



Yarrowonga College P-12

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

Yarrowonga College P-12 will assess and verify the suitability of staff, volunteers, Cleaners and contractors who will work with children. Unless an exemption applies to a person, a valid Working with Children's Check (WWCC) is the minimum standard for all adults working with children. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWCC e.g. police officer, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

In addition to a WWCC, Yarrowonga College P-12 may also require a criminal record check. This may be considered necessary when certain offences are relevant to the duties of the volunteer or staff member, for example checking for dishonesty offences may be required for a role that involved managing finances or petty cash.

POLICY PURPOSE

To minimise the risk of harm to students by requiring staff and volunteers of Yarrowonga College P-12 to provide evidence that they have appropriate approvals to work with children in accordance with legislation and Department policy.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons are employed in the school. Prior to employing a person, the Principal must be satisfied that the person meets the required Suitability for Employment Checks. See **Suitability for Employment Policy**:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Suitability_for_employment.pdf

To maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism in our school, Yarrowonga College P-12 will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx>

Yarrowonga College P-12 will adhere to the Department procedures for the conduct of criminal record checks for all school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and WWCC to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

VOLUNTEERS

Definition

Working with Children Check's 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 holidays.

1. The definition of 'direct contact' with children includes oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact; and

2. A WWCC is required for anyone engaging in 'child related work' as part of their role or duties, whether an employee, volunteer, visitor or contractor must have a WWC Check regardless of whether they are being supervised by a teacher or another adult with a WWC Check.

Commencing volunteering

A volunteer can commence work at Yarrawonga College P-12 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.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The WWCC is a minimum checking standard set by the Working with Children's Act (2005) For those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis. It checks the serious sexual, violent and drug-related offences as well as disciplinary findings of professional agencies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

To be a volunteer at Yarrawonga College a valid Working with Children Check Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:-

- Valid for 5 years
- Transferable between volunteer organisations
- Free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

Note: WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

Maintaining Records

A copy of the staff member, contractor, cleaner, or volunteer's WWC Check will be kept on the file at the school.

Yarrawonga College P-12 will implement procedures to ensure staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check Card; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year.

It is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to:-

- Provide Yarrawonga College with the successful WWC Check Card prior to commencement.
- 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 or if their WWCC has been suspended.
- Apply for a new WWCC before their card expires.

Privacy

Yarrawonga College P-12 will apply 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)*.

EXEMPTIONS

The Working with Children Act identifies categories or individuals who are exempted from the requirements to have a WWCC. Yarrawonga College P-12 reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWCC if the Principal considers it necessary in the circumstances. The exempt categories are:-

Children

If you are under 18 years of age, you are exempt from the Check.

Under the *Child Employment Act 2003* this exemption does not apply to under 18 year olds supervising children under the age of 15 in employment.

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 WWCC.

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 WWCC. 'Closely related' to a child means:

Spouse or domestic partner

Parent, step-parent, mother-in-law or father-in-law

Grandparent

Uncle or Aunt

Brother or sister, including half sibling, step sibling, brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

In the case of domestic partners, a person who would be closely related to the child if the domestic partners were married to each other.

This exemption does not apply if you are a kinship carer. A person who engages in kinship care work must hold a Check. A person is engaged in kinship care if:-

The person is a family member or other person of significance to a child; and

The child is or has been placed in the out of home care of that person under the ***Children, Youth and Families Act 2005***.

Teachers

Registered teachers or teachers who have permission to teach from the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), are exempt from the Check.

Police Officers

Victorian Police officer or an Australian Federal Police (AFP) officer, are exempt from the Check.

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

Links and References

School Policy Advisory Guide:

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

DEECD Human Resources

- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)

External Links:

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

The policy was reviewed in 2017 and will be reviewed every year.

RATIFIED BY YARRAWONGA COLLEGE P-12 SCHOOL COUNCIL

Date: ____/____/____

School Council President:

Review Date: August, 2018.

FLOWCHART for WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

NB:

It is mandatory that All volunteers and Locally Employed staff hold current Working with Children Checks.

Business Manager has primary responsibility for checking and processing WWCCs .

All Administration staff are also responsible for fully implementing this process in the event of the Business Manager's absence or at the instruction of the Business Manager.

