Working with
Children Check Policy
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PREAMBLE

All policy, protocols and procedures flow from the St Andrews Christian College Mission Statement:

“To educate our students so that they are well skilled, understand life on the basis of biblical truth, and are motivated to walk with God and serve Him in their lives, so that they will be a positive Christian influence in the world.”

POLICY DOCUMENT INFORMATION

TITLE: Working with Children Check Policy

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

PURPOSE: To provide policy and direction for all the College Community.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

OH&S Policy
Staff Code of Practice
Student Wellbeing Policy
Visitors Policy

KEY DATES

ISSUE DATE: May 2016

REVIEW DATE: 2018 or as legislation dictates
1. RATIONALE

In providing an environment of safety and well-being for the community at St Andrews Christian College, the College will take steps to ensure that all persons employed by the College are suitable people to be involved in ‘child related work’ as outlined in the Working with Children Act 2005.

The Working with Children Check (WWCC) helps to keep children safe by preventing those who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either paid or volunteer work.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Interview of Prospective Employees

All prospective employees are to be asked of any factors that may affect their employment. The following question is an example of what could be asked during an interview:

‘Are you aware of any factor that may emerge on your Working With Children / National Criminal History Record check, or any other matter that you know about that may affect your employment, or preclude you from employment, with St Andrews Christian College which is an institution primarily engaged in working with children?’

3. PROCESS

Employment with St Andrews Christian College will not be offered to any person prior to a current WWCC / NCHRC (Working With Children Check / National Criminal History Record Check) being provided to the Principal. A provisional offer of employment will be made conditional on the successful applicant being able to provide a check to the College. Prospective employees are to be advised of this conditional offer. A provisional offer will be held open for a 3 week period. A database recording the date of an employee receiving a WWCC / NCHRC will be maintained by the PA to the Principal. If prospective employees are required to undertake a check with the Victorian Institute of Teaching or other regulatory body, then St Andrews Christian College will not pay the administrative costs. However, if the prospective employee or current employee is requested by the College to obtain a WWCC / NCHRC, then St Andrews Christian College will pay administrative costs.

If a cardholder’s WWCC expires, the individual, whether an employee or a volunteer, must stop all child related work immediately until they have renewed their WWCC.

3.1 Teachers

All teachers registered with the Victorian Institute of Teachers from 2006 will have obtained a NCHRC as part of their application for registration. All teaching staff are registered with VIT, and undergo ongoing monitoring that satisfies Working with Children Check requirements, and are therefore exempt.

3.2 Non-Teaching Staff

All Support Staff who have not had a Working with Children Check will be required to undertake a WWCC.

The College will pay the administration fee. The WWCC is valid for five years and is transferable between employers or volunteer organisations. The WWCC is unique because it is monitored on an ongoing basis – this means that as a holder of a WWCC, the individual person’s status will continue to be checked for any new relevant offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies.
3.3 Extra-Curricular Staff
Counsellors/Music Instrumental teachers/Sport/Coaching and Tuition Services/Support Services for Students/OSHC

All people coming to St Andrews to work with our students must have a WWCC before commencing such work.

3.4 Contractors and Trades
Refer to St Andrews Christian College ‘Visitors Policy’.

3.5 Parent/Volunteers
If a parent is involved in a ‘one-off’ activity with students at the school in which their own child is involved, they do NOT require a WWCC. This parent must be under direct supervision of the teacher of the class.

There are many cases where a parent / volunteer cannot ensure they will be under the direct supervision of the teacher for the entirety of an event (e.g. excursions where parents may assist by overseeing a small group of students for toilet visits, short walks, or emergency vehicle transport). Because of these uncertainties, all parents / volunteers must have a WWCC prior to attending any such event.

This includes, but is not limited to:

• Regular classroom help or school activities.
• Classroom help / incursions where children may require assistance in walking away from the supervision of the teacher – e.g. music lessons, learning assistance, Reception / Sickbay, toilet visits.
• If a parent volunteers in a class or activity that his or her child does not ordinarily participate in.
• All excursions, overnight camps, teaching of swimming lessons, transport of students without staff present, extracurricular activities such as sporting teams must have a WWCC.

Before any parent / volunteer works in the classroom, they must sign the Visitors’ Book at Reception and wear a Visitor’s Identification Badge. Parents / volunteers must ‘sign-out’ at Reception on completion of duties.

3.6 Accredited drivers under the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 (Vic)
An accredited driver under Division 6 of part IV of the above legislation must get a WWCC if undertaking child related work. All bus drivers commissioned by St Andrews Christian College are therefore required to have a WWCC. When buses for excursions or camps are booked, the booking officer will ask specifically for drivers who have a valid WWCC.

Reception Staff at St Andrews Christian College will keep a record of all parents / volunteers with a WWCC.

Teachers will fully supervise any parent / volunteer help in their class and will check that parents / volunteers have obtained a WWCC.

The Working with Children Check is a free service for volunteers and can be obtained online and lodged with a participating Australia Post outlet.
4. **WWCC Register**

Records of WWCC details are processed and stored as follows:

- Letter is received from Department of Justice (VIC), or physical card is sighted and photocopied by office staff.
- Details of parents/guardians are entered into the student database (SAS). This includes card number, card type and expiry date. Details received from those that are not student contacts are entered into an Excel document/register.
- Hard copies of all letters/card photocopies are filed in the principal’s filing cabinet/WWCC file.
APPENDIX 1 — Working With Children Check General Information Guide

What is the Working with Children Check?
The Working with Children Check (the Check) helps protect children from physical and sexual harm. By screening a person’s criminal and professional conduct records, the Check aims to prevent people who may harm children from working with them.

Who needs a Check?
Under the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act), you need a Check only if you meet ALL of the following six conditions for child-related work:
1. You are an adult volunteering or paid to work with children aged under 18 years of age.
2. You are working with children in one of the services, places or bodies listed in the Act as ‘Occupational fields’.
3. Your work involves direct contact with children, which means you are able to talk face-to-face or have physical contact with children.
4. The contact you have with children is part of your duties.
5. Your contact with children is not directly supervised by another person.
6. You are not exempt from having a Check*

*Details are on the Working with Children website, under 'Exemptions'.

It is an offence to start child-related work without applying for a Check first.
Your organisation is also committing an offence if they ask you to start child-related work before you have applied for a Check.

Ministers of religion
All ministers of religion are now required to pass the Check unless the contact they have with children is only occasional and always incidental to their work. Child-related work for ministers 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.

Full details are on the Working with Children website, under ‘Who needs a Check?’

How do I apply?
To apply for a Check:
- fill in the online form on the Working with Children website, under ‘Apply for a Check’
- print out the application summary and receipt
- lodge the summary and receipt at a participating Australia Post retail outlet, along with 100 points of identification, a passport-size and quality photo, and the non-refundable fee for an Employee Check. Volunteer Checks are free.

It is an offence to use a Volunteer Check for paid child-related work.

Can I work during the screening process?
The Act allows most people to do child-related work during the screening process. However, by law, you must not if you:
- have been charged with, convicted or found guilty of a serious sexual, violent or drug offence listed in clause 2 of Schedule 3 of the Act
- have been given a Negative Notice and not subsequently passed the Check
- will be supervising a child in employment under the Child Employment Act 2003
- will be working in a service regulated by the Children’s Services Regulations 1996 or in an education and care service under the Education and Care Services National Law (Victoria)
- are required to report or be supervised under the:
  - Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004
  - Serious Sex Offenders Monitoring Act 2005
  - Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) Act 2009.

Ask your organisation about working during the screening process, as some organisations only allow applicants to work after they have passed the Check.
What is checked?
You are screened for serious sexual, violent and drug offences and adverse professional conduct reports made by the agencies listed in the Act. The list of offences is on our website.

The protection of children is the paramount consideration for any decision made under the Act.

How do I know if I have passed the Check?
The Department of Justice & Regulation notifies both you and your organisation if you pass the Check.
The Check is valid for five years unless the department suspends or revokes it.
You must apply to renew your Check before it expires if you want to continue doing child-related work.

Sample WWC Check card

What if I don’t pass the Check?
If the department believes you pose an unjustifiable risk to children, it will notify you that it intends to prohibit you from working with children by issuing you an Interim Negative Notice. This gives you the opportunity to write to the department and ask it to consider the reasons why you think you should pass the Check.
If, after the department considers your reasons, you fail the Check, the department will issue you with a Negative Notice prohibiting you from working with children.

What if I have a criminal record or an adverse professional conduct report?
Not all offences and adverse professional conduct decisions mean that you pose an unjustifiable risk to the safety of children.

Whether you pass or fail the Check depends on the type of adverse professional conduct report, the offence you have committed, and the circumstances surrounding these matters.

More Information
Website  www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au
Email  workingwithchildren@justice.vic.gov.au
Customer Support Team  1300 652 879
8.30am–5pm, Monday–Friday (except public holidays)
TTY  13 36 77
Speak & Listen  1300 555 727

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 and ask them to contact the Working with Children Customer Support Team.
Translations  Download translations of this publication from our website.
Large print  Email workingwithchildren@justice.vic.gov.au.

This information is intended as a general guide only. It is not intended to be given as legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. It is recommended that you obtain legal advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

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Document available:

Additional language translations available: