POLICY: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK AND SUITABILITY CHECKS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the office at Brentwood Park on 9702 2022.

PURPOSE:

The Working With Children Check (WWC) 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 and Community Safety.
A WWC check is required for individuals who engage in 'child related work' that involves direct contact with a child. 'Direct contact' with children has been expanded to include oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact.

A WWC Check is required for anyone engaging in 'child- related work' regardless of whether contact with a child is supervised by another person or not. This means that a volunteer or visitor who is supervised by a teacher must have a WWC Check if they engage in 'child related work.'

A police record 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.

- At Brentwood Park parent volunteers who **require** a WWC are:
  - parent helpers who regularly support the classroom/specialist/library programs
  - parent helpers at swimming, sporting events excursions/incursions and camps
  - fundraising committee members
  - school council members
- At Brentwood Park parent volunteers who **do not** require a WWC are:
  - parents who listen to reading for the first fifteen minutes of the school and then leave

AIMS:

The 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 the school including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.
To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Minimum Standards for school registration, including the Child Safe Standards, the school 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 and department policies.

IMPLEMENTATION:
PROCEDURES FOR STAFF:

- All employees 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 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.

PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS:

- 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.
- Volunteers and visitors entering the school, sign in at the XUNO kiosk which automatically verifies a WWCC record.
- Volunteer and visitor WWCC details will be recorded in our WWCC Register.
- 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.

The register includes each person's:

- name
- clearance number
- expiry date
- date the check was last verified

WWCC REGISTER:

The WWCC Register on an excel spreadsheet on the administration network

Adding new employees, volunteers and visitors to the WWCC Register

The Business Manager is responsible for sighting, verifying and recording WWCC information for any new employee, volunteer or visitor under the following process:

1. Record the relevant WWC clearance details in the WWCC register
2. Ensure the WWWC card type is correct (Employee or Volunteer)
3. Verify the WWCC;
   - If checking the status of multiple WWCCs, copy the last name and card number into the sample CSV file from the Service Victoria website, submit to the online Working With Children Status Checker and wait for an email with the results of the status check
   - If checking the status of a single WWCC enter the last name and card number into the online Working With Children Status Checker
   - If checking the status of a Digital Working with Children Check, use the Service Victoria app on a mobile device to scan the QR code on the digital card. Get the Service Victoria app from Google Play or the App Store
4. Record the date the WWCC was verified on the WWCC register and copy paste the status check message or expiry date provided by Service Victoria into the WWCC register.

5. 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
6. Save the WWCC register in [insert wording to describe the location of the WWCC Register at your school eg "our local network file"]
7. 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

At the beginning of each school year the Business Manager will copy the last name and card numbers of all entries in the WWCC register into the sample CSV file from the Service Victoria website, submit to the online Working With Children Status Checker and wait for an email with the results of the status check, to check if there have been any changes to a person's WWCC status

1. Where a person's WWCC status has changed to indicate a concern (eg expired, suspension or revocation of clearance) [insert position title] 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 or evidence that they have applied for a check as per the Department's Working with Children Checks and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors guidance.
2. At the same time as running the check the Business Manager will note where clearances are due to expire during the year
3. Where the check is expiring during the year the 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
4. When the updated information is provided the information is entered into the school's WWCC register and validated as per the procedure above for adding new entries.

EMPLOYEE VIT or WWCC INFORMATON ON eduPay

Upon engagement of a new employee the 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 and the school will be informed by the department of any change to VIT registration status that requires action.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Brentwood Park policies:

- Visitors to School Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety Policy

- Child Safe Code of Conduct

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

Policy last reviewed	18/2/2025
Consultation	Consultation with school council and approved by School Council
Approved by	James Bell, principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2029