC Check considers serious sexual and violent drug offences.

FLOWCHART for WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

NB:
 It is mandatory that all Locally Employed staff and ES staff hold current Working with Children Checks. Volunteers and contractors require WWCC if involved in work that brings them in direct contact with students and this contact is not directly supervised.

Business Manager has primary responsibility for checking and processing WWCCs.
 All Administration staff are also responsible for fully implementing this process in the event of the Business Manager's absence or at the instruction of the Business Manager.

