



BLACKBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY

STATEMENT

Blackburn Primary School will assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers who will work with children. Unless an exemption applies to a person, a valid Working With Children Check (WWC Check) is the minimum standard for all adults working with children. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC Check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

RATIONALE

The WWC check aims to assist in protecting children from harm (including sexual and physical). It is designed to complement good selection, supervision and training practices (including rigorous reference checking).

The intent of this policy is to outline which positions at the school require a WWC check and the process to be followed.

This policy applies to all positions at the school including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.

Definitions

Child: a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Student: any child who is enrolled at the school

GUIDELINES

What is the WWC check?

The WWC check verifies a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies. The WWC check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time the cardholder continues to be checked for new relevant offences or findings. The WWC check is administered by the Department of Justice.

When is a WWC check required?

A WWC check is required for positions that:

- involves [direct contact](#) with children and
- the position does not qualify for an [exemption](#) as listed under the [Working with Children Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#). Evidence of exemption must be provided to the school and maintained as part of the WWC Check Register.

Volunteers

WWC Checks are required by all volunteers who will be working with students for school activities whether or not supervised by a teacher and whether or not the activity is on school grounds or during school hours.

For example, a volunteer who is assisting at a school camp or any other approved school activity outside of school grounds will require a WWC Check. See Appendix A for a list of exemptions.

A volunteer can commence work at the school when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a WWC Check with the Department of Justice and have otherwise been considered by the school to be suitable.

PROCEDURES

What is the application process?

Information about the application process is available on the [Department of Justice webpage](#).

What if the applicant does not pass the check?

If the applicant does not pass the check they cannot undertake 'child-related work' or work at the School.

When can the candidate commence?

Commencement in the School is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card. Any queries should be directed to the Principal.

Who pays for the WWC check?

Candidates who are required to undergo a WWC check as a condition of working in Blackburn Primary School will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from the school.

Responsibilities

The School must:

- identify all staff who require a Working with Children check;
- ensure existing staff and volunteers are informed of the requirement to undergo the check;
- ensure prospective staff and volunteers have passed a WWC check before commencement;
- check the card's validity on the [Department of Justice webpage](#);
- have a photocopy of the WWC card and with details updated on the school register (if individual is a staff member, copy to be kept on the staff member's personnel file)
- ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWC check card at all times.

The staff member or volunteer must:

- provide the successful WWC check card prior to commencement at the school
- notify the office if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence.
- apply for a new WWC check before their card expires.

School Register

The School will take a copy of each WWC check card and file in the school office. The WWCC register will be placed on the admin network.

Privacy

The School will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

What is the difference between a WWC Check and a police records check?

A police records check gives information about a person's past criminal record and is only valid at the time of issue. The WWC check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked). During this time, cardholders continue to be checked for new relevant offences or disciplinary findings from professional bodies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching. In addition, not all criminal offences are relevant to the WWC check. Broadly, the WWC check considers serious sexual and violent drug offences.

A staff member or volunteer is required to undertake a WWC check even if they have already completed a police records check.

LINKS AND REFERENCES

School Policy Advisory Guide:

- [Volunteer Checks](#)
- [Volunteer Workers](#)

DET Human Resources:

- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)

External Links:

- [Victorian Institute of Teaching](#)
- [Working with Children Check](#)

Appendices which may be used with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Exemptions

Further information is available from the [Department of Justice Working with Children webpage](#) or the Working with Children information line on 1300 652 879

RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL

DATE: October 2016

Date	Version Number:	Update information	Next Review:
25 March 2014	1.0	N/A	October 2016
October 2016	2.0	Review in line with Department guidelines. Addition of information on volunteers and list of exemptions (Appendix A)	2018

APPENDIX A - EXEMPTIONS

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check. The School reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWC Check if the principal considers it necessary in the circumstances. The exempt categories include:

Student volunteers

A student who is 18 or 19 years of age is exempt from the WWC Check for volunteer work organised by or held at the same educational institution they attend.

Parents volunteering in an activity with their child

Parents volunteering in an activity in which their child participates or normally participates, are exempt from needing a WWC Check.

Family members and people who are closely related to the child

Family members closely related to each child in the child-related work are exempt from the WWC Check. 'Closely related' to a child means:

- parent
- spouse or domestic partner
- step-parent
- mother-in-law or father-in-law
- grandparent
- uncle or aunt
- brother or sister, including half siblings, step siblings, brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

Teachers

Registered teachers or teachers who have permission to teach from the Victorian Institute of Teaching under Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.

Police officers

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.

For a full list of exemptions and examples refer to: [Working with Children Check – Exemptions](#)