

# WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Preamble

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 Goornong Primary School require a WWC check and the process to be followed.

This procedure applies to all positions at Goornong Primary School 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 Goornong Primary School.

## 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:

- Involves contact with children in connection with our school.
- involves 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.

The following definitions are taken from [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au).

**Direct contact** is being able to talk face-to-face or having physical contact with children.

**Directly supervised** means that the supervision is personal and immediate but can include a brief absence, such as taking a phone call in another room.

**The purpose of the table below is to provide examples of the types of activities at Goornong Primary School where a Working with Children Check is / is not required**

<b>Working with Children Check Required</b>	<b>Working with Children Check Not Required</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Volunteers conducting head lice inspections.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers attending any overnight camp.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers transporting students via vehicle for a school event without the supervision of a teacher/school employee and where the transport is <u>school arranged</u>.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers assisting on excursions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Volunteers assisting with morning reading.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers assisting in the classroom where the teacher is present.</li> <li>▪ Volunteers umpiring or coaching at school sporting events where there is a teacher/school employee in attendance.</li> </ul>

**School arranged** transport does not include transport designated as 'parental responsibility' such as sharing of lifts and carpooling to school events which is arranged by parents external to the school.

### **What is the application process? (Volunteers Paid Employees)**

1. The candidate must complete a Working with Children Check application form. The forms are available online at [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au).
2. Under the section marked 'Organisation Details, candidates should ensure they state Goornong Primary School.
3. The completed online form is to be printed and taken to an Australia Post outlet for processing. *Please note there is a time limit for applications to be lodged at an Australia Post outlet once they have been submitted online.*

Candidates need to provide a passport size photo, 100 points of acceptable identification and the printed copy of the completed online application form when lodging at Australia Post.

*Please note that some Australia Post outlets have the facility to take passport size photos.*

4. If the applicant passes the check they will be sent a successful Assessment Notice, followed by a WWC check card two-three weeks later.

Further information about the application process is available on the [Department of Justice webpage](#).

### **Cost for Submitting an Application**

There is no cost for volunteers to apply for a Working with Children Check, other than the cost of providing the passport size photo.

There is a cost for paid employees to apply for a Working with Children Check which is set by the Department of Justice. Paid employees may also have a cost of providing the passport size photo.

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

Candidates who are required to undergo a WWC check as a condition of working at Goornong PS will not be reimbursed for the cost from the school.

### **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 in the school.

### **When can the candidate commence volunteering/paid employment at Goornong PS?**

Commencement at Goornong Primary School is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card. A copy of the card must be provided to the school prior to commencing in the school. Any queries should be directed to the Principal.

### **Responsibilities**

Goornong PS 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.

The staff member or volunteer must:

- provide the successful WWC check card prior to commencement at Goornong PS.
- notify the office 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 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

## School Register

Goornong PS will take a copy of each WWCC and file it in the Administration Filing Cabinet as per the Staff Register Policy.

The register will be placed in the school policies folder.

## Evaluation:

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	16.03.2015
<b>Approved By</b>	School Council
<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	
<b>Communication Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Parents – Via school office.</li><li>▪ Staff – Via Induction pack.</li></ul>
<b>Next Review Date</b>	16.03.2018

## PROCEDURE for WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

