

The Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations (Tasmanian State School Parents and Friends) would like to submit the following points to the Royal Commission - Issues Paper No 1 - Working With Children.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Questions

Working with child protection check.

1. Should there be a national WWCC?

Tasmanian Association State School Organisations support the development of a WWCC in consultation with all State and Territory Governments. Presently Tasmania unlike many other states does not have a uniformed WWCC and the introduction of a national check may help provide a more robust system.

2. What features should be included in any national scheme?

- Proof of identity including past names if applicable.
- National Police check.
- Declaration including these following questions:
Any charges or found guilty of any of the following, crimes of violence, sex-related offences, serious drug offences, crimes involving dishonesty and serious traffic offences.

Any possible past disciplinary action required where you have been excluded from acting as a volunteer, or past exclusions from working with children

The requirements above are all in a Good Character Check Application Form completed by staff and volunteers working in Tasmanian state schools. Education staff and volunteers in our schools must complete a Character Check Application Form which is sent to the Education Department's Conduct and Investigations Unit for processing and approval.

3. If there is no national scheme, should there be minimum requirements for each state and Territory?

Yes there should be minimum requirements.

4. How long should any clearance be granted for?

3 years is a reasonable length of time and is presently the time limit for Good Character Checks.

5. Should a person be able to commence work before the check is complete?

It would be preferable for a person to not commence work before the check is complete, but there may be times when this is not possible and there should be considerations for a short period when people can work supervised with children if they have submitted an application but are waiting for their WWCC approval.

6. How should child-related work be defined?

Child related work is defined as any work place where an adult person (applicant) is required to supervise or work alongside any person under the age of 18.

8. Are current exemptions for a WWCC adequate or appropriate- in particular should a WWCC apply to those:

- a Living in the homes of children in out-of-home care?
- b. parent volunteers?

Adults living in homes of children in out-of-care should complete a WWCC.

Already many schools in Tasmania ask for parent volunteers who may at times be unsupervised with children to have a check so it may be appropriate when this occurs in other organisations for the parent volunteers to have a WWCC.

9. What records should be included in the check? For example, should the check include juvenile records?

Juvenile records may need to be part of records for WWCC only in the event of crimes including sexual assault or crimes of violence.