



## Stella Maris Primary School

### School Visitors/ Volunteers and Working With Children Policy

#### Rationale

All children deserve as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect. Stella Maris has a zero tolerance for child abuse and all adults in our school have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.

The safety of the children is a paramount responsibility of the school community. Therefore, it is essential to monitor the people who enter the school. Visitors working with children must have a current Working With Children Card. The security of the school and the school's resources must be maintained. A record of who is present in the school is needed in case it is necessary to call an evacuation of the school as part of our Emergency Management Procedures. (Refer to Emergency Management Policy.)

Not everyone who has contact with children needs a Working with Children (WWC) Check.

Under the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act), only people who are doing child-related work and who are not exempt need a WWC Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers.

#### What is child related work?

The Act defines children as anyone under the age of 18.

Child-related work involves direct contact with a child that is part of the person's duties. Direct contact includes oral, written or electronic communication.

Child-related work is an activity undertaken in any of the services, bodies or places referred to in the Act as 'occupational categories'.

Child-related work for ministers of religion has a different meaning under the Act. Please go to the section below under Ministers of religion and child-related work for full details.

#### You do not need a WWC Check if you:

- work in an unpaid private/domestic arrangement for family and friends
- 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 5 criteria listed below:

1. You are an adult working with under 18 year olds.
2. You are working as one of the following:

- 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 participant in practical training through an educational or vocational course
- a participant in unpaid community work under a court order
- an officer of a body corporate
- a member of a committee of management of an unincorporated body
- a member of a partnership
- 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.

3. You are working in any of the occupational fields listed in the Act. Go to Occupational fields for the full list.

4. Your work involves direct contact with children, which means you are in direct contact with a child that is part of the person's duties. Direct contact includes oral, written or electronic communication.

5. Your contact with children is part of your duties i.e. not incidental to your work

## **Implementation**

People visiting the school must sign an entry in the Visitor's Book, located in the office.

This applies to:

- Parent Helpers/ volunteers
- Tradesmen and Tradeswomen
- The Handyman
- Guest speakers
- Visiting Teachers
- Ministers of Religion

This does not apply to:

- People visiting the office are only e.g. For deliveries
- Parents dropping off and picking up their children before and after school

Details of the date, badge number, name, arrival and departure times and the reason for the visit, must be recorded.

New visitors to the school are welcomed and the procedure for wearing a visitor's badge are explained.

Once signed in the visitor is given a visitor's badge which they are expected to wear.

Staff are expected to ensure that all parents assisting in the room follow these procedures.

Staff are expected to politely ask any visitors to return to the office to sign in, if they do not have a visitor's badge.

When leaving the school, visitors are to return to the office, sign out and return their badge.

## **Working With Children Card**

A WWCC is required for all volunteers over 18 years of age in the school, such as on excursions, camps, sporting events or sports coaching, elective programs or student workshops. If parent, parish volunteers or contractors are assisting or working in the school and are not talking with children face-to-face or being physically close enough to interact with a child, then he/ she may be able to do so without a WWCC if given permission by the school principal or delegate.

Visitors without Working With Children Cards or Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration may not work with children at Stella Maris.

## **Volunteers**

All volunteers in the school must have a WWCC. And sign the Volunteering at Stella Maris form (Appendix 1 & 2) The form asks volunteers to acknowledge and accept adherence to our Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct. Volunteers will also be asked to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality with respect to information obtained while in the role of Parent Helper. Classroom volunteers must be inducted into working within the school by attending the Classroom Helpers Course, run by the Literacy leaders.

## **Ministers of Religion**

All Ministers of Religion are required to get a WWC Check unless the contact they have with children is only occasional and always incidental to their work.

Child-related work for ministers of religion is defined more broadly than for everyone else. For ministers, child-related work is not limited to work involving direct and unsupervised contact with children. Any contact with children, unless it is only occasional and incidental, is enough to trigger the requirement to get checked. This would include having children present in their congregation, or attendance at schools or children's camps, even when all their contact with children is supervised.

The only time a minister does not require a WWC Check is when any contact with children is only occasional and never a part of the minister's normal duties. This might occur, for example, for ministers with purely administrative roles within a church's bureaucracy.

## **School Employees**

All qualified teaching staff are exempt from WWCC as they already have undergone National Criminal Record Checks to obtain teacher registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Employed contractors (e.g. tradespeople such as cleaners, plumbers and builders) who are likely to be in school property during school hours for more than 5 days of the school year, are required to obtain a WWCC.

## **Procedures for Maintaining the WWCC register.**

Step 1: Admin staff ask for WWCC.

Step 2: A photocopy of the WWCC, kept in a folder in the Principal's Office.

Step 3: Admin staff pass information to the Deputy Principal, who will keep a data base of people with current Working With Children Cards and those nearing the renewal date.

Step 4: Deputy Principal checks data base at the start of each term and liaises with admin staff to contact those whose renewal dates are approaching.

## **Appendix 1: Letter to Parent Volunteers**

## **Appendix 2: Volunteering at Stella Maris Form**

Refer to <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>



This policy was ratified in September 2008

This policy will be reviewed biannually

This policy was last reviewed in 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017

## **Appendix 1: Letter to Parent Volunteers**

Dear Parents,

The Victorian Government recently introduced new Child Safe Standards along with Ministerial Order No. 870, which set out the minimum requirements for schools in relation to child safety. Child Safe Standard 4 and clause 10 of Ministerial Order No. 870 relates to staff screening, selection, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel, including employees, parent helpers (volunteers) and contractors.

Volunteers at Stella Maris may include; helpers who work in the classrooms, parents assisting with sporting activities or attending excursions and in-school activities, people over the age of 18 assisting as host families for homestay programmes, people assisting with P & F functions within the school, (e.g. Hot Dog Days, Disco, Walkathon) and working bees.

In order to meet the Child Safe Standards, Stella Maris Primary School has prepared the following information:

### **Pre-engagement Checks**

The *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic.) requires that any person doing child-related work, must have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC). The school already requires that all school parent helpers apply for and pass a WWCC. There is no charge to this requirement. The school must sight the WWCC and it will be photocopied and the copy kept on file.

### **Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct**

Stella Maris takes child safety very seriously. The school collaboratively developed a Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct, recognising that the responsibility of child safety sits with the whole school community. These documents, together with the Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) Commitment Statement to Child Safety and other documents are on our website at <http://www.smbearmaris.catholic.edu.au/student-wellbeing/child-safety/>. I request that you read through and familiarise yourself with these documents.

All parent volunteers ***in any capacity*** will be required to sign a "Volunteering at Stella Maris" form which is Appendix 2 of our School Visitors/ Volunteers and Working With Children Policy. The form asks volunteers to acknowledge and accept adherence to our Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct. You will also be asked to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality with respect to information obtained while in the role of Parent Helper. The "Volunteering at Stella Maris" form is available at the Office and can be downloaded from the website. Please return the signed form and it will be stored at school.

The annual Parent Helper course includes a Child Safety session, which provides further information on the school's Child Safety Policy, Code of Conduct and commitment to child safety, as well as an opportunity to ask questions. It is essential that all new parent helpers who wish to work in the classroom, attend this session. Any current parent helpers who would like an update are also welcome to attend. Our Child Safety Officer, Sharon Hynes, is available to answer queries. Please call the Office to arrange a meeting or phone call.

I would like to thank you for your understanding, your commitment to child safety within our school community and for your continued support as a volunteer at Stella Maris Primary School. Our volunteers are integral to the school experience for our students and they provide an important link to the community.

If you have any further questions regarding the policy documents, the Child Safe Standards or this letter please contact me.

Kind regards,

Rob Horwood  
Principal

## Appendix 2: Volunteering at Stella Maris Form



*Stella Maris School*  
A Catholic Co-Educational Parish Primary School  
www.smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au info@smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au

113 Oak St  
Beaumaris  
Victoria 3193  
Australia  
ph: (03) 9589 2641  
fax: (03) 9589 1628

### Volunteering at Stella Maris

Thank you for volunteering to help with school activities. Stella Maris takes child safety very seriously. The school collaboratively developed a Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct, recognising that the responsibility of child safety sits with the whole school community. These documents, together with other documents and the Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) Commitment Statement to Child Safety are on our website at <http://www.smbeaumaris.catholic.edu.au/student-wellbeing/child-safety/>

Before volunteering your help please read the documents and acknowledge your agreement by completing this form.

- I have a current Working with Children Check & have registered it with the school Office
- I have read & will adhere to the Child safety Policy
- I have read and will adhere to the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- I agree to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality with respect to any information obtained in my role as Volunteer.
- I understand that I will be required to undertake induction training prior to commencing Classroom Volunteer work at Stella Maris and that the school can cease the volunteering arrangement at any time

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_