



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BALLARAT

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK AND
NATIONAL POLICE RECORD CHECK POLICY**

Professional Standards
Catholic Diocese of Ballarat



Introduction

This Policy outlines the requirements in the Diocese, parishes and diocesan agencies in relation to Working with Children Checks and National Police Record Checks.

This Policy applies throughout the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat to all persons who have contact or who might have direct contact with children in the course of any parish or diocesan activities. This includes volunteers, employees, clergy, religious brothers and sisters and seminarians. It also applies to contractors engaged by the diocese or by a parish if they work with children. Diocesan agencies such as Centacare and the Catholic Education Office, while subject to this Policy, are in addition subject to their own policies in relation to Police Checks and Working with Children Checks.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Diocesan Safeguarding Children, Young people and Vulnerable Adults Code of Conduct and the principles set out in the Diocesan Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safety Policy which includes this commitment:

“The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for people of all ages, with special concern for children, young people and vulnerable adults. This commitment is made in the spirit of Christ’s teachings on behalf of the bishop, clergy, staff and volunteers who serve in parishes, schools, Centacare and other Catholic organisations in the diocese. The diocese will respond to complaints of unprofessional conduct in ways that reflect nationally established standards and protocols and ensure adherence to applicable legislation. We are committed to providing ongoing pastoral support to any person affected by physical, emotional or sexual abuse by church personnel.”

The Working with Children Check (WWC Check) is a check pursuant to the Working with Children Act 2005(Vic) (the WWC Act) which is designed to create minimum standards in Victoria for those who work with children. Evidence of this is a Working with Children Check Card.

Unless suspended pursuant to the WWC Act, a Working with Children Check Assessment Notice is valid for 5 years.

It is an offence under the WWC Act to engage in child related work without having applied for a WWC Check.

Child related work is defined in section 9 of the WWC Act as work where contact with children is direct and part of a person’s duties. Direct contact includes contact with children which is oral, written or electronic communication as well as face to face and physical contact.

A child is defined in the WWC Act as a person under the age of 18 years.

This Policy, in so far as it applies to Working with Children Checks, has broader application than the obligations imposed on a person under the WWC Act. For example, many of the exemptions under the WWC Act do not apply under this policy and employees who are not engaged in child related work as defined in the WWC Act are required to obtain a WWC Check.

On the other hand some persons who are not employees and who are not engaged in child related work are excluded where it has been considered necessary to balance making this policy workable in practice without detracting from the principal purpose of providing a safe environment for children.



It is intended that this Policy be consistent with the equivalent policies of Diocesan Agencies. However, in the event that there is any inconsistency between the policies, this Policy shall apply to the Agency.

A National Police Record Check (Police Check) is a prudent pre-employment or pre- engagement check. Evidence of this is a National Police Certificate.

An offence history may not necessarily preclude employment or engagement as a volunteer but is a consideration to be applied when determining the suitability of a person for a particular position or role.

If a person is required by this policy to obtain a Police Check and the process has been commenced but not completed his/her offer of employment is conditional upon the employee providing a declaration that he/she has not been charged with or found guilty of any offence that would be incompatible with his/her position of trust and responsibility. This requirement should be included in any offer of employment or engagement as a volunteer

Appendix 2 – Parish Volunteer Requirements

Ministry	WWCC Card	Police Check
Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (Mass)	✓	
Young Adult Group Coordinator - (Over 18's)		✓
Altar Server Co-ordinator/Trainer	✓	
Altar Servers (over 18 years)	✓	
Care and Concern - Home Visits to Families	✓	✓
Catechist	✓	
Mass Welcomer	✓	
Children's Liturgy Co-ordinator / Leader	✓	
Cleaners - with keys for access and unsupervised	✓	
Choir/Music Conductor (Child/Adult group)	✓	
Counters		✓
Fund raising event coordinator - trivia night, fete, raffles		✓
Groundsman/Gardeners (vol.) - again consider if children around and size of ground	✓	
Organist/Musicians (with keys)	✓	
RCIA Leader -adult only		✓
RCIA Leader -incl. minors	✓	
	✓	

Sacramental Preparation or Program Coordinators /Leaders		
Sacristan	✓	
Youth Group Leader	✓	
Administrator in Parish Office (> 5 hours/week volunteer)	✓	✓
Community Leaders - Ethnic & Faith Communities	✓	✓
Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to sick (Hospital, Private residence, etc)	✓	✓
Parish Finance Council Member	✓	✓
Outreach - Homeless Support including children	✓	✓
Parish Pastoral Council Member/Leadership Team	✓	✓
Piety Store Convenor	✓	✓
Parish Safeguarding Officer	✓	✓
Transport Ministry	✓	✓
Youth Coordinator	✓	✓