



PPSS VIT & WWC CHECK PROCEDURES CHILD SAFE

STATEMENT

Port Phillip Specialist School will assess and verify the suitability of staff and volunteers who will work with children. This school has a commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse**. We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all students can be happy, confident and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children.

A Working with Children's check (WWC Check) is required for anyone engaging in 'child-related work' and having 'direct contact' with children as part of their role or duties, an employee, volunteer, visitor or contractor must have a WWC Check regardless of whether they are being supervised by a teacher or another adult with a WWC Check. Direct contact with children includes oral, written or electronic communication (as well as face-to-face and physical contact).

Unless an exemption applies to a person, a valid WWC Check is the minimum standard for all adults working with children. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC Check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

In addition to a WWC Check, Port Phillip Specialist School may also require a criminal record check. This may be considered necessary when certain offences are relevant to the duties of the volunteer or staff member, for example checking for dishonesty offences may be required for a role that involves managing finances.

1. PURPOSE

To minimise risk of harm to students by requiring staff and volunteers of Port Phillip Specialist School to provide evidence that they have appropriate approvals to work with children in accordance with legislation and Department policy.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that only suitable and eligible persons are employed in the school. Prior to employing a person, the principal must be satisfied that the person meets the required Suitability for Employment Checks. See **Suitability for Employment Policy**: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Suitability_for_employment.pdf

To maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism in our school, Port Phillip Specialist School will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx>



Port Phillip Specialist School will adhere to the Department procedures for the conduct of criminal records checks for all school-based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and WWC Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

3.1 Volunteers

3.1.1 Definition

WWC Checks are required by all volunteers who will be working with students for school activities whether or not supervised by a teacher and whether or not the activity is on school grounds or during school hours.

For example, a volunteer who is assisting at a school camp or any other approved school activity outside of school grounds will require a WWC Check. See section 3. 2

3.1.2 Commencing volunteering

A volunteer can commence work in Port Phillip Specialist School when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a WWC Check with the Department of Justice and have otherwise been considered by the school to be suitable.

3.2 Working with Children Check

The WWC Check is a minimum checking standard set by the *Working with Children Act 2005* for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis. It checks for serious sexual, violent and drug-related offences as well as disciplinary findings of professional agencies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

To be a volunteer at Port Phillip Specialist School, a valid Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:

- valid for 5 years
- transferable between volunteer organisations
- free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

Note: WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

3.3 Maintaining records

A copy of the staff member or volunteer's WWC Check will be kept on the file at the school.

Port Phillip Specialist School will implement procedures to ensure staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check card; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year.

It is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to:

- provide Port Phillip Specialist School with the successful WWC Check card prior to commencement
- 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 or if their WWC Check has been suspended.
- apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.



It is the schools responsibility to:

- ask for the WWC Check card on arrival at Port Phillip Specialist School
- keep a copy of the WWC Check card on file

The office manager at school will maintain a Working with Children Register and archive, where appropriate, the files of WWC Check Cards of all relevant visitors, volunteers and staff.

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Registration:

- Current registration is required by all Teacher & Principal Class members, including Casual Relief Teachers
- It is the responsibility of the Business Manager and Principal to ensure prior to employment that all prospective new employees are compliant with VIT registration
- It is the responsibility of each teacher and Principal Class member to ensure that their registration is current. This information can be accessed by visiting MyVIT @ <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au>
- Each Teacher & Principal Class must present their signed renewal VIT to the Business Manager for updates to be processed to the register and copied for their staff file.
- Any Teacher or Principal Class member whose registration lapses or is suspended will be removed from their duties as they have no registration to teach and may have no current WCC
- Provisionally registered Teachers must meet the VIT requirements to gain Full Registration within the time frame set out by the VIT.

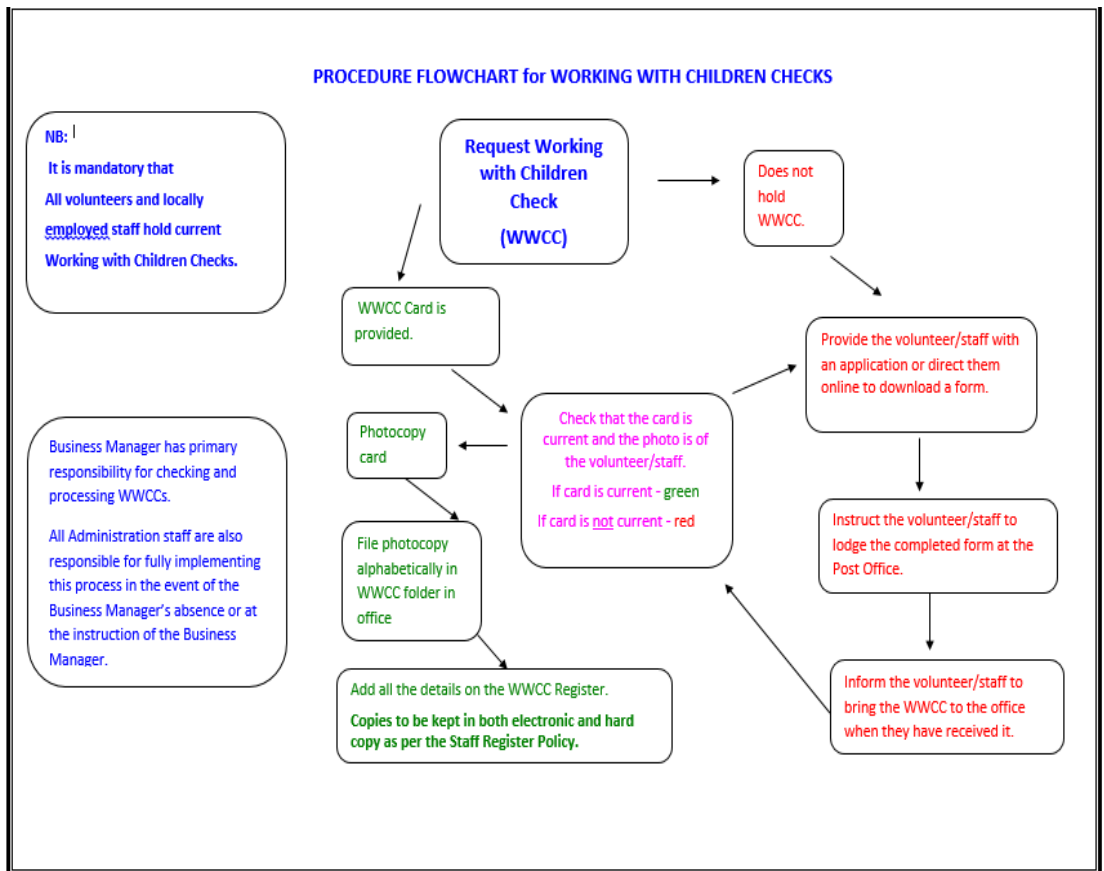
3.4 Privacy

Port Phillip Specialist School will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

3.5 Exemptions

The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check. Port Phillip Specialist School reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWC Check if the principal considers it necessary in the circumstances.

For a full list of exemptions and examples refer to: [Working with Children Check – Exemptions](#)



Guidelines

- A Register for VIT & WWC of Teaching, Education Support Staff & Volunteers will be maintained.
- The original version of a WWC or VIT Registration must be sighted and copied and authorized by Leadership or the Business manager.
- All staff and visitors identified in the scope of this procedure will not start in their role without a valid WWC or VIT registration.
- The register will include dates for renewal of qualifications
- A hard copy of VIT & WWC cards for employees including local payroll staff and volunteers will be kept in a folder and stored securely in the office. All staff including casuals will also have a copy kept in their individual files.
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REVIEW CYCLE

This Code of Conduct or Policy was endorsed/approved by the Port Phillip Specialist School Council in May 2021 for review if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than November 2020.

Date Implemented	March 2021
Author	Principal
Approved By	School Council
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	School Council President: Signature: Date:
Date Reviewed	Feb 2021
Responsible for Review	Principal, Assistant Principal, Business Manager
References	Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide