



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: VOLUNTEERS

Ardoch recruits, trains and places volunteers in schools and early years services in disadvantaged communities. Please read on to find answers to some frequently asked questions about volunteering.

HOW TO BECOME AN ARDOCH VOLUNTEER

What does being an Ardoch education volunteer involve?

Our education volunteers provide assistance in early years services (playgroups, family centres and kindergartens), primary and secondary schools. They provide literacy and numeracy support to children and young people. In some schools, our volunteers also provide specialised support in alternative classroom settings. You need to commit to volunteering for two hours a week, at the same time, at the same school and early years centre during school hours for a minimum of six months.

[For more details on the volunteering opportunities at Ardoch go to get involved.](#)

How can I volunteer with Ardoch?

Click register on the individual volunteering section and complete the application form. Please ensure you have answered each question on the form.

What are the steps in the application process?

- Complete the online application form
- Register for face-to-face training
- Complete a phone interview with an Ardoch staff member
- Complete Ardoch online trainings
- Apply for a Working with Children Check (WWCC) and add Ardoch as an organisation online (Victoria only)
- Submit a Police Check (fee covered by Ardoch)
- Attend face-to-face training
- Provide two referees

How old do I have to be?

You need to be over 18 to be able to volunteer with Ardoch.

Do I have to have experience in the education sector?

Although experience in the education sector is valued, it is not mandatory.

What time commitment do I need to give to volunteering?

You need to commit to volunteering for minimum two hours a week, at the same time, at the same school/early years service during school hours for a minimum of six months. Most people continue beyond six months and this enables you to build a stronger bond with the children, young people, educators and the school/early years service community.

Do I have to attend the centre/school on the same day and time?

Yes. In order to maintain relationships and consistency, we ask that our volunteers are at the early years service or school at the same time and day each week.

Can Ardoch's Education Volunteer role be considered as tertiary placement for university students?

We do not usually take individual tertiary placements at Ardoch as we cannot provide the level of supervision required for most courses.

However, in some cases, we have partnered with education providers upon agreement of the terms and conditions of the placement. If you are an education provider and would like to discuss this option further, please contact us.

Do I need to attend the face to face training if I apply for Research, Office Admin or Fundraising/Marketing role?

No, you do not need to attend face to face training, but you need to undertake the child safety online refresher and obtain a Working With Children Check.

Why do I need a Working with Children Check if I am already getting a Police Check?

A Working with Children Check is a more thorough check which lasts for five years. It is 'live' so it is updated on an ongoing basis for 5 years and Ardoch will be contacted if any problem arises. A Police Check (CrimCheck) is a list of offences at any given point in time.

Do I have to pay for anything when I become a volunteer at Ardoch?

Ardoch pays for every volunteer's Police Check (CrimCheck). A Working with Children Check is free for volunteers. However, the volunteer will have to pay for their travel to the partner school or early years service. We are not able to reimburse travel expenses for volunteers.

Is my existing CrimCheck valid?

No. A CrimCheck (or Police Check) is a list of offences at a given point in time. When you become an Ardoch volunteer, we need to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information. We therefore will always carry out our own CrimCheck during the application process at no cost to you.

Does my VIT (Victorian Teaching) card replace the Working with Children Check?

No. Although you can teach without having a WWCC card, you cannot volunteer without a WWCC, this is Ardoch's best practice policy. Ardoch is then notified when there are any changes to a WWCC. However, this is not the case with a VIT card.

Who should I nominate as my referees? Do they need to have an email address?

You should try to nominate two people who you have known for at least two years. Preferably, one referee should know you professionally and ideally at least one referee should have seen you interact with children. We do not accept immediate family members as referees. You need to include correct phone number and email addresses of all referees in your application. Referees need to be local, not international.

ONCE YOU BECOME AN ARDOCH VOLUNTEER, WHAT NOW?

What happens after the face-to-face training?

We wait for all your checks (WWCC, CrimCheck, referee checks) to be returned, which can take from between three days to one month, depending on each person. Once your checks have been returned and are clear, you will receive an email notification that your placement with a school/early years centre has been arranged. The school/early years centre will contact you within one week of this notification.

Can I choose my own school or early years service to volunteer at?

You can choose whether you want to volunteer at a school or an early years centre. You will need to undergo further training in our Early Learning and Literacy and Curious Young Minds STEM literacy programs if you want to volunteer at an early years centre. Ardoch will place you at an Ardoch partner site within your preferred area. We try to organise a placement as conveniently located as possible to you. Placements depend on capacity and availability at our sites at the time. Volunteers who can drive will have a wider range of options. However, if you cannot drive, you must let us know and we will try to match you with a partner site reachable by public transport.

What times does placement occur?

All of our Education Volunteer placements are within school hours. Our Research, Office or Fundraising/Marketing roles occur within business hours.

How is my Education Volunteer placement arranged and who do I contact?

Your Ardoch liaison staff member will contact you with the school/early years centre and possible induction dates. This will then be confirmed with the school/early years centre and you will be advised via email of the time, date and person to meet at your school/early years centre.

How often do I need to log my hours in Track it forward?

After a day of volunteering (includes training and professional development sessions) you will simply be required to log the hours you have done for the day through the app or website and submit, which sends the hours to an online platform administered by Ardoch. Track it forward allows us to acknowledge the time you have contributed and receive feedback on your volunteering experience.

What do I do if I can't access Track it Forward?

Please contact one of the volunteer coordinators on volunteers@ardoch.org.au for further investigation. We can easily reset your password.

Do I contact Ardoch in the event of disclosure?

Yes, once you have discussed with supervising teacher or school/early years centre volunteer contact (person who did induction – this might be Early years director, Welfare officer or Deputy Principal) prior to leaving school/centre premises; you must notify Ardoch staff about the concerns/disclosure.

What do I do if I can no longer volunteer? Who should I inform?

Inform your local Ardoch liaison staff member and school/early years centre that you can no longer volunteer and when you will be finishing.

What do I do if I want to return to volunteering with Ardoch after one year break?

Email volunteers@ardoch.org.au for further details. You will be required to complete a new police check (CrimCheck) as well as any updated online trainings. If you have any other questions regarding volunteering, please contact our Programs Coordinators, Education Volunteers & Training on 03 9537 2414.

Can I get involved in ways other than volunteering?

There are plenty of other ways you can support Ardoch and children in disadvantaged communities. This includes making donations, through community fundraising, donating books and resources, workplace giving and more. [If you want to see the ways in which you can support Ardoch, please visit Get involved webpage.](#)

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK FAQ'S

What is a Working with Children Check?

A [Working With Children Check \(WWCC\)](#) is a card issued by the Department of Justice in Victoria, or a number issued by the Office of the Children's Guardian in NSW. It is issued after checking the history of an applicant with regards to child safety. It is a "live document" which means that it remains active for five years. During this period if the applicant is involved in any legal infractions relevant to working with children the Department of Justice/Office of the Children's Guardian will inform the agencies volunteered at (namely, Ardoch) about it.

For more about the relevant legislation information:

<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check

I have a Police Check. Why do I still need to apply for a WWCC?

A police check is not a "live document" so it is only true for the date of issue. Our volunteers commit to programs that last up to a year. A WWCC will ensure child safety on an ongoing basis for five years.

Why didn't I need one before now?

The process leading to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has meant that many organisations, including Ardoch, have reviewed their Child Protection and Child Safety requirements. As acknowledged by many institutions, WWCC reduces the risk to children as much as possible. Hence, we have decided to adopt it as a child safety measure.

What does it involve? / how do I get one?

Volunteers must apply for the Working with Children check relevant to the state in which they volunteer:

For Victorian Instructions [please see here](#).

For NSW Instructions [please see here](#).

For Queensland Instructions [please see here](#).

For WA Instructions [please see here](#).

How much does it cost?

For volunteers in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales the WWCC is free. For volunteers in Western Australia there is an \$11 cost for volunteers at one organisation and \$83 charge for volunteers at more than one organisation.

Can I volunteer and start the program without a WWCC?

No, you need to apply for a WWCC before your first contact with the child (i.e., a letter, blog or a meeting). It is important that you submit your WWCC application prior to this and have a receipt to prove it.

How long will it take to get one and how long is it valid for?

It can take a few weeks for your WWCC to be sent to you and it is valid for 5 years.

I have a WWCC already because I volunteer elsewhere.

If you already have a WWCC:

VIC: please add Ardoch to your WWCC, as only the organisations' currently named on it are kept informed of any changes in the WWCC status.

NSW: please provide us with your WWCC number, expiry date, full name and date of birth.

QLD: please complete in the prefilled form you have received from Ardoch and return.

WA: please complete in prefilled form you have received from Ardoch and return.