

POLICY STATEMENT**WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK**

PURPOSE:

The Working with Children Checks coupled with Police Checks for Teachers, completed as part of VIT Registration, ensure a safe environment for our students and are critical to maintaining high standards of professional conduct.

OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that all employees and volunteers involved in school activities are responsible and of sound character.
- The Working with Children Check aims to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, serious violence or serious drug offences and findings from certain professional disciplinary bodies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).
- To ensure that all adults (people over the age of 18) who enter the school know they need to hold, and present to the office, a valid WWC Check card and to have signed Tecoma Primary School's Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- To keep an up to date register of all adults who hold a current WWC Check and have signed the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION:**Teachers:**

In order to maintain high levels of safety for all students and a commitment to maintaining high standards of professional conduct, it is a DET requirement that all employees and volunteers have a current and satisfactory criminal records check.

All rehired, promoted or transferred teaching staff, and Casual Relief Teachers (CRT's) shall produce a Registration Card from the VIT acknowledging a current Criminal Records Check.

ES staff and other paid employees and Student Teachers are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check.

All staff must be familiar with and have signed a copy of the Tecoma Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Contractors:

All contractors (Cleaners, building contractors, etc.,) tutors, music teachers, Robotics Teachers, Chess Teachers, etc, who enter the school ground must sign in at the office and present a valid WWCC Card, which will be copied and entered on the school WWCC & Code Of Conduct Register. As part of their induction they will be asked to read and sign the Tecoma Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Visitors and Volunteers:

Changes to the *Working with Children Act 2005 (Act)* came into effect on 1 August 2017.

There are two key changes to the Act:

- The definition of 'direct contact' with children has been expanded to include oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact; and
- A WWC Check is now required for anyone engaging in 'child-related work' regardless of whether contact with a child is supervised by another person or not. This means that a volunteer or visitor who is supervised by a teacher must have a WWC Check if they engage in 'child related work'.
- **Tecoma Primary School requires all volunteers over the age of 18 to hold a current Working with Children Check with no exemptions.**

This includes:

- Excursion Helpers
- Camp Helpers
- Uniform Shop Volunteers
- Classroom Volunteers
- Reading Room Volunteers
- Parent Network members
- anyone engaging in 'child-related work' as part of their role or duties, whether an employee, volunteer, visitor or contractor must have a WWC Check regardless of whether they are being supervised by a teacher or another adult with a WWC Check.
- Secondary school students, under the age of 18, who are working in the school or at sporting events, are deemed as children, and thus cannot hold a WWC. They will be supervised at all times by a DET employee. This includes:
 - Cross aged tutoring
 - Work experience students
 - Sports coaching
- Pre-service teachers must also hold a current WWC Check card and have signed the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct, on commencement of their placement.

The process to receive a Working With Children Check is summarised below:

- Fill in an online application form online- www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au
- Gather your proof of identification documents
- Lodge your application at a participating Australia Post Retail outlet, where they will take a photo of you.

There are no fees for a Volunteer check and it generally takes 3 to 6 weeks to be processed.

EVALUATION

This policy will be evaluated and monitored particularly in regard to changes in relevant legislation. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.