

# PERANBIN PRIMARY COLLEGE



## CHILD SAFE:

## CHILD PROTECTION –

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### INTRODUCTION

All children have the right to feel safe and be safe, all of the time.

Peranbin Primary College is committed to the creation of a safe, just and respectful environment that supports wellness for all members of the school community. In this, there is a moral obligation and shared responsibility to protect the most vulnerable members of the community.

Peranbin Primary College believes that, while protecting children and young people against sexual abuse is a community wide responsibility, the school has a particular moral and legal responsibility to ensure children and young people are safe in our care and to actively and intentionally work to eliminate all forms of abusive behaviours towards children. There are also particular moral and legal obligations for us in authority to prevent, reduce and minimise child abuse and exploitation in all forms.

### 1. AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure the whole school community supports a safe environment for all children and young people.

It is based on the responsibilities of all Victorian schools in complying with the provisions of the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005*, which was enacted to assist in protecting children from sexual or physical harm by ensuring that people that work with, or care for, them are subject to a screening process. [*Working with Children Act 2005, s.1(1)*]

### 2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

The Principal

### 3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of the Working With Children Act 2005 and the Colleges Child Protection: Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure, the following definitions are to be used;

- **Children** are those under the age of 18 years
- **Child related work** is work involved in one of the occupational fields listed in the Act, and that “usually involves direct contact with a child and that contact is not directly supervised by another person.”

**Note:** “Work is not child-related work by reason only of occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.”

- **Direct contact** is any contact between a person and a child that involves:
  - Physical contact, or
  - Face to face oral communication
- **Direct supervision** is supervision of a person's contact with children rather than of their work in

general. Supervising another person's contact with children must be personal and immediate but can include a brief absence such as taking a telephone call in another room.

- **Working with Children Checks (WWCC) Employee** – There are two types of Working with Children Checks, Voluntary and Employee. Both checks are the same, however by law people doing paid child related work must have an **Employee Check** and pay the associated fee.
- **Working with Children Checks (WWCC) Volunteer** – Volunteers working with children are required to complete this check. If a person holds a Volunteer Check but will be paid for their services in a particular instance, by law the person must not use the Volunteer Check for that work. Penalties apply. The person must apply for the Employee Check before they start the paid work.

#### 4. KEY PRINCIPLES

- A safe environment is required to protect children and young people from harm and to prevent staff from abusing their position of authority and trust.
- The child and young person's ongoing safety and wellbeing must be the primary focus of all decision making.
- School leaders and staff must be fully self-aware of, and comply with, their professional obligations and responsibilities.
- The commitment to protecting children is embedded in the school's culture and responsibility for taking action is understood and accepted at all levels of the organisation.

#### 5. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy applies to the whole school community in supporting safe environments for all children and young people.

##### 5.1 Who is required to have a Working with Children Check?

At Peranbin Primary College all staff employed at the school are required to have an 'Employee Working with Children Check'. The only staff exempt from this requirement are;

- Those under the age of 18 years
- Staff who are currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching

See Appendix 1 for further information.

##### 5.2 Appointment of Staff

- New staff (paid and volunteer) are unable to commence employment at the school without a current Working with Children Check or a valid application receipt.

##### 5.3 Proof of Check

- All staff employed at the school are required to hold a Working with Children Check in accordance with the School's Child Protection: Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure, and are required to provide proof to the College in the form of a photocopy of their current Employee Working with Children Check or a valid application receipt prior to their commencement at the school. Please note: the application receipt is a valid alternative to a Working with Children Check for only 60 days.
- All other persons (except those who are exempt) are required to show their Working with Children Check on arrival at the school. This would normally occur at Reception where all visitors to the school are required to sign in. The office staff will check this against the Working with Children Check Register and add Working with Children Checks to the data base. This will require the person to provide us with a photocopy of their Working with Children Check as well as their full name, address, and date of birth.
- In the case of contractors, trades or delivery people who may not always necessarily attend Reception, they are

required to show their Working with Children Check to the Facilities Manager / Maintenance staff member when meeting on site. The Facilities Manager / Maintenance staff member will contact the office and check that the Working with Children Check is recorded on our Register, where this is not the case they will arrange for this to occur. Where the person does not have a Working with Children Check the Facilities Manager is responsible for ensuring active supervision by a staff member with a Working with Children Check or VIT registration of the person while they are on site.

- A Working with Children Check is therefore required at all times for contractors, volunteers and visitors to the school.

#### **5.4 Renewal of Check**

- Working with Children Checks are to be renewed every five years. The renewal of the Working with Children Check is the **sole responsibility** of the individual.
- The school checks the Department of Justice website annually to ensure Working with Children Checks are current.
- The individual is required to provide proof of their registration in the form of a copy of their new Working with Children registration card to the school. This copy is to be provided within 7 days of receiving it from the Department of Justice.

#### **5.5 Lapsed Check**

- Once a Working with Children Check expires a person cannot engage in any child related work until it is renewed, to do otherwise is an offence.

#### **Working with Children Check Register**

The school maintains a register of Working with Children Checks which is administered by the Payroll Administration Officer.

All persons requiring a Working with Children Check are;

- To provide a copy of their check together with their name, address and birthdate prior to commencing work or volunteering at or for the school. This information will be recorded in the school's Working with Children Check register.
- When arriving at the school persons will be required to sign in and show their Working with Children Check which will be checked against our register.
- Where we do not have a record of this Working with Children Check we will require a copy of it together with the person's name, address and birthdate which will then be added to the school's register.

Those exempt from the register are still included on the register with an explanation as to why they are exempt.

#### **5.6 Exemptions from the Working with Children Check**

- Sworn Police Officers (who are not suspended from duty)
- Persons who hold current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- Contractors, tradespeople, guest speakers, delivery people, presenters, visitors, etc attending the school for a short time or a one off situation if **DIRECTLY SUPERVISED** by a staff member holding a Working with Children check or with VIT Registration.

#### **5.7 Active Supervision for those without a Working with Children Check**

There will at times be instances where a person attending the school such as a contractor, tradesperson, delivery person, guest speaker, visitor etc. does not have a Working with Children Check and is not exempt from holding one (as per Appendix 1). In these instances;

- The person without a check, if 'directly supervised' by a staff member holding a Working with Children

Check or VIT Registration, is not required to hold one.

- The staff member responsible for organizing the visit is to ensure that the person is 'directly supervised' while at the school.
- Where a delivery is being made to a location other than the office, the Facilities Manager or a Maintenance staff member is to be contacted in order to 'directly supervise' the delivery person.
- 'Direct supervision' requires that a staff member with a Working with Children Check or VIT Registration is present with the person who does not hold the check for the time that they are at the school.

Therefore, contractors, tradespeople, guest speakers, delivery people, presenters, visitors etc. attending the school for a short time or a one off situation can be exempted in these circumstances.

### **5.8 Communication of Policy**

- All staff are made aware each year (including during induction) of, understanding and implementing the School Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure

## **6 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents

### **7 REFERENCES**

- Working with Children Act (Vic) 2005  
[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\\_act/wwca2005232/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/wwca2005232/)
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### **8 REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed at least every three years.

**Initially Ratified:** March 2018

**Next Review to be completed by:** 2020