



## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Werribee Secondary College will establish and implement policies to assess and verify the suitability of teachers, staff and volunteers who will work with children including requiring all volunteers to provide evidence of their suitability. This evidence is generally a Working With Children Check (WWC); however if a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWC e.g. police officers and teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

In addition to a WWC the College may also consider it necessary that a criminal record check is conducted through the Department.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. POLICY PURPOSE

To ensure teachers, staff and volunteers of Werribee Secondary College are approved to work with children by meeting legal requirements.

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION

As part of the process for maintaining high standards of conduct and professionalism in the workplace, principals and leadership of Werribee Secondary College will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Werribee Secondary College Council to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons are employed in the school. Prior to employing a person, the College Council (or the principal if the school council has delegated its employment powers to the principal) must be satisfied that the person has met the required checks suitability for employment.

Verification of a satisfactory criminal record is achieved by ensuring the employment of new employees and engagement of volunteers proceeds in accordance with Department of Education and Training policy (for Victorian Public Servants), and legislative obligations pursuant to the Working with Children Act 2005 (for school based non-teaching employees and volunteers), and to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 Part 2.6 Victorian Institute of Teaching (for principals and teachers).

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

### 3.1 Volunteers

#### 3.1.1 Definition

A volunteer school worker is a person who without payment or reward voluntarily: engages in:

- school council functions
- any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school work
- any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council
- providing any assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support

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<sup>1</sup> This may occur when possible offences are relevant to the duties of the volunteer, for example dishonesty offences, which are not part of the WWC. The school covers the cost of the criminal record check.

### 3.1.2 Commencing volunteering

A volunteer can commence work at Werribee Secondary College when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a WWC with the Department of Justice.

## 3.2 Working with Children Check

The WWC Check is a minimum checking standard set by the Working with Children Act 2005 for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis.

To be a volunteer at the College, a Working with Children 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.

## 3.3 Maintaining the register

Upon receipt of verification (for example, a certified photocopy), the WWC details will be updated on the College's Staff Register and a copy kept on the staff member's personnel file as per the Staff Register policy.

Werribee Secondary College will ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure teachers, staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC card (or equivalent) at all times; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the academic year.

It is the responsibility of the teacher, staff member or volunteer to:

- provide the successful WWC card (or equivalent) prior to commencement at the College
- 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 (or equivalent) before their card expires.

## 3.4 Privacy

Werribee Secondary College will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information as per the Privacy Act 2005.

## 3.5 Relevant exemptions

### 3.5.1 Student volunteers

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

### 3.5.2 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.

### 3.5.3 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.

'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.

### 3.5.4 Teachers

Teachers registered with, or has permission to teach from, the Victorian Institute of Teaching under Part 2.6 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 are exempt from a further Working with Children check

### 3.5.5 Police officers

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from the WWCC.

### 3.5.6 Visiting workers

Persons who usually live and work in another state or territory engaged in child-related work and are visiting Victoria to engage in child-related work are exempt from the WWC.

### 3.5.7 Some accredited drivers

Persons engaged in child-related work that requires a current driver accreditation under the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 are exempt from the WWC for that child-related work, with some exceptions.

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

## 4. 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](#)

Related Legislation:

- Working with Children Act 2005
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Privacy Act 2005

## 5. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.