



Working with Children Checks Policy

Rationale:

The Victorian Government has introduced child safe standards for organisations that work with children. Children have the right to be safe and protected. Child abuse, and arrangements that allow it to occur, will not be tolerated. This policy is intended to comply with the new minimum standard for school registration set out in Ministerial Order 870. Bonbeach Primary School is committed to child safety and to our children to being principled, caring, balanced members of our community. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of our children and have zero tolerance of child abuse.

Aims:

- To ensure children under our care are protected from being exposed to inappropriate people;
- To ensure all school staff (as defined below) engaged in 'child related work' with our students and who are required to have Working with Children Checks, do so;
- To ensure that our school complies with the relevant Acts and laws and Ministerial Orders; and
- To provide an environment that is safe.

Definition:

In line with Ministerial Order 870:

"school staff" for the purpose of this policy refers to an individual working in a school environment who is:

- a) employed under Part 2.4 of the Education, Training and Reform (ETR) Act in the government teaching service; or
- b) employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act; or
- c) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

"school environment" means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the School Council or Principal for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a) a campus of the school;
- b) online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- c) other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

"volunteer" means any person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work, without payment or reward. School work means:

- a) carrying out the functions of a school council;
- b) any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school;
- c) any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council;
- d) providing any assistance in the work of any school;

- e) attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support.

Implementation:

- All school staff must undergo Working with Children Checks prior to commencing work. This includes volunteers (e.g. those involved in school camps, excursions, sleep-overs, teaching of swimming lessons, transport of students without staff members present, volunteering in the classroom, extra-curricular activities such as school sporting teams etc.) and contracted service providers as outlined in the above definition;
- All teaching staff members registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, undergo ongoing monitoring that satisfies Working with Children Check requirements, and are therefore exempt. Police officers are also exempt;
- School Council does not pay for Working with Children Checks. Working with Children Checks last for 5 years and are currently free of charge for volunteers;
- All people required to have Working with Children Checks are issued a Working with Children Check Card which School Council expects them to display on their person at all practicable times when working or volunteering at the school or during school related activities; and
- Administration will maintain a record of volunteers with up to date Working with Children Checks.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring all volunteers have a current Working With Children Check.

Volunteer

The volunteer has responsibility for applying for a Working With Children Check and ensuring that a current check is provided to the Office.

Office Staff

The administration staff will process and maintain an up to date register of volunteers who meet requirements, and will ensure this is shared with all classroom teachers in a timely manner.

Classroom teachers

Teachers must ensure that any person who volunteers in the classroom has a current Working With Children Check and is listed on the Office register provided to the teachers. Staff will regularly review the list provided from the Office.

Related document:

Flow Chart for Working with Children Check.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, or as required due to changes in relevant Acts, Laws or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.

Approval:

This policy was approved by the School Council 13 September 2016.

Timeline for implementation:

We are working towards a full implementation by 31st December.