



## **STAFF EMPLOYMENT POLICY (formerly Working With Children's Check Policy)**

### **Preamble**

The Staff Employment Policy is to be followed when employing a new staff member at Kurunjang Secondary College in any position whether it be teaching or non-teaching.

The policy is to ensure that any staff who are employed at Kurunjang Secondary College meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards which include, but not limited to, a current Working With Children (WWC) check as well as procedure ensuring that the employed staff member complies with relevant standards.

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) and is part of the procedure outlined later in the policy.

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.

### **Definitions**

Child: a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Student: any child who is enrolled at the college

### **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:

- involve contact with children in connection with our college
- the contact happens on a regular (everyday) basis;
- involve 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.

### **What is the application process?**

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 Kurunjang Secondary College

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 in the college

### **When can the candidate commence?**

Commencement at Kurunjang Secondary College is conditional upon receipt of a successful Assessment Notice or WWC check card and the completion of the Staff Employment Checklist as outlined in this policy.

### **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 the college.

### **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 ( 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 The School
- 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 card 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.

### **Staff Employment Checklist**

It is the duty of the school to ensure that all employment opportunities at Kurunjang Secondary College are subject to the Staff Employment Checklist (see Appendix A). This checklist must be completed for any candidate that may be employed by the school. The checklist includes the areas:

- 1) Advertising the position
  - a) Includes the general statement as outlined below
  - b) Any other statement as outlined by the department or ministerial order
- 2) Interviewing
  - a) Any relevant questions and responses in relation to a working history with children
- 3) Referee Checks
  - a) A written referee check form outlining work history and suitability with working with children
- 4) Final Records Check
  - a) Proof of identity
  - b) Working with Children's Check or similar
  - c) Any relevant qualifications
  - d) Any relevant history of working with children.

The school will be required to keep the completed checklist and relevant documentation, signed by the panel chair and principal with all other relevant employment documentation.

### **Advertised Positions**

The 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide has been updated and requires that position descriptions for all new positions advertised from 1 August 2016 include the following standard 'Child safe environments' clause:

*Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our schools actively promote 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 their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards. Kurunjang Secondary College's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school's website. All successful candidates will be required to provide documentation outlining suitability to working with children.*

*This organisation promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability. Kurunjang Secondary College also promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples. This organisation promotes the safety and wellbeing of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.*

*Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with Aboriginal children and/or communities, children with disabilities and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.*

### **Required Documentation**

Staff who are offered employment by Kurunjang Secondary College are required to submit the following documentation, to be copied and kept on a staff file:

- Working with Children Check, or similar;
- Proof of personal identity
- Any professional or other qualifications;
- Personal history of working with children (if applicable);

This documentation is only required for newly employed candidates and is not required for any individual who has provided relevant information in the preceding 12 months.

### **Induction**

It is the requirement of all staff members employed by Kurunjang Secondary College that they undertake induction in school policies and procedures. This induction is to

ensure that newly appointed staff understand the relevant material in relation to the Child Safe Standards. The induction will include, but not limited to:

- Understanding the Child Safe Policy
- Relevant procedures for the Mandatory Reporting Policy
- School procedures outlining the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community

#### **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**

The college will take a copy of each WWCC and any other relevant documents and file it in the Administration Filing Cabinet as per the Staff Registers Policy.

The register will be placed on the admin network.

#### **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

<b>Date Implemented</b>	17/11/2016
<b>Author</b>	Aylin Gökmen / Shane Cole
<b>Approved By</b>	
<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	College Council Traci Bradley – President 17/11/2016
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal Aylin Gökmen
<b>Review Date</b>	17/11/2018
<b>References</b>	

## STAFF EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

### Advertising

Planning your advertisement and its placement provides a good opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders.

Does your advertisement include a message about your organisation's commitment to child safety?	
Does your advertisement include reference to your code of conduct and child safe policy?	
Does your advertisement inform applicants that appropriate rigorous reference and background checking will be undertaken, including a Working with Children Check and police record and identity check?	
Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability?	
Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to cultural safety, inclusion and empowerment of Aboriginal children, their families and communities?	
Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?	

### Selection criteria

Developing appropriate selection criteria for the position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. It will also ensure that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Does your selection criteria clearly state the experience, qualifications, qualities and attributes expected from the successful applicant?	
Does your selection criteria outline the supervision and accountability processes in place which support child safety?	
Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of the needs of children with a disability?	
Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of Aboriginal cultural safety and awareness?	
Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?	

## Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for your organisation and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children. Give yourself sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires. You may want to consider including Aboriginal peoples, people from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background and people with a disability on the interview panel.

Have you prepared a list of open-ended questions which will determine how the interviewee will behave in certain situations?	
Are there any unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history	
The applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision	
The applicant is evasive or inconsistent in his or her answers	

## Pre-employment screening

Screening applicants (including for paid and volunteer positions) is a good tool for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering your organisation.

### Police checks

Have you undertaken a police record check (which includes identity check)?	
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### Working with Children Check

Under the *Working with Children Act 2005*, people who are doing child-related work, and who are not exempt, need a Working with Children Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers.

Does the applicant hold a valid Working with Children Check, if required? Have you <a href="http://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj">checked the validity of their Working with Children Check</a> <online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj>?.  OR  If the applicant does not hold a valid Working with Children Check, and it is required, has the applicant provided evidence that they have applied for a Working with Children Check, and does your organisation have processes to follow up pending applications?	
Has the applicant provided you with evidence of their Working with Children Check, or evidence of their application for a Working with Children Check?	

## Referee checks

You should always talk to at least two referees as this can provide insight into the applicant's character and skills. Line managers, particularly the most recent, are likely to provide you with the most accurate reference. Where possible, referees that can provide insights into the applicant's experience working with children should be contacted.

Do the referees provided by the applicant include line managers who can be objective, rather than colleagues or friends?	
Has the applicant provided their most recent line manager as a referee? If not, have they provided you with a satisfactory reason?	
Have you spoken to at least two of the referees by telephone? Did you confirm with them their name and position provided to you by the applicant?	
Have referees completed the referee response checklist?	

## Additional checks

Additional checks will confirm the identity of the applicant and that their responses have been truthful.

Have you checked the identity of the applicant (for example, that their driver's licence/passport has the same name they have provided you)?	
Did you see a certified copy of the applicant's qualifications (if required)?	