



Help for Non-English Speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Kalinda Primary School on (03) 9876 3289.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK AND SUITABILITY POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Kalinda Primary School (Kalinda PS) community understands and complies with the legal requirements for undertaking suitability checks including Working with Children Checks for volunteers and visitors who work with children in government school environments.

Kalinda PS is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Working with Children Check procedures. This policy consolidates the process that Kalinda PS has developed and implements in order to provide a safe environment and protect the emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing of its students.

Kalinda PS regards its child protection responsibilities as being of the utmost importance and so is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture. Kalinda PS is committed to supporting and upholding the Victorian Government's Child Safety Standards complying with Ministerial Order 1359. Kalinda PS acknowledges that it has a legal and moral duty to protect its students from foreseeable harm.

The Working with Children Check (WWCC) and Suitability policy 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 policy is to outline which positions at Kalinda PS require a WWCC check and the process to be followed.

This policy applies to all positions at Kalinda PS other than teaching positions, including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.

WWCC DEFINITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The Working with Children Check (WWCC):

- verification of a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies.

WWCC validity:

- 5 years (unless revoked). During this time the cardholder continues to be checked for new relevant offences or findings.

WWCC Administration:

- the WWCC is administered by the Department of Justice.

WWCC at Kalinda PS:

- at Kalinda PS a WWCC is required for any person, volunteer or paid, who engages with students in any school related/approved activity.



Child:

- a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Student:

- any child who is enrolled at the school.

Child-related work:

- involves an adult working with under 18 years old (both paid and unpaid work);
- having direct contact with children (physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact) and it is a usual part of the person's duties (and is not occasional or incidental to their work)
- A WWCC is required for anyone engaging in 'child-related work' regardless of whether contact with a child is supervised by another person or not. This means even if a volunteer or visitor is supervised by a teacher, they must still have (and provide evidence of) a WWCC if they intend to engage in 'child related work'.

A WWCC is not legally required if the person:

- qualifies for an exemption (e.g. Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher, police officer, parent whose child is participating or ordinarily participates in the relevant activity, or person working with a child who is closely related to them)
- is supervising a student in practical training organised by their educational institution
- takes part in an activity with a child in the same way that a child participates. e.g. as other players in a chess team.

For more guidance on when a WWCC is legally required, see the [Working with Children Checks](#) website.

Child-connected work:

- More broadly defined than child-related work, child-connected work is authorised by the principal, school council or Department and performed by an adult in a school environment (including online and school camps) when children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
- For child-connected work, it is up to each school to determine whether they will require WWCC Checks for individuals, based on the nature of the person's interaction with children. Each school is unique and what checks are required should reflect the risks of each individual school setting, the school community and what duties the individual will be performing.
- Schools are encouraged to develop their own specific policies and practices, keeping in mind the broad intent of the Child Safe Standards to embed a child safe culture that has zero tolerance for child abuse.
- Note: Suitability requirements for both child-related and child connected work apply to adult volunteers and visitors to the school, including contractors.

POLICY

Assessing Suitability

In assessing what suitability checks should be made, Kalinda PS will consider what (if any) level of risk is acceptable or reasonable in the circumstances and adopt appropriate risk mitigation strategies.

Strategies may include:

- considering how much time the individual spends on school premises to perform their work while children are present
- considering whether the individual will be able to move freely around the school without staff members accompanying them or in close proximity to staff members
- adding a clause in contractor service agreements about the need to comply with the Child Safe Standards
- taking reasonable precautions to supervise individuals, including their contact with children, where this is considered necessary.



| Work Category | Work Examples | Suitability Check requirements |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Child Related | <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ attendant care ▪ school camps ▪ excursions (including swimming) ▪ literacy and numeracy support ▪ homework clubs, breakfast lunch clubs and other student support activities ▪ distance education ▪ Work in an early childhood education and care service on school grounds (for example, kindergarten or playgroup) <p>Positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ classroom/library assistant ▪ sporting/musical and other extracurricular coaches ▪ canteen and uniform shop assistant ▪ allied health/NDIS therapists ▪ Department staff who are working with children ▪ Special Religious Instruction practitioners ▪ distance education ▪ Chaplains ▪ School camp or excursion support ▪ Mentors and guides from partner organisations ▪ Volunteering in the classroom (in any capacity) | <p>WWCC Required for all Child Related Activities and Positions:</p> <p>Other suitability checks may be required including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ proof of personal identity ▪ proof of professional qualifications ▪ history of working with children ▪ reference checks. <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a parent volunteering in an activity with their child or a parent or carer who is closely related to all the children they are undertaking the activity with is exempt from requiring a Working with Children Clearance under the Worker Screening Act. ▪ in this instance requiring a WWCC is at the discretion of Kalinda PS ▪ where the parent is regularly involved in the volunteer activity and working directly with children, and/or the nature of the activity poses a higher risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ overnight camps ○ swimming ○ or activities involving close contact with students then Kalinda PS will require a WWCC ▪ However, the department recommends that schools require anyone who volunteers regularly or who assists with excursions, camps or similar events obtain a Working with Children Clearance given the contact volunteers may have with other students in these situations. <p>For more information about the occupational categories that fall within the legal definition of ‘child-related’ work, refer to Working with Children Check Victoria.</p> |
| Child Connected | <p>Child Connected work is any work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present, or</p> <p>for the purposes of a school boarding premises, work authorised by the provider</p> | <p>Kalinda PS may require some or all volunteers and visitors engaged in child-connected work to have a Working with Children Check before commencing work.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the Principal to determine if a Working with Children Check is required, considering the child safety risks relevant to the person’s role. If the contact with</p> |



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| | <p>of school boarding services in a school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.</p> <p>Child Connected Activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fete/fundraising activities • working bee assistance (outside school hours) • parents and friends clubs <p>Child Connected Positions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external trades-peoples • gardening • building and grounds workers | <p>a child or children is occasional direct contact which is incidental to the work being performed, then a Working with Children clearance may be deemed unnecessary.</p> <p>Kalinda PS Principal will decide as to what suitability checks are required, but a WWCC is recommended where the visitor/volunteer will regularly be present at the school and/or children can reasonably be expected to be present.</p> |
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The Application Process

The candidate must complete an online Working with Children Check application via the Department of Justice website <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>.

Under the section marked ‘Details of Organisation’, candidates should ensure they state **Kalinda Primary School**.

If the applicant passes the check they will be sent a successful Assessment Notice, followed by a WWCC card 2-3 weeks later.

Further information about the application process is available on the Department of Justice webpage.

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 WWCC and cannot undertake ‘child-related work’ or work in the school.

Commencement

Commencement at Kalinda PS is conditional upon possession of a successful Assessment Notice or WWCC card. Any queries should be directed to the Principal.

Candidates who are required to undergo a WWCC as a condition of working or volunteering at Kalinda PS will not receive reimbursement for any costs associated with the WWCC. Payment for a WWCC is the responsibility of the applicant.

Kalinda PS will assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers who will work with children.

Police Records Check

A police records check gives information about a person’s past criminal record and is only valid at the time of issue.

Kalinda PS may require a criminal record check in addition to a WWCC. The WWCC is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time, cardholders continue to be checked for new relevant offences or disciplinary findings from professional bodies.

In addition, not all criminal offences are relevant to the WWCC. Broadly, the WWCC considers serious sexual and violent drug offences. A staff member or volunteer is required to undertake a WWCC even if they have already completed a police records check.



Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons are employed in the school.

To maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism in our school, Kalinda PS will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented.

Kalinda PS will:

- assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers who will work with children
- identify all staff who require a WWCC. This applies to all non-teaching staff (all teaching staff must have a current VIT registration).
- ensure existing staff and volunteers are informed of the requirement to obtain a WWCC.
- ensure prospective staff and volunteers have passed a WWCC before commencement at the school.
- check each person's card validity on the Department of Justice webpage, during term 2 each year.
- Keep an electronic scan and photocopy of each WWCC card and keep the details (name, card number, expiry date) updated on the school's WWCC register. Staff members will have a hard copy on their personnel file.
- ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWCC at all times.
- Card expiry dates will be monitored by the Business Manager on a regular basis.

The staff member or volunteer will:

- provide the successful WWCC prior to commencement at Kalinda PS
- notify the Business Manager and Assistant Principal if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence
- apply for a new WWCC before their card expires.

Exemptions

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWCC. Kalinda PS, nevertheless, reserves the right to require a WWCC check if the Principal considers it necessary in the circumstances.

The exempt categories are:

- Student volunteers - A student who is 18 or 19 years of age is exempt from the WWCC check for volunteer work organised by the educational institution which they attend
- Teachers with Victorian Institute of Teaching with permission to teach
- Police Officers

School Register

All staff who require a WWCC check will have a hard copy of their WWCC card on their personnel file and the details (name, card number and expiry date) recorded electronically in the Staff DET Training Register.

All other personnel, volunteers and paid workers, will have a hard copy of their WWCC card kept in a central WWCC folder, filed in the administration filing cabinet. An electronic register of these details (name, card number and expiry date) will be saved to the administration network.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- [Working with Children Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Working with Child Regulations 2016](#)
- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment \(Child Safe Standards\) Bill 2015](#)
- [Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises Ministerial Order 1359](#)
- [Worker Screening Act 2020](#)



Kalinda Primary School No. 5121

REFERENCES

[Volunteers in Schools](#)
[Working with Children Check](#)
[Department of Justice – Protecting Children and Families](#)

RELATED KALINDA PS POLICIES

Philosophy
Kalinda PS Duty of Care Policy
Kalinda PS Child Safety Policy
Kalinda PS Child Safety Code of Conduct
Kalinda PS Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
Kalinda PS Visitors and Volunteer Policy
Kalinda PS Child Protection Reporting Obligations

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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|----------------------------|------------|
| Policy last reviewed | March 2023 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | March 2026 |

Flowchart for Working with Children Checks

Working With Children Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools

Is the person working or volunteering at the school or in a school activity when children are present or reasonably expected to be present (online or face-to-face)?

Yes

The contact with a child is indirect and occasional or incidental to the work performed

For example: fete/fundraising activities, tradespeople, working bee, parents and friends clubs, etc.

This is **child-connected work** defined as:

- work authorised by the school and performed by an adult in a school environment (including online and offsite school activities, such as school camps) while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

It is the responsibility of the principal to determine if a Working with Children Clearance is required, considering the child safety risks relevant to the person's role.

In assessing what suitability checks should be undertaken, schools must consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role and the school's visitors and/or volunteers policy.

For further information see the [Working with Children Checks and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors Policy](#)

No

A Working With Children Clearance is not legally required but the school should consider the child safety risks and any other suitability checks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role (e.g. qualifications, identity, criminal record check if working with finances etc) and the school's visitors and/or volunteers policy.

Is the person exempt from a Working with Children Clearance?

A person is exempt from needing a Working with Children Clearance if they are any one of the following:

- a registered teacher in Victoria
- a parent volunteering in an activity with their child
- under the age of 18
- a student who is 18 or 19 years old volunteering or on placement, organised by an educational institution
- closely related to all the children they are undertaking the activity with
- a Victoria Police or Australian Federal Police officer

Even if a person is legally exempt they may still be required to get a Working with Children Clearance if the school requires it as part of their Visitors Policy or Volunteers Policy. This ensures that volunteers and visitors are adequately screened, considering the child safety risks relevant to the person's role.

The department **recommends that schools require anyone who volunteers regularly or who assists with excursions, camps or similar events** obtain a Working with Children Clearance given the contact volunteers may have with other students in these situations.

The contact usually involves direct work with a child (face to face or online)

Examples of child-related work activities

- Attendant care
- School camps
- Excursions (including swimming)
- Literacy and numeracy support
- Homework clubs, breakfast clubs, lunch clubs, leadership or cultural workshops and other student support activities
- Distance education
- an Early Childhood Education and Care service on school grounds (e.g. kinder or playgroup)

Examples of child-related work roles

- Classroom or library assistant
- Sporting, musical or other extracurricular coaches
- Canteen and uniform shop assistant
- Allied health or NDIS therapists
- Department staff who are working with children
- Special Religious Instruction instructors
- Chaplains
- School camp or excursion support
- Mentors and guides from partner organisations
- Volunteering in the classroom (in any capacity)

This is **child-related work** defined as work that:

- involves an adult working with children under 18 years old (both paid and unpaid work)
- usually involves direct contact with a child or children, including physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact and
- the contact with the child or children is a usual part of the person's duties and is not occasional direct contact which is incidental to their work.

Working with Children Clearance are legally required for child-related work unless an exemption applies

Schools must **also** consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer or visitor's role in assessing what **other** suitability checks should be undertaken.



KALINDA PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Volunteer Name:

Phone:

Email:

As a volunteer at Kalinda Primary School (Kalinda PS) I agree to:

1. Work as a volunteer in the area/s of:
2. Discuss any concerns in relation to school matters with the appropriate staff member or a member of the Principal team of the school.
3. Keep all school related matters confidential and under no circumstances approach parents or community members in relation to issues arising at the school. I understand this is the responsibility of the Principal.
4. Abide by the terms and conditions detailed in the volunteer policy which includes providing a current Working with Children Check to Kalinda PS.
5. As a volunteer I have participated in an induction program and I understand my responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting, Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Procedures, Duty of Care to students, Privacy and Confidentiality obligations.
6. I have also received training specific to my area of volunteer work at Kalinda PS.
7. I understand that if I breach any of the above agreements my services as a volunteer may be terminated.

VOLUNTEER

Signed:

Date:

Name:

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL (OR DELEGATE)

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Title: