WORKING WITH CHILDREN CLEARANCE REGISTER PROCEDURE and POLICY 2024 - 2028

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please email the General Office cranbourne.east.sc@education.vic.gov.au

STATEMENT

The Working with Children (WWC) clearance aims to assist in protecting children from sexual or physical harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for, students are subject to a screening process. It is designed to complement good selection, supervision and training practices (including rigorous reference checking).

Passing the 'Check' is a legal requirement for everyone in Victoria doing paid or voluntary child-related work who doesn't qualify for an exemption. Exemption details - http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/who+needs+a+check/exemptions/

Verification of suitability for employment is assisted by ensuring the employment of new school based employees proceeds in accordance with legislative obligations pursuant to the *Working with Children Act 2005* (for 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 authority for the policy and procedures is Ministerial Order 199 - which applies to the principal class, teacher class, and education support class employed by the Department, and Ministerial Order 200 for all non-teaching staff and casual relief teachers employed by school councils.

The Department has developed procedures for the conducting 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 Working with Children Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

These procedures apply to:

- persons employed under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- persons employed under the Public Administration Act 2004
- volunteers
- casual employees including casual relief teachers
- student teachers and interns
- contractors
- home-stay families.

Reviewed – Term 2 2024
Date of Next Review – Term 2 2028

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Minimum Standards for school registration, including the Child Safe Standards, Cranbourne East Secondary College maintains a register of all employees, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) details, where they are required to have one under the *Worker Screening Act 2020* or under our school or department policies. This ensures all employees, and those volunteers involved in activities with potentially high levels of student contact, are responsible and of sound character.
The register includes each person's:

- name
- clearance number
- expiry date
- date the check was last verified
- Other information such as WWCC type (employee/volunteer), status message etc

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines will be adhered to in relation to working with children checks at the College:

- All workers or volunteers related in 'child related work' must undergo Working with Children Checks prior to commencing work.
- You are considered to be performing 'child related work' if you work or volunteer at a school or school related activities, and you volunteer or do this work on a regular basis, and you have direct contact with children under 18 years of age which is either supervised or unsupervised, and you do not qualify for an exemption.
- All teaching staff members are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and undergo ongoing monitoring that satisfies Working with Children check requirements, and are therefore exempt. Police officers are also exempt.
- Any parent volunteering on a regular basis will be required to obtain a Working with Children Check.
- CESC does not pay for Working with Children Checks. WWC Checks last for 5 years.
- All people required to have Working with Children Checks are issued a WWC Check Card which must be displayed on their person at all practicable times when working or volunteering at the school or during school related activities. A photocopy of the card must be given to the school.
- All WWCC currency will be recorded and monitored within the school's compliance register.

PROCEDURE

This procedure outlines how our school maintains this register. It also outlines the required process for entering WWCC and Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration information onto eduPay.

A template procedure and Excel register to support schools in recording the required information has been provided by the Department to assist schools to record the required details for each person and to document their local procedures for maintaining a register of all staff and volunteers with a WWCC.

VIT registration and WWCC requirements

All employees of Cranbourne East Secondary College employed to undertake teaching duties must be registered with the VIT. This includes Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs). Staff with VIT registration do **not** also require a WWCC.

All employees of Cranbourne East Secondary College employed as education support staff or in roles that are non-teaching roles must have a current WWCC (unless they have VIT registration).

Employee VIT registration and WWCC details must be recorded in eduPay. Procedures for staff to enter VIT registration and WWCC details into eduPay are set out in the *Update Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working With Children Check card details* quick reference guide.

All volunteers and visitors (including contractors or staff placed through agencies/third parties) who are engaged in child-related work or are required to have a WWCC under our school's Volunteers or Visitors policies will be required to provide evidence of a current WWCC.

Volunteer and visitor WWCC details will be recorded in our WWCC Register. At CESC the Business Manger will conduct a the Volunteer Child Safe briefing with the volunteers who are engaged in child-related work.

Any employee, volunteer or visitor who does not have a current satisfactory WWCC or VIT registration where required under this procedure, will be removed from their duties until such time as they provide satisfactory evidence of their clearance.

WWCC Register

Our school maintains the WWCC Register in reception area. School receptionist makes copies the WWCC provided by the volunteer and a hard copy is kept on.

Adding new employees, volunteers and visitors to the WWCC Register

Cranbourne East Secondary College School Business Manager is responsible for sighting, verifying and recording WWCC information for any new employee and school receptionist is responsible for sighting, verifying and recording WWCC information for volunteer or visitor (where applicable), under the following process:

1. Record the relevant WWC clearance details in the WWC Status Checker – the person's first name can be entered into the 'Personnel #' column
2. Ensure the WWWC card type is correct (Employee or Volunteer)
3. Click "Start status check" to ensure the information provided is valid
4. Request that the employee, volunteer (or visitor if engaged to work at the school on a regular basis) access their MyCheck account to update their details to include the name of the school
5. Save the WWC Status Checker in CESC WWCC Register on our local network file
6. Retain a copy of any documentation sent by the Department of Justice and Community Safety (such as the letter of confirmation for employees and any volunteers or contractors who have listed the school on their WWCC details), and records of any other child safety suitability checks (such as reference checks) in the employee file or relevant file for visitors and volunteers WWCC information.

Ongoing maintenance of the WWCC Register

NOTE: If the employee, volunteer or visitor has entered the school details into their card account, the Department's Employee Conduct Branch will be contacted by the Department of Justice and Community Safety about any changes to the card status, who will in turn contact the school. By law, the card holder must also inform the school in writing of any subsequent exclusion notice they receive. Schools must also:

- proactively check a person's WWCC status at least once every 12 months to check for any status changes
- periodically review their WWCC register to anticipate upcoming expiry dates and take steps to remind card holders close to expiry to renew their WWCC – this can be done at the same time as the WWCC status check process or more regularly depending on the process established at the school

Procedure to maintain WWCC Register to ensure the WWCC information in your register remains current and that no employee, volunteer or visitor is working at the school without a valid WWCC.

1. At the beginning of each school year School Business Manager will run another check of the WWC Status Checker to check if there have been any changes to a person's WWCC status

2. Where a person's WWCC status has changed to indicate a concern (eg expired, suspension or revocation of clearance) School Business Manager will inform the Principal immediately and steps will be taken to ensure the person is removed from their duties until such time as they provide satisfactory evidence of their clearance.
3. At the same time as running the check school receptionist will note where clearances are due to expire during the year
4. Where the check is expiring during the year School Business Manager will contact the WWCC holder to remind them that their WWCC is due to expire and to request updated information once it has been renewed
5. When the updated information is provided the information is entered into the WWC Status Checker and verified by clicking "Start status check"

Employee VIT or WWCC information on eduPay

Upon engagement of a new employee School Business Manager will follow the eduPay User Guide: School Appointments to ensure they are properly entered into eduPay (regardless of whether they are Department or school council employees) including:

- checking that employees have been entered correctly as either a teacher (if they are performing teaching duties) or education support staff, and that valid and current VIT registration or WWCC information (as applicable) has been entered into eduPay by the staff member
- for employees who have entered WWCC information, checking that the card type is entered as 'Employee' and verifying the WWCC details through the process outlined above.

VIT registration status is verified and monitored through a centralised process between VIT and the Department of Education and Training and our school will be informed by the Department of any change to VIT registration status that requires action. Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning) will monitor VIT registration status.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Child Safe Standards
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Contractor OHS Management
- Recruitment in Schools
- Suitability for Employment Checks
- Visitors in Schools
- Volunteers in Schools
- Working with Children Checks and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors

Communicate the procedure in the following ways:

- included in the induction material for leadership staff and any staff member responsible for implementing the procedures
- made available in the staff handbook/manual

PROCEDURE REVIEW AND APPROVAL

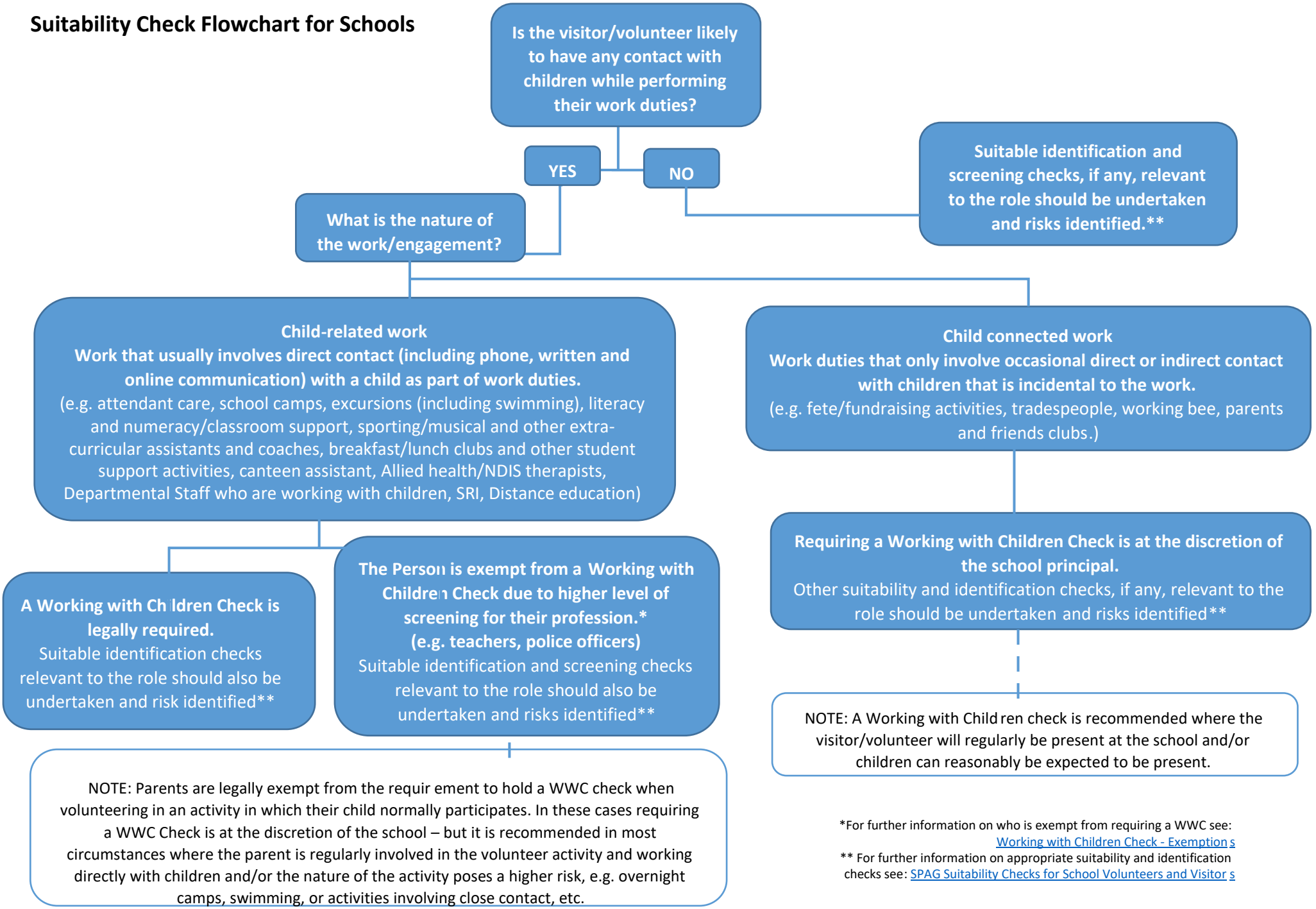
Procedures last reviewed	Term 2 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Term 2 2028 – recommended review cycle is 3 to 4 years

SUPORTING DOCUMENTS

The Act

http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/purpose/working+with+children+act/

Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools



*For further information on who is exempt from requiring a WWC see: Working with Children Check - Exemptions

** For further information on appropriate suitability and identification checks see: SPAG Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors