

St Bernard's Parish Bacchus Marsh

Working with Children Guidelines

Purpose

These guidelines have been prepared to ensure that St Bernard's Parish complies with the requirements of the Working with Children Act (the Act) and to ensure that all children involved in Parish activities or on Parish premises are safe from harm at all times.

Scope

The guidelines apply to all Parish employees, volunteers and contractors working directly with children under 18 years of age, or likely to be in contact with children on Parish premises or at Parish events, unless they are directly supervised at all times by a person holding a valid Employee Working with Children Check. It includes:

- *contractors who employ other workers on a parish or school site*
- *organisations that are not auspiced by the parish but associated with it*
- *organisations involving children not auspiced by the parish/school and not operating on a parish/school site but bearing the parish's/school's name*

Parish Obligations

Parish schools should fulfil these obligations for all workers under their control, including volunteers and contractors working on school premises or at school events. The Parish Office will fulfil all other requirements.

1. Ensure that anyone engaged in child-related work has a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) unless they are directly supervised at all times by an employee. Employees and contractors must have an Employee WWCC (either as a Parish employee or as the employee of the contracted organisation). Volunteers only require a Volunteer WWCC.
2. Ensure that no person charged with, or found guilty of, a category 1 or 2 offence under the Act works with or cares for children unless they are cleared to do so.
3. Ensure that anyone who has a Negative Notice under the Act does not undertake child-related work even if supervised.
4. Keep records of WWCC details for all employees, volunteers and contractors and ensure that details are correct and current.
5. Respect and preserve the privacy of workers, volunteers and contractors in these matters.

Note that applications for Melbourne priests and seminarians will be processed by the Vicar General's Office. Order priests will be directed by their Provincial or Congregational Leader.

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Individual obligations

1. Each person is responsible for obtaining their own WWCC, including meeting the cost for an Employee. A Volunteer WWCC is currently free. WWCC applications can be made at most Australia Post offices.
2. Evidence of a current WWCC, or having applied for a WWCC must be provided before starting work. Where an application has been made, evidence of the approved WWCC must be provided to the Parish within 21 days.
3. Keep personal details relating to their WWCC up to date via the *workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au* website.

Managing the WWCC.

The following practices should be used by the Parish to effectively manage the WWCC obligations.

1. Advise all workers, volunteers and contractors of their requirements for a WWCC before engaging them.
2. Keep records of WWCC details including:
 - a. Application Receipt numbers, where applicable
 - b. WWCC card number and type (Employee or Volunteer)
 - c. Notices received from the Justice Department, including advice of new cards.
3. Regularly check the status of WWCCs via the *workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au* website.
4. Follow any instructions received from the Department of Justice regarding individual employees.

References

Further details relating the Working with Children Checks can be obtained from the Department of Justice - *workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au* – the diocesan Human Resources Office or the Assistant Director responsible for Professional Standards in the Catholic Education Office.