

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC)

PURPOSE

Ripponlea Primary School (RPS) welcomes visitors and volunteers to support school programs and activities whilst taking appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students.

RPS follows guidelines set by the Department of Education and Training (DET) when it comes to requirements for suitability checks including Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for volunteers and visitors who work with children at our school. The DET's policy and guidance can be found [here](#).

POLICY

The purpose of the 'Working with Children Check' policy is to:

- comply with DET requirements regarding the screening of visitors and volunteers;
- ensure as much as possible the safety of all students participating in school activities;
- ensure as much as possible that parents and staff are confident that all reasonable steps have been undertaken to secure the safety of students participating in school activities.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: As defined by the Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional contact with children that is incidental to the work.

IMPLEMENTATION

Visitors

All visitors to the school will comply with the [RPS 'Visitors' policy](#). In brief, this policy states:

*All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) must have a valid WWC Check.*

*In some circumstances, visitors to RPS who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Check depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, RPS will require a valid WWC Check for:*

- **visitors who will be working regularly with children** during the time they are visiting, even though direct contact with children is not a central part of their normal duties
- **visitors (e.g. contractors)**, who will regularly be performing work at the school and in circumstances where they will be performing their work in an area where they will be unsupervised and around children.

Further background checks, including references, may also be requested at the discretion of the principal.

Visitors who will be working in areas away from students (e.g. a visiting auditor who will be located in the front office with administration staff) or who will be supervised and accompanied by a staff member during their visit (e.g. a Member of Parliament, a journalist, a prospective parent on a school tour) may not be required to have a WWC Check.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

Volunteers

All volunteers at the school will comply with the [RPS 'Volunteers' policy](#). In brief, this policy states:

Working with students

RPS values the many volunteers that assist in RPS classrooms, with sports events, camps, excursions, school concerts and other events and programs. To ensure that RPS is meeting its legal obligations under the Worker Screening Act and the Child Safe Standards, RPS is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working With Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that RPS is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to RPS office staff for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at RPS are required to have a WWC Check if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is **not** participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, RPS may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

Non child-related work

On some occasions, parents and other members of the RPS community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example, volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, School Council, participating in sub-committees of School Council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet outside of school hours during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

Volunteers for this type of work are not required to have WWC Clearances or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, RPS reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity or WWC Clearances, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

RELATED POLICIES

- Visitors
- Volunteers
- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting)
- Camps & Excursions
- RPS – About Our School (Values, Vision, Philosophy & Learning)

Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

Reviewed by School Council: September 2021

Next review date: June 2025