

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK PROCEDURE

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).

Schools are required to exercise their legal obligations in regard to suitability checks, including Working with Children Checks, for adults who work with children at schools, and for work undertaken by school visitors and volunteers.

The intent of this procedure is to outline which positions at Saltwater College require a WWC check and the process to be followed.

This procedure applies to all positions at Saltwater College including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. Any reference to 'candidates' also extends to staff currently occupying a position.

DEFINITIONS

Child: a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Student: any child who is enrolled at Saltwater College.

WHAT IS THE WWC 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 (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:

- anyone engaging in '[child-related work](#)' regardless of whether contact with a child is supervised by another person or not. This means even if a volunteer or visitor is supervised by a teacher, they must still have (and provide evidence of) a WWC Check if they intend to engage in 'child related work' in connection with Saltwater College
- 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 Saltwater 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 Saltwater College.

WHEN CAN THE CANDIDATE COMMENCE?

Commencement at Saltwater College 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 in Saltwater College will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from Saltwater College.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Saltwater 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;
- check the card's validity on the [Department of Justice webpage](#);
- have a photocopy of the WWC card to be kept on the staff member's personnel file and the school register.
- 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 Saltwater 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 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.

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

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Worker Screening Act 2020](#)

Further information is available from the [Department of Justice Working with Children webpage](#) or the Working with Children information line on 1300 652 879

SCHOOL REGISTER MAINTENANCE PROCEDURE

- Saltwater College Primary School will make two copies of the WWCC.
- An electronic copy will be kept in the Administrative files.
- A hard copy of the file will be kept in the Administrative office.
- Copies will be placed on the staff files.

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.

