

Working with Children Check Policy

General Statement:

The Working with Children (WWC) check aims to assist in protecting children from sexual or physical harm. It is designed to complement good selection, supervision and training practices (including rigorous reference checking). The intent of this procedure is to outline which positions at the school require a WWC check and the process to be followed.

To ensure school based non-teaching employees and the engagement of volunteers' proceeds in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Developments Policy.

These procedures apply to all positions at the school including:

- Non-Teaching Employees
- Volunteers
- Student Teachers

Implementation:

- a. Jackson School has established and implemented a policy to assess and verify the suitability of non-teaching employees and volunteers who intend to work in 'child-related work' to provide evidence of their suitability. This evidence is generally a Working with Children Check (WWCC); however a volunteer or non-teaching employee's occupation may exempt them from the requirement to have a WWC Check e.g. police officers and teachers. Evidence to support their claim to an exemption must be provided to the school.
- b. Jackson School is responsible for the following:
 - 1) identifying all staff who require a Working with Children check;
 - 2) ensure existing staff and volunteers are informed of the requirement to undergo the check;
 - 3) ensure prospective staff and volunteers have passed a WWC check **before commencement**;
 - 4) check the card's validity on the [Department of Justice webpage](#);

- 5) have a photocopy of the WWC card and with details updated on the school register (if individual is a staff member, copy to be kept on the staff member's personnel file) ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWC check card at all times.
- c. **The Workplace Manager** should determine whether a WWC is required based on the nature of the work, and the type of contact the volunteer worker will have with children. A WWC is not mandatory for all volunteers working at DET schools, A WWC may be required if the work is child related, and involves, or is likely to involve, regular and direct contact with a child; where the contact is not directly supervised by another employee (eg music lessons, cooking demonstrations, sports coaching)
- d. In addition to a WWC check the school may also consider it necessary that a criminal record check is conducted through the Department. This may occur when possible offences are relevant to the duties of the non-teaching employee or volunteer, for example dishonesty offences, which are not part of the WWC Check. The payment of these criminal records checks are the responsibility of the applicant.
- e. Candidates must complete a Working with Children Check application form. The forms are available online from the Department of Justice website or at Australia Post outlets in Victoria.
- f. Under the section marked 'Details of Organisation', candidates should ensure they state "Jackson School".
- g. If the applicant passes the check they will be sent a successful Assessment Notice, followed by a WWC check card 2-3 weeks later.
- h. If the applicant does not pass the check they will be given an Interim Negative Notice. The applicant can then make a submission to the Department of Justice to explain why they believe they should pass. If this submission is not successful the applicant will be issued with a Negative Notice. This means they have failed the WWC Check and cannot undertake 'child-related work' or work at Jackson School.

- h. The staff member or volunteer must:
 - 1) provide the successful WWC check card prior to commencement at Jackson School.
 - 2) notify the office if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence.
 - 3) apply for a new WWC check before their card expires.

PROGRAM:

- a. The WWCC 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.
- b. To be a non-teaching employee or a volunteer at Jackson School a Working with Children Check Card administered and provided by the Department of Justice is required.
- c. This card is:
 - 1) valid for five years (unless revoked)
 - 2) WWC check to be paid personally by individual non-teaching staff and card valid to be transferable between paid employment with the school system
 - 3) free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment
 - 4) transferable between volunteer organisations

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

- d. It is an offence under the Act to engage in 'child-related work' without having applied for a WWC Check. Penalties apply to both employer and employee if procedures are not followed.
- e. A WWC check verifies a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies. During the five year term of the WWCC the cardholder will continue to be checked for new relevant offences or findings.
- f. A WWC check is required for positions that meet all of the following criteria:
 - 1) involve contact with children in connection with Jackson School
 - 2) the contact happens on a regular (everyday) basis;
 - 3) involves direct contact with children and this contact is not directly supervised; and

4) the position does not qualify for an exemption as listed under the act.

You do not need a WWC Check if you:

- supervise a student in practical training organised by their educational institution
- take part in an activity with a child in the same way that a child participates e.g. as other players in a chess team.

You do need a WWC Check if you meet ALL 6 criteria listed below.

1. You are an adult working with under 18 year olds.
2. You are working as one of the following:
 - Your contact with children is **not directly supervised** by another person (ie the teacher or other school employee) - Direct supervision means **immediate and personal supervision**. It is possible for the person supervising the contact with children to leave the room briefly for example to take a phone call.
 - an employee
 - a self-employed person or an independent contractor
 - a volunteer
 - a supervisor of child employees (where the child is under 15 years of age) pursuant to the *Child Employment Act 2003*
 - a minister of religion* or someone performing duties of a religious vocation

*Please read 'Ministers of religion and child-related work' for full details on the special obligations under the Act for ministers.

 - You are working in any of the occupational fields listed in the Act. Go to [Occupational fields](#) for the full list
 - Your work involves direct contact with children, which means you are able to talk face-to-face or have physical contact with children
 - Your contact with children is part of your duties i.e. not incidental to your work
- g. Commencement at Jackson school is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card. Any queries should be directed to the Principal. Candidates who are required to undergo a WWC check as a condition of working in the School will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from the school.
- h. A non-teaching staff member or volunteer is required to undertake a WWC check even if they have already completed a police records check.

Volunteers - unpaid (will be expected to obtain a WWCC):

A volunteer school worker is a person who without payment or reward voluntarily engages in:

- school council functions
- activities for the welfare of the school at the requests of the principal or school council
- work within the school environment eg: help on excursions, within the classrooms or school grounds

Non-teaching employee:

Is a person who has paid employment within the school environment. This can be as a new employee, through promotion from within the school or transfers from other schools.

Student Teachers:

Must have applied for a WWC Check prior to commencing a practicum in a Victorian Government School. Student teachers do not receive payment for undertaking a practicum; therefore a volunteer WWC Check may be accepted.

- g. Jackson School will take a copy of each WWCC and all copies will be collated and kept in the general office as per the Staff Registers Policy. The register will be placed on the administration network and Dropbox.
- h. A list of WWCC expiry dates will be kept so that office staff can follow up with non-teaching employees and volunteers to provide updated copies of WWCC cards to the office. The WWCC register will be updated with new card holders and expiry dates by administration staff as required.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Ratified by School Council: _____

Review Date: _____

School Council President

Jackson School Principal