

Child Safety: Recruitment and Personnel Policy

Introduction

Fitzroy Primary School has an important responsibility for keeping children safe.

We recognise that we are required to meet child safety requirements for staff selection, supervision and management (clause 10 of Ministerial Order No. 870).

We acknowledge that:

1. Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:
 - o the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and
 - o the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
2. All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about our school's child safety practices (including the code of conduct).
3. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, our school will gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
 - a. Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - b. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - c. the person's history of work involving children; and wherever possible
 - d. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
4. The school will not need to make the checks outlined in (3) above about a particular individual if it has already done so within the previous 12 months.
5. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - a. the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
 - b. monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.

6. The school must implement practices that enable the School Council to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Explanatory note: To be 'satisfied', it is not necessary that the School Council make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The school governing authority needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

Recruiting New Staff and Volunteers

When recruiting new staff or volunteers we consider the applicant's:

- motivation to work with children (personal or professional)
- relevant and verifiable child-related work experience
- understanding of professional boundaries
- communication skills.

We understand that specialist roles may present different child safety risks for the school.

Staff Selection

We use the following checklist for staff selection to strengthen their focus on child safety in the staff recruitment and employment process and minimise the risk of appointing a person who poses a child safety risk.

Step 1 — Ensuring transparency and natural justice in the selection process

Questions

Has the school reviewed its position description to reflect the child safe standards?

Has the applicant been provided with a statement that sets out the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding:

- child safety, and
- essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety?

Has the applicant been informed about the school's child safety practices including the school's Child Safety Code Of Conduct?

Has the applicant been informed of their role in ensuring a child safe environment?

Step 2 — Verifying the Applicant's Identity, Suitability and Qualifications

Questions

Check at least two forms of personal identification eg driver's licence, passport? Is the name and address the same as those provided by the applicant?

Does the applicant have an original academic transcript or qualification/s that confirms their claims about their qualifications or registrations?

If the applicant is registered by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) have you verified the registration and ensured that it is current? (noting that a teacher registered with VIT does not need a Working with Children Check)

Sight and retain a copy of the applicant's current Working with Children Check?

Are there any unexplained gaps in the applicant's employment history? If so, are there satisfactory explanations such as travel, study leave, family leave?

Has the applicant nominated at least two referees including:

- the current or most recent employer, and
- direct supervisor/line manager.

Is there any personal relationship between the applicant and his or her previous supervisor/manager (this may affect the objectivity of the reference)?

Check with the referee that the work history and previous employment details the applicant has provided are accurate?

Has the referee(s) directly supervised the applicant and observed their work with children?

Would the referee(s) employ the person again?

Did a referee(s) have any concerns about the applicant working directly with children?

Did a referee(s) have any concerns about the applicant's adherence to the organisation's Code Of Conduct?

Have you asked the referee(s) about a time when they observed the applicant managing the behaviour of a child?

If the reference is in writing, have you contacted the referee to confirm authenticity?

Does the applicant have experience working with children outside their employment (eg volunteering, private tutoring or coaching, non-commercial child-minding etc.)?

Further information

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

Child safe standards website (all schools): www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe

Government Schools

Website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards

The Victorian Institute of Teaching

For Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics and information about employer responsibilities to report action taken against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers.

Website: www.vit.edu.au

Definitions

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A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes.

Child abuse includes—

- any act committed against a child involving—
 - o a sexual offence or
 - o an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of—
 - o physical violence or
 - o serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means 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.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School staff means:

- in a government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
- employed under Part 2.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (ETR Act) in the government teaching service or
- employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act or
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

Explanatory note: There is a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements.

This policy was endorsed by School Council on October 17th 2016 .

