

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK POLICY

Watsonia North Primary School (Child Safe Standard 4)

Purpose

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

The intent of this procedure is to outline which positions at the School require a WWC check and the process to be followed. This procedure applies to all positions at Watsonia North 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.

Aims

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 meet all of the following criteria:

- involve contact with children in connection with Watsonia North
- the contact happens on a regular (everyday) basis;
- involve **direct contact** with children and this contact is not **directly supervised**; and
- the position does not qualify for an exemption as listed under the act.

Implementation

- The candidate must complete a Working with Children Check application form. The forms are available online www.workingwithchildrencheck.vic.gov.au or at Australia Post outlets in Victoria.
- Under the section marked 'Details of Organisation', candidates should ensure they state our school.
- If the applicant passes the check they will be sent a successful Assessment Notice, followed by a WWC check card 2-3 weeks later.

- Further information about the application process is available on the [Department of Justice webpage](#).
- If the applicant does not pass the check they will be given an Interim Negative Notice. The applicant can then make a submission to the Department of Justice to explain why they believe they should pass. If this submission is not successful the applicant will be issued with a Negative Notice. This means they have failed the WWC Check and **cannot undertake 'child-related work' or work at our school.**
- Commencement at our school is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card. Any queries should be directed to the Principal.
- Candidates who are required to undergo a WWC check as a condition of working at Watsonia will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from The School.

Watsonia North 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;
- maintain a WWC Register (one for staff and one for parents). Administration staff will maintain the WWC Volunteers register and publish on Sharepoint for staff to access.

The staff member or volunteer must:

- provide the successful WWC check card prior to commencement at our school.
- notify the Principal 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.
- office staff will maintain registers and ensure staff and volunteers WWCs are up to date.

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. Teachers are exempt from this as per Victorian Institute Registration requirements.

Further Information and Resources

Related Procedures

Police Records Check Procedure

Related Documents

Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

Further information is available from **the Department of Justice Working with Children webpage** or the Working with Children information line on 1300 652 879

School Register

The School will take a copy of each WWCC and filed in the Administration Filing Cabinet as per the Staff Registers Policy. The register will be placed on sharepoint.

WNPS Volunteers Policy
WNPS Employment Policy

Evaluation

Evaluation of the *WWC Policy* will occur as stipulated in the *Watsonia North PS Policy Review Cycle* document.

This policy was endorsed by School Council on 18 October 2016 and is scheduled for review in 2020.