WORKING WITH CHILDREN COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

Rationale
Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School along with the Catholic Education Office Melbourne have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all children and employees, and maintain the security of assets by requiring and maintaining high standards of professional conduct from employees and volunteers.
In meeting these responsibilities Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School must be satisfied that only those employees and volunteers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed. Such assessments may include reference or referee checks, medical assessments, qualification verification and/or a criminal records check.

Working with children check
On 3 April 2006, the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act) became operational and introduced a Working with Children Check (WWC Check), thereby creating minimum checking standards across Victoria for people who work or volunteer with children in certain capacities.

The WWC Check will ensure that people who are unsuitable to engage in 'child-related work' do not do so.

Guidelines
The Act defines 'child-related work' as work, which usually involves (or is likely to involve) regular, direct contact with a child where that contact is not directly supervised, and in any of twenty child-related occupational fields listed in the Act. 'Child-related work' may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary)

The Principal will consult all relevant government legislation and implement policy as required.

Employees
Principals and Teacher

Principals and teachers class are employed pursuant to the Teaching Service Act 1981 and are required to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching as a condition of employment. Teachers and principals who are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching are exempt from the Working with Children Act 2005 and do not require a WWC Check.

School Service Officers and Student Support Service Officers

On 3 April 2006, the Victorian Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act) became operational. The Catholic Education Office, School advisory boards, and employees and volunteers to whom the Act applies including School Service Officers (SSO) and Student Support Service Officers (SSSO), will be required to be compliant with its provisions by 30 December 2007. As from 30
December 2007 it will be an offence under the Act to engage in 'child-related work' without having applied for a WWC Check. Penalties will apply to both the employer and employee.

Principals and managers will sight and retain a record of employee's WWC Check unique number.

**Casual Relief Teachers**
Casual relief teachers are required to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. Accordingly they qualify for an exemption from the Working with Children Act 2005 and do not require a WWC Check.

**Other Casual Employees**
Casual employees in schools, other than casual relief teachers, are employed pursuant to the Education Act 1958 and therefore are required to demonstrate their suitability for employment by undergoing a WWC Check or a criminal records check.

Not all casual employees in schools will be required by the Act to undergo a WWC Check; it will depend on whether their duties meet the definition of 'child-related work' as defined in the Act.

**Contractors**
Principals and managers should assess the duties to be performed by contractors to determine whether they constitute 'child-related work' and will therefore require a WWC Check.

**Volunteers**
The Act will require certain volunteers who engage in 'child-related work' in schools to undergo a WWC Check. The Act exempts parents who are volunteering in activities in which his/her child ordinarily participates from requiring a WWC Check. 'Parent' includes the spouse or domestic partner of the father or mother of the child, or a person who has custody of the child.

Volunteers will be required to present a WWC check for
- participation in excursions, incursions and camps.
- participation in swimming programs
- involvement with the supervision of students who are not closely related to them as defined by Crimes(Family Violence) Act 1987.
- membership of School Advisory Board and Parent and Friends Association
- involvement in any other events where it is deemed by the Principal.

Preference for participation in all school events will be given to volunteers with a valid WWCC.

The Principal will periodically verify the status of WWC Checks held by people engaged in 'child-related work' at their school as WWC Checks are subject to ongoing monitoring and it is possible that if an individual has a relevant change in circumstances, their WWC Check may cease to be valid.

**Student Teachers**

As from 31 December 2007, student teachers must have applied for a WWC Check prior to commencing a practicum in a Victorian Catholic School. As student teachers do not receive payment for undertaking a practicum, a volunteer WWC Check may be accepted.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be evaluated in accordance with the School Improvement Plan or as required.