



WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK PROCEDURES

1. STATEMENT

Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School (YRSDS) 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 the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe **environment** for children with a disability.

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, Yarra Ranges SDS 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 or petty cash.

2. PURPOSE

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

3. 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, Yarra Ranges SDS will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx>

Yarra Ranges SDS 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 Yarra Ranges SDS 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 Yarra ranges SDS 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.

Yarra Ranges SDS 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 Yarra Ranges SDS 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 YRSDS
- 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.

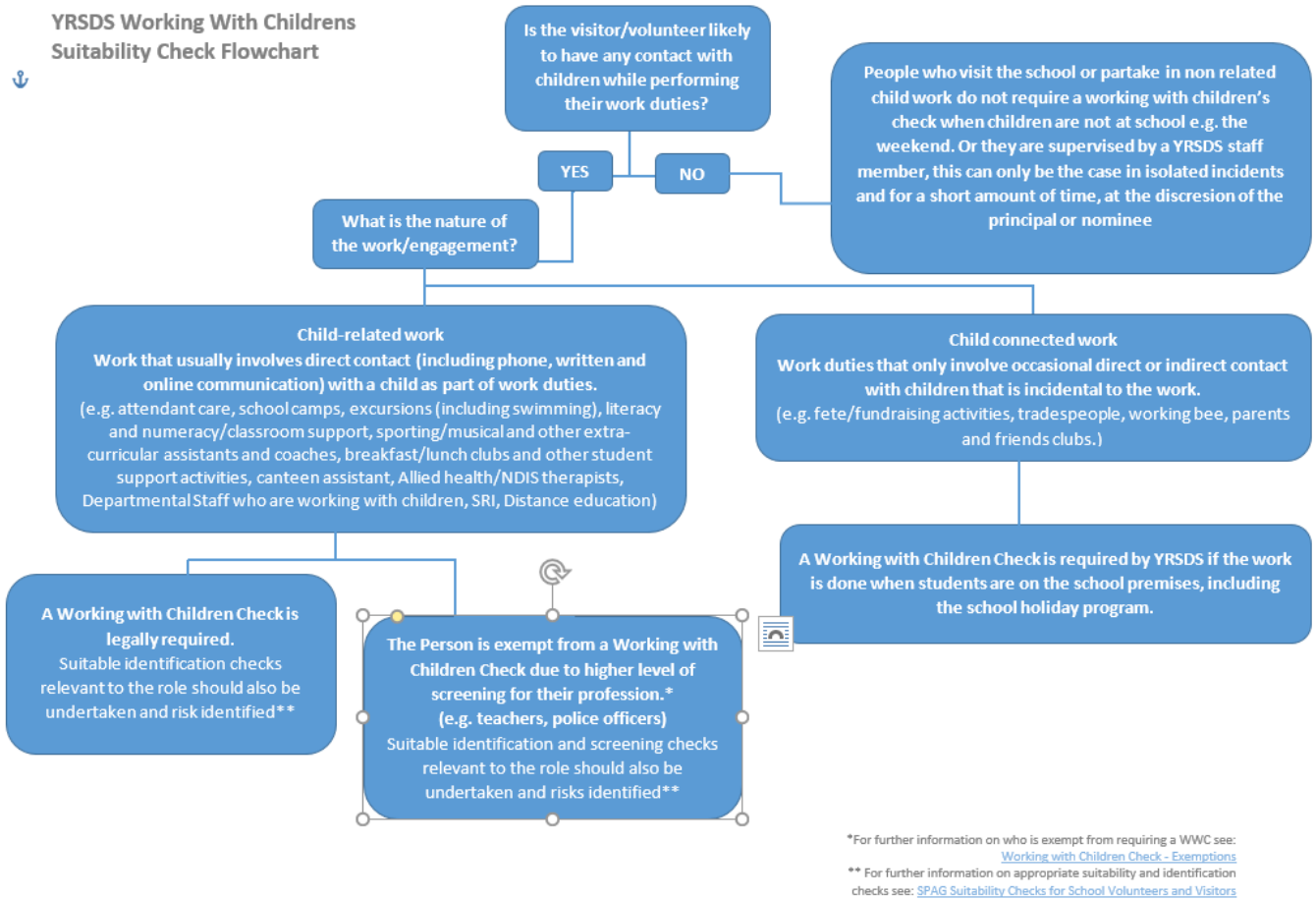
3.4 Privacy

Yarra Ranges SDS 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. Yarra Ranges SDS 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](#)



PROCEDURE 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.

