



4.2.20

St Leonard's Primary School Working with Children Policy

Rationale:

- The Victorian Government through the Department of Justice has introduced the “Working with Children Act 2005” which has distinct implications for all volunteers at St Leonard’s.
- The requirement for WWC Checks commenced in April 2006. It seeks to prevent those who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either paid or volunteer work. The *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)* (Act) requires that people who work or volunteer in child-related work apply for, and pass, a WWC Check.
- The WWC Check covers all areas of school life: administration, teachers and volunteers.
- The Working with Children Check Act has some exemptions, with teachers and sworn in police officers exempt as they are checked through other mechanisms. As well as this the Act states that those under 18 years of age are not required to get the check.

Aims:

- The WWC Check is an initiative to further improve the safety of Victoria’s children when they are participating in activities. It was developed through extensive public consultation, and aims to strike a balance between protecting children less than 18 years of age, promoting volunteering and safeguarding individuals’ rights.

Implementation:

- Under the Act, only people seeking to engage in ‘child-related work’ must apply for and obtain a WWC Check.
- Any person who has access to children in their duties will be required to obtain a Working with Children’s Check. This includes all parents who volunteer to work in the classroom, attend excursions or are doing volunteer work.
- The WWC Check is obtained by submitting an application form that is obtained from most Australia Post outlets. A passport sized photo is required when submitting the application form, along with several forms of identification. Volunteers receive their WWC Check free of charge.
- When one receives receipt of their lodgement they are asked to make a copy for the school office so that the details can be recorded on the school data base.
- When the applicant receives their WWC Check card, they are required to advise the school office who will record the details on the school’s data base. Details recorded are: Name, WWC Check card number (different from application number), WWC Check expiry date.
- Please note that a WWC Check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). Employees and volunteers must apply for a renewal 6 months prior to the expiry date of the WWC Check. The details of the renewed WWC Check must then be provided to the school.
- Similar to a licence, persons who hold a WWC Check must advise the Department of Justice of changes to their circumstances: including surname, address and any additional organisations that they work or volunteer for.
- For more information about the WWC Checks, the Department of Justice can be contacted on 1300 652 879 or visit www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

This policy was reviewed by Staff in 2015.

It will be reviewed again in 2018