

## **WWC (Working with Children) Check - Parents / Volunteers**

During excursions such as a major excursion to Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat etc. Camps and Sleepovers or any other activity you may be asked to supervise a small number of children (5 or less) and consequently we are mandated to ask that you apply for a Working With Children Check (WWC Check.)

The Victorian State Government is committed to a whole government and community approach to safeguarding children in Victoria. As part of this approach, the Victorian Government has introduced a new checking system that affects parents who volunteer to assist with school programs / activities. The WWC Check helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences.

The check is conducted at no cost for volunteers. Application Forms are available from the school office or the Post Office. When you have completed this form you will need to lodge it with Australia Post. Do not sign the form as you will need to do so when you lodge your application.

When you lodge your application, Australia Post will verify and issue to you your application receipt to prove you have applied for a WWC Check. While your application is being processed, the Act allows you to commence or continue to perform child related work.

**The school requires you to present your application receipt to the School Office before the commencement of the excursion so we can add your information to our WWC Check data base.**

We are directed that if we do not receive a copy of this card (or evidence of the Working With Children Check Application receipt) we are unable to allow that person to supervise on any excursion.

Further information can be obtained at Australia Post or by visiting the Department of Justice Website [www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren). I have visited this site myself and have included some information from it overleaf.

Thank you for volunteering.

Rob McCartney

## **About the Check**

The Working with Children (WWC) Check commenced operation in April 2006. Schools were mandated to meet its requirements as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2007.

It contributes to the safety of Victoria's children when they are being cared for, or participating in a range of activities, by seeking 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* requires that people who work or volunteer in certain child-related work apply for, and pass, a WWC Check. It aims to strike a balance between protecting children under 18 years of age, promoting volunteering and safeguarding the rights of individuals.

Applicants are checked to make sure their record does not include any criminal offences specified in the Act or findings by a specified professional disciplinary body (currently only the Victorian Institute of Teaching). Criminal offences not specified in the Act can also be considered if there is a potential link to a risk to the safety of children and exceptional circumstances may exist that justify refusal of the application.

### **Benefits of the Check**

The benefits of the WWC Check include:

- ongoing checking of a person's criminal record while the person's WWC Check is valid.
- providing employers, volunteer organisations and agencies with the ability to verify WWC Check cards at any time
- card holders do not need to apply for a new WWC Check when they change their employer or volunteer organisation, unless they are moving from volunteer to paid work. WWC Check Cards are valid for five years (unless revoked because of a relevant change in the holder's circumstances or voluntarily surrendered by the holder).

### **How to Apply**

If you have determined that you are required to apply for a Working with Children (WWC) Check and your occupational field is currently being phased in, you need to:

1. Complete a WWC Check application form. Do not sign the form as you will need to do so when you lodge your application. Application forms are available from participating Australia Post outlets or by submitting the Application Forms Request form on this website.
2. Prepare your original identification documents.
3. Organise a passport-size photograph.
4. Take your completed application form, original identification documents and passport-size photograph. There is no charge for volunteers

### **Lodging your application**

At the Australia Post outlet, the attendant will photocopy your original identification documents. You need to sign the form and Application Receipt in front of the attendant.

The Application Receipt with a unique number will be given to you once it is signed and stamped. You need to keep the Application Receipt as evidence that you have submitted your application.