



**Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne
Working with Children
Protocol
Implementation guidelines**

10 May 2007

Purpose

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to promulgate the implementation guidelines associated with the Working with Children protocol.

Application

2. These guidelines apply to all settings in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. They are to be read in conjunction with the Working with Children protocol.

Initiating action

3. Responsibility for obtaining a Working with Children Check (WWCC) resides with the individual. Applications are made at participating Australia Post outlets.
4. ¹Employers are to inform their² workers³ who needs to apply for a WWCC, by what date and the rationale for the diocesan policy position. They also need to set up registers and, after sighting the WWCC or application receipt, record names, WWCC numbers and expiry dates.
5. The Working with Children protocol and these guidelines are to be displayed in a prominent location.
6. Attachment 1 is a sample letter to contractors who employ other workers on a parish or school site. Attachments 2 and 3 are samples of letters to organisations that are not auspiced by the parish⁴ but associated with it. If relevant contractors or organisations refuse to comply with the expressed requirements, employers should contact either the diocesan Human Resources Office or the Assistant Director responsible for Professional Standards in the Catholic Education Office.
7. Melbourne priests and seminarians will be contacted by the Vicar General's Office (Mrs Alina Tsakonas) who will take them, step-by-step, through the application process and subsequent notification to the Vicar General's Office of the outcome. Order priests will be directed by their Provincial or Congregational Leader.

Timing

8. For the child related work undertaken in our settings, the scheme is being phased in over eighteen months.
9. Prior to 30 June 2007
 - Before and after school care workers.
 - Those involved with overnight camps.
 - Juvenile justice places.
 - All members of the clergy, including Pastores Emeriti available for supply.
 - Seminarians.

¹ In this context, those who engage are referred to as employers, even when it includes relationships that are not employment related, eg the person who engages a contractor or a volunteer, the bishop who appoints priests.

² Those under their direct control and those of auspiced bodies

³ Workers includes, employees, contractors or volunteers as well as clergy, other religious and Board members.

⁴ The word parish in this context is used to include schools which are independent of a parish

10. Prior to 31 December 2007

- School workers excluding teachers.
- Other parish workers where there is a school on site.
- Other parish workers with any involvement with the school where there is no school on site.
- Workers in the CEOs, other than registered teachers who undertake child related work – as identified in accordance with Catholic Education Commission of Victoria's (CECV's) policy.
- Workers in other diocesan agencies undertaking child related work that involves school students – as determined by the agency head acting on advice from the Human Resources Manager, eg Centacare school counsellors.

11. Prior to 30 June 2008

- Remaining parish workers.
- Other workers working in other diocesan agencies undertaking child related work – as determined on a case by case basis between the Human Resources Manager and the agency head, eg World Youth Day 2008 leaders.

12. Beyond the transition period

- Individuals are responsible for renewal of their WWCCs every five years.
- The Vicar General's Office will continue to coordinate WWCCs for the clergy and seminarians.
- Many employment contracts will require many employees to hold current WWCCs as a condition of employment. Advice of this will be forwarded separately.
- Criminal Records Checks polices will be modified. Advice of these changes will be forwarded separately.

Payment

13. The diocese/CECV will pay for all employed prior to the last date of applications for that category of worker.

14. Reimbursement will occur as follows:

- (a) Members of the clergy will be reimbursed on request on an individual basis.
- (b) The diocese will reimburse parishes for their **employees'** costs. In a separate advice, parishes will be provided with a template and instructions on submitting claims for reimbursement. Renewal and replacement costs are to be the responsibility of the employee.
- (c) The CECV will reimburse schools for their **employees'** costs. In a separate advice, schools will be provided with a template and instructions

on submitting claims for reimbursement. Renewal and replacement costs are to be the responsibility of the employee.

15. Contractors are responsible for their own costs.

16. Employees employed after the last date of applications for that category of worker are to be the responsibility of the employee.

Enquiries

17. Enquiries should be directed to Tom Carr, Human Resources Manager, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne on 9926 5629 or to Maria Kirkwood, Assistant Director Religious Education and Pastoral Care, Catholic Education Office, Melbourne on 9267 0221.

Sample letter to contractors engaging other workers on parish and school premises.

Dear

I am writing to inform you that it is the policy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne to require contractors engaging other workers on parish and school sites to comply with its Working with Children Protocol regardless of whether the activities of the contractor are involved with children or not. A copy of the protocol is attached.

This parish/school is fully committed to ensuring that children are protected from sexual or physical harm while in its settings.

The protocol requires you to ensure that the contractor, if a natural person, and employees, contractors or volunteers involved in this setting hold a current Working with Children Check, or have applied for one and are not disqualified from possessing one. Some exceptions apply.

If applicable, I need to sight your Working with Children Check. You in turn, need to keep a register of others' names, Working with Children Check numbers and their expiry dates. This register needs to be current and available for inspection either by myself or my delegate on request. You also need to inform me if any of the persons named receive an Interim Negative Notice.

I realise that while this will impose some obligation upon you that are in addition to any obligations you may have under the Act, this policy is best practice in settings like ours which are frequented by children.

You need to be mindful, however, that possession of a Working with Children Check does not in itself mean that the person is suitable to be near children. Appraising the suitability of those involved with children against a high standard and constant vigilance remain ongoing requirements of all involved.

I seek your agreement in writing that you will comply with this protocol.

Yours sincerely

Sample letter to organisations not auspiced by the parish or school operating on parish and school premises.

Dear

I am writing to inform you that it is the policy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne to require organisations using parish facilities to comply with its Working with Children Protocol regardless of whether the activities of the organisation are involved with children or not. A copy of the protocol is attached.

This parish/school is fully committed to ensuring that children are protected from sexual or physical harm while in its settings.

The protocol requires you to ensure that members of your organisation and its employees, contractors or volunteers involved in this setting and who are responsible for the conduct of the activity (as distinct from other participants unless children are involved) hold a current Working with Children Check, or have applied for one and are not disqualified from possessing one. Some exceptions apply.

You need to keep a register of names, Working with Children Check numbers and their expiry dates. The register needs to be current and available for inspection either by myself or my delegate on request. You also need to inform me if any of the persons named receive an Interim Negative Notice.

I realise that while this will impose some obligations upon you that are in addition to any obligations you may have under the Act, this policy is best practice in settings like ours which are frequented by children.

You need to be mindful, however, that possession of a Working with Children Check does not in itself mean that the person is suitable to be near children. Appraising the suitability of those involved with children against a high standard and constant vigilance remain ongoing requirements of all involved.

I seek your agreement in writing that your organisation will comply with this protocol.

Yours sincerely

Sample letter to 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.

Dear

I am writing to inform you that it is the policy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne to require organisations using the parish's/school's name to comply with its Working with Children Protocol if the activities of the organisation are in any way involved with children. A copy of the protocol is attached.

This parish/school is fully committed to ensuring that children are protected from sexual or physical harm while in its settings or in any other way associated with it.

The protocol requires you to ensure that any members of your organisation or its employees, contractors or volunteers involved in activities with children (as distinct from others who are not involved in such work) hold a current Working with Children Check, or have applied for one and are not disqualified from possessing one. Some exceptions apply.

You need to keep a register of names, Working with Children Check numbers and their expiry dates. This register needs to be current and available for inspection either by myself or my delegate on request. You also need to inform me if any of these names receive an Interim Negative Notice.

I realise that while this will impose some obligations upon you that are in addition to any obligations you may have under the Act, this policy is best practice in settings like ours which are frequented by children.

You need to be mindful, however, that possession of a Working with Children Check does not in itself mean that the person is suitable to be near children. Appraising the suitability of those involved with children against a high standard and constant vigilance remain ongoing requirements of all involved.

I seek your agreement in writing that your organisation will comply with this protocol.

Yours sincerely