



THOMASTOWN  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN CLEARANCE POLICY (Child Safe Standard 4)

### PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Minimum Standards for school registration, including the Child Safe Standards, Thomastown 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.

The register includes each person's:

- name
- clearance number
- expiry date
- Thomastown Secondary College will also reference check people we plan to engage in child-related work and continue to monitor the behaviour of their workers around children once engaged
- 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).
- 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.

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.

### PROCEDURE

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

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 the school. 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](#)

### VIT registration and WWCC requirements

All employees of Thomastown 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 Thomastown 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.

Employee, 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.

### **WWCC Register**

Our school maintains the WWCC Register. The School will take a copy of each WWCC and filed in the Administration Filing Cabinet. The register will be placed on the administration network.

### **Adding new employees, volunteers and visitors to the WWCC Register**

At Thomastown Secondary College, the Principal/Assistant principals Example is/are responsible for sighting, verifying and recording WWCC information for any new employee, volunteer or visitor (where applicable), under the following process:

The school 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 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.
1. Identify all staff who require a Working with Children check and record the relevant WWC clearance details in the [WWC Status Checker – the person's first name can be entered into the 'Personnel #' column](#). Check the card's validity on the [Department of Justice webpage](#)
  2. [Ensure before commencement, 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 [insert wording to describe the location of the WWCC Register at your school eg "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.

7. Ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWC check card at all times.
- 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 before commencement, the WWWC card type is correct (Employee or Volunteer)
  - Click “Start status check” to ensure the information ON wwc ACRD provided is valid. 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)
  - 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
  - Save the WWC Status Checker in [insert wording to describe the location of the WWCC Register at your school eg “our local network file”]
  - 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.
  - Ensure suitable monitoring procedures are in place to ensure staff members hold a valid WWC check card at all times.

### **Ongoing maintenance of the WWCC Register**

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

To ensure school the WWCC information register remains current and that no employee, volunteer or visitor is working at the school without a valid WWCC. The school must:

1. At the beginning of each school year Principal/Assistant principal 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) the Facilities 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 the Facilities Manager will note where clearances are due to expire during the year
4. Where the check is expiring during the year Principal/Assistant principal 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 the Human Resource/ 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.

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Example School policies:

- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Duty of care

Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [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](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	Community consultation via College website – ongoing Leadership Team Consultation with School Council 18 <sup>th</sup> May
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025

**DET DOES NOT HAVE THIS- part of TSC**

<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>The Act</b>	<i>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</i>
<b>Aboriginal child</b>	A person under the age of 18 who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent</li> <li>• identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and</li> <li>• is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community</li> </ul>
<b>Child abuse</b>	For the purposes of these standards, abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical violence</li> <li>• sexual offences</li> <li>• serious emotional or psychological abuse</li> <li>• serious neglect</li> </ul> Further explanation of these types of abuse is provided in the section 'What is child abuse?'
<b>Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds</b>	A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.
<b>Child</b>	A person who is under the age of 18 years.
<b>Child safety</b>	In the context of the child safe standards, child safety means measures to protect children from abuse.
<b>Child safe organisation</b>	In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse.

<b>Cultural competency</b>	A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
<b>Cultural abuse</b>	Actions and attitudes that deliberately ignore, denigrate or attack the culture of a person or community.

<b>Cultural safety for Aboriginal children</b>	<p>The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.</p> <p>A culturally safe environment does not ignore, challenge or deny cultural identity. Cultural safety upholds the rights of Aboriginal children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify as Aboriginal without fear of retribution or questioning</li> <li>• have an education that strengthens their culture and identity</li> <li>• maintain connections to their land and country</li> <li>• maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations</li> <li>• be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders</li> <li>• receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner</li> <li>• be involved in services that are culturally respectful</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds</b>	An environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need. Efforts need to be made to ensure the culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages.
<b>Children with a disability</b>	<p>A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

<b>Organisation</b>	<p>The <i>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</i> (the Act) will provide that the standards apply to 'applicable entities', which are defined in the Act as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an incorporated body or association</li><li>• an unincorporated body or association (however structured)</li><li>• an individual who carries on a business and engages contractors, employees or volunteers to assist in the business in providing services or facilities</li></ul>
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A person will not commit this offence if they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information, including a fear for their safety or where the information has already been disclosed.

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) [www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence)

<sup>i</sup> Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence)

<[www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence)>.

<sup>ii</sup> Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first) <[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first)>.

<sup>iii</sup> For example behaviour, please see [An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards:](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc) <[www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards\\_overview.doc](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)>

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