Rationale:
The Department of Education (DET) Craigieburn Primary School and School Council has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all children and employees, and maintain the security of assets by requiring and maintaining high standards of professional conduct from employees and volunteers. In meeting these responsibilities the DET and School Council must be satisfied that only those employees and volunteers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed.

Verification of a criminal record is achieved by ensuring the employment of new school based employees proceeds in accordance with legislative obligations pursuant to the Working with Children Act 2005 (for non-teaching employees and volunteers), and to the Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001 (for principals and teachers).

Child Safe Standard:
Victorian Government Schools are child safe environments. Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with the legal obligations including child safety standards. Refer to our Child Safety and Code of Conduct Policies.

Broad Guidelines:
The Department has developed procedures for the conduct of WWC Checks for all school based, non-school based employees and volunteers, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working with Children’s Checks to meet the Department’s pre-employment suitability for employment requirements. These Procedures apply to:

- Persons employed under the Education Reform Act 2006.
- Persons employed under the Public Administration Act 2004.
- Volunteers (in school and attending excursions/events as an official helper).
- Casual employees including casual relief teachers.
- Student teachers.
- Contractors.

Definitions:
Child – a person who is under the age of 18 years.
Student – any child who is enrolled at the school.

What is a 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 (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:

- The contact with children happens on a regular basis.
- The contact involves direct contact with children and this contact is not directly supervised.
The position does not qualify for an exemption as listed under the ACT.

Who is exempt from having a WWC Check?

- Parent Volunteers – parents volunteering in an activity in which their child participates, or normally participates, are exempt and do not need a WWC Check (excluding camps and excursions).
- Student Volunteer – any student volunteer under the age of 18 years, eg work experience students, which have had volunteer work organised by an educational institution (excluding camps or excursions).

Who requires a Volunteer WWC Check?

- Pre Service teachers – any pre-service teacher doing a placement in the school organised by an educational institution is required to have a Volunteer WWC Check.
- Contractors – any contractors employed to work in the school are required to have a Volunteer WWC Check.

What is the application process?
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).
Under the section marked ‘Details of Organisation’, candidates must ensure that 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.

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 Craigieburn Primary School.

When can the candidate commence?
Commencement at Craigieburn Primary 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 in the School will not be able to receive reimbursement for the cost from Craigieburn Primary School.

Responsibilities:
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;
- 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 a successful WWC check card prior to commencement at Craigieburn Primary School and is required to 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.

**School Register**
Craigieburn Primary School will take a copy of each WWCC and file them. The register will be placed on the admin network.

**References:**

Child Employment Act 2003

**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.
Visitors Policy.

**Evaluation:**
This policy will be reviewed as a part of the school’s cyclic process or more often if necessary due to changes in legislation or regulations.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in **Oct 2016** and will be reviewed annually.
It is mandatory that all locally employed non teaching staff hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC).

The Business Manager has the primary responsibility for checking and processing WWC checks.

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.

**Request Working With Children Check (WWCC)**

- **WWCC provided**
  - Check that the card is current and the photo of the volunteer/staff.
  - Photocopy the card and file the photocopy alphabetically in the WWCC folder in the office.
  - Add the details on the WWCC Register. Copies to be kept in both electronic and hardcopy as per the Staff Register Policy.

- **Does not hold a WWCC**
  - Ask person to apply for a WWCC through the [www.workingwithchildrencHECK.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildrencHECK.vic.gov.au) to find the forms.
  - Inform the volunteer to bring the WWCC to the office when they have received it.