



# STAWELL SECONDARY COLLEGE

## **Working With Children Check Policy**

### **Rationale:**

Stawell Secondary College has a zero tolerance of child abuse and is committed to acting in the best interest of children and to keeping them safe at all times.

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).

This procedure applies to all positions at the Secondary College, except teachers with a current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration, and including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.

### **CHILD SAFETY**

Stawell Secondary College is aware of its obligations under the Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order 870 – effective August 1, 2016) to protect students from all forms of child abuse. To this end, all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure that visitors do not pose a risk to child safety.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure children under our care are protected from being exposed to inappropriate people and subsequent child abuse.
- To ensure all people engaged in 'Child related work' with our students and who are required to have a Working with Children Check do so.
- To ensure our College complies with the relevant Acts and Laws.(Ministerial Order 870)
- To provide an environment that is safe

### **Date Effective:**

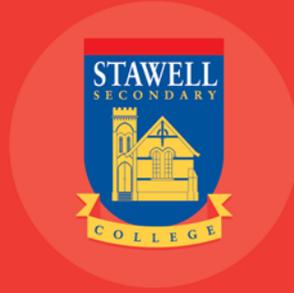
26/03/2020

### **Definitions:**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Child	A person who is under the age of 18 years
Student	Any child who is enrolled at the Stawell Secondary College
Candidates	Person who applies for a job and/or is within the school grounds for a requested purpose

### **What is the Working with Children 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



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(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 our College
- 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.

## **What is the application process?**

- The candidate must complete a Working with Children Check application form. The forms are available online or at Australia Post outlets in Victoria. Under the section marked 'Details of Organisation', candidates should ensure they state Stawell Secondary College.
- 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](#).

## **What if the applicant does not pass the check?**

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 the Stawell Secondary College.

## **When can the candidate commence?**

Commencement at the Stawell Secondary School is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card. Any queries should be directed to the Principal.

## **Who pays for the WWC check?**

Candidates who are required to undergo a WWC check as a condition of working at Stawell Secondary College will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from the College.

## **Responsibilities**

The Stawell Secondary College 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



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- 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.

The staff member or volunteer must:

- provide the successful WWC check card prior to commencement at the Stawell Secondary 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 check before their card expires

## **What is the difference between a WWC Check and a police records check?**

A police records check provides 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, violent and drug offences.

A staff member or volunteer is required to undertake a WWC check even if they have already completed a police records check.

## **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

Suitability checks for school volunteers and visitors (2019)

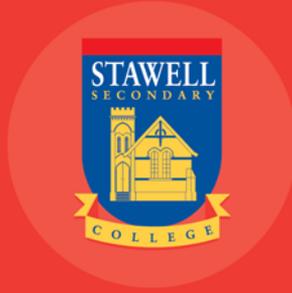
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/volunteers.aspx>

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority, resources (2019)

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/resources.html>

## **Implementation:**

- All persons requiring a WWCC will be informed of their responsibilities by the Principal, teacher in charge of relevant program and the Business Manager.
- The Business Manager is responsible for maintaining the WWCC register and documentation collection.



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## **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle in accordance with the Child Safe Policy, in March every year. The review will be led by the Leading Teacher Wellbeing team and referred to the Policy Sub-Committee and School Council for ratification.

First issued	March 2020
Date of update	Summary of change(s)