Stella Maris Primary School

School Visitors/ Volunteers and Working With Children Policy

Rationale

The safety of the children is a paramount responsibility of the school community. Therefore, it is essential to monitor the people who enter the school. Visitors working with children must have a current Working With Children Card. The security of the school and the school’s resources must be maintained. A record of who is present in the school is needed in case it is necessary to call an evacuation of the school as part of our Emergency Management Procedures. (Refer to Emergency Management Policy.)

Not everyone who has contact with children needs a Working with Children (WWC) Check.

Under the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act), only people who are doing child-related work and who are not exempt need a WWC Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers.

What is child related work?
The Act defines children as anyone under the age of 18. Child-related work involves contact with a child that is unsupervised, direct and a part of the person’s duties. Child-related work is an activity undertaken in any of the services, bodies or places referred to in the Act as ‘occupational categories’.
Child-related work for ministers of religion has a different meaning under the Act. Please go to the section below under Ministers of religion and child-related work for full details.

You do not need a WWC Check if you:

work in an unpaid private/domestic arrangement for family and friends
supervise a student in practical training organised by their educational institution
take part in an activity with a child in the same way that a child participates e.g. as other players in a chess team.

You do need a WWC Check if you meet ALL 6 criteria listed below.
1. You are an adult working with under 18 year olds.
2. You are working as one of the following:

- an employee
- a self-employed person or an independent contractor
- a volunteer
- a supervisor of child employees (where the child is under 15 years of age) pursuant to the Child Employment Act 2003
- a participant in practical training through an educational or vocational course
- a participant in unpaid community work under a court order
- an officer of a body corporate
- a member of a committee of management of an unincorporated body
- a member of a partnership
• a minister of religion* or someone performing duties of a religious vocation

*Please read ‘Ministers of religion and child-related work’ for full details on the special obligations under the Act for ministers.

3. You are working in any of the occupational fields listed in the Act. Go to Occupational fields for the full list.

4. Your work involves direct contact with children, which means you are able to talk face-to-face or have physical contact with children.

5. Your contact with children is part of your duties i.e. not incidental to your work

6. Your contact with children is not directly supervised by another person.

Direct supervision means immediate and personal supervision. It is possible for the person supervising the contact with children to leave the room briefly for example to take a phone call.

Implementation

People visiting the school must sign an entry in the Visitor’s Book, located in the office.

This applies to:

• Parent Helpers/ volunteers
• Tradesmen and Tradeswomen
• The Handyman
• Guest speakers
• Visiting Teachers
• Ministers of Religion

This does not apply to:

• People visiting the office are only e.g. For deliveries
• Parents dropping off and picking up their children before and after school

Details of the date, badge number, name, arrival and departure times and the reason for the visit, must be recorded.

New visitors to the school are welcomed and the procedure for wearing a visitor’s badge are explained.

Once signed in the visitor is given a visitor’s badge which they are expected to wear.

Staff are expected to ensure that all parents assisting in the room follow these procedures.

Staff are expected to politely ask any visitors to return to the office to sign in, if they do not have a visitor’s badge.

When leaving the school, visitors are to return to the office, sign out and return their badge.
**Working With Children Card**

The Admin staff will keep a record of people with current Working With Children Cards.

This will consist of a photocopy of the WWCC, kept in a folder in the Principal's Office.

Visitors without Working With Children Cards or Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration may not work with children at Stella Maris.

A WWCC is required for all volunteers over 18 years of age in the school, such as on excursions, camps, sporting events or sports coaching, elective programs or student workshops. If parent, parish volunteers or contractors are assisting or working in the school and are not talking with children face-to-face or being physically close enough to interact with a child, then he/she may be able to do so without a WWCC if given permission by the school principal or delegate.

**Volunteers**

All volunteers in the school must have a WWCC. Volunteers must be inducted into working within the school by attending the Classroom Helpers Course, run by the Literacy leaders.

**Ministers of Religion**

All ministers of religion are required to get a WWC Check unless the contact they have with children is only occasional and always incidental to their work.

Child-related work for ministers of religion is defined more broadly than for everyone else. For ministers, child-related work is not limited to work involving direct and unsupervised contact with children. Any contact with children, unless it is only occasional and incidental, is enough to trigger the requirement to get checked. This would include having children present in their congregation, or attendance at schools or children’s camps, even when all their contact with children is supervised.

The only time a minister does not require a WWC Check is when any contact with children is only occasional and never a part of the minister’s normal duties. This might occur, for example, for ministers with purely administrative roles within a church’s bureaucracy.

**School Employees**

All qualified teaching staff are exempt from WWCC as they already have undergone National Criminal Record Checks to obtain teacher registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Employed contractors (eg. tradespeople such as cleaners, plumbers and builders) who are likely to be in school property during school hours for more than 5 days of the school year, are required to obtain a WWCC.


This policy was ratified in September 2008

This policy will be reviewed biannually

This policy was last reviewed in 2016