



KINDNESS RESILIENCE RESPECT

Working with Children Check Procedure

Rationale

Fitzroy North Primary 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 WWCC e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

In addition to a WWC Check, Fitzroy North Primary School may also require a criminal record check. This may be considered necessary when certain offences are relevant to the duties of the volunteer or staff member, for example checking for dishonesty offences may be required for a role that involves managing finances or petty cash.

Purpose

To minimise risk of harm to students by requiring staff and volunteers of Fitzroy North Primary school to provide evidence that they have appropriate approvals to work with children in accordance with legislation and Department policy.

The FNPS policy is aligned with DET and the changes to the working with children ACT 2005 (Act) as commenced on 1 August, 2017.

As aligned with the Act, the changes do not affect the requirements for individuals who are engaged in 'child-related' work to having a WWC check. 'Child related work' is any work that involves 'direct contact' with a child that is part of the persons work. It does not include occasional direct contact with a child that is incidental to the work the person is performing at the school. A WWC check is required regardless of whether they are being supervised by a teacher or another adult with a WWC check.

Vocabulary

Direct Contact – with children can be expanded to include oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact.

Implementation

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

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Suitability_for_employment.pdf

To maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism in our school, Fitzroy North Primary school will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx>

Fitzroy North Primary school will adhere to the Department procedures for the conduct of criminal records checks for all school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and WWC Check to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

Volunteers



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Definition

In addition to the Act and the stipulation of direct contact, WWC Checks are required by all volunteers and paid contractors (such as handiman, etc) 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. See section 3.5 below for a list of exemptions.

Commencing volunteering

A volunteer can commence work in Fitzroy North Primary 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.

Working with Children Check

The 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.

To be a volunteer at Fitzroy North Primary School a valid Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:

- valid for 5 years
- transferable between volunteer organisations
- free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

Note: WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

Maintaining records

A copy of the staff member or volunteer's WWC Check will be kept on the file at the school.

Fitzroy North Primary School will implement procedures to ensure staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check card; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year. When new volunteers or another person (for example contractor) commence work or volunteering with the school they will need to provide a WWC check before they are granted any access to the school.

It is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to:

- provide Fitzroy North Primary School with their successful WWC Check card prior to commencement
- notify the principal 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 has been suspended.
- apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.

Privacy

Fitzroy North Primary school will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*.



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Exemptions

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check.

Fitzroy North Primary school reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWC Check if the principal considers it necessary in the circumstances.

The exempt categories are:

Student volunteers

A student who is 18 or 19 years of age is exempt from the WWC Check for volunteer work organised by or held at the same educational institution they attend.

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.

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.

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](#)

LINKS AND REFERENCES

School Policy Advisory Guide:

- [Volunteer Checks](#)
- [Volunteer Workers](#)

DET Human Resources:

- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)



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External Links:

- [Victorian Institute of Teaching](#)
- [Working with Children Check](#)

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or more often if necessary due to changes in legislation or circumstance.



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FLOWCHART for WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

