

Recruitment Policy

RATIONALE

Emmanuel College is a school operated in the traditions of both the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers. Mercy Education Ltd (MEL) has delegated authority for all employment related matters to the College Principal.

The College only engages people who are suitable to work with students at the school and has developed and implemented child safe human resources practices accordingly.

All teachers employed are required to have Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration and, as part of that registration, they are required to apply for a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC). In view of the broader NCCHC, teachers are exempt from a Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance. All other non-teaching staff and volunteers are required to apply for a WWCC.

All staff and volunteers are instructed about the College's child safety policies and are expected to comply with the school's understanding of a child protection culture and minimisation of the risk of child abuse. Staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training and development opportunities as well as supervision and management to ensure their conduct is consistent with the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.

SCOPE

The practices the College will implement in recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers will comply and be consistent with the following published Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) guidelines and apply to all staff and volunteers.

DEFINITION

Staff at Emmanuel College are individuals who are working in the school environment and are:

- engaged directly or employed by the school
- a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

Volunteers are individuals who perform work without remuneration or reward for Emmanuel College in the school environment.

POLICY STATEMENT

At Emmanuel College, we are committed to ensuring that our recruitment practices create a safe environment for our students. To this end, we have established policies and procedures for recruiting employees and volunteers to assess their suitability to work with children.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Child safe recruitment practices

Each job description for staff involved in child-connected work (being those persons with direct contact with children that is regular and not incidental to the work) has a clear statement that sets out the requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing for those in that role, and the person's essential or relevant qualifications, experience, and attributes in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

All applicants for child-connected work at Emmanuel College are informed about these requirements and the school's child safety and wellbeing practices, including the Mercy Education Code of Conduct, prior to commencing work (including as a volunteer) at the school.

Once employed or engaged, staff and volunteers are also taken through an induction procedure that is appropriate to the nature of their role, and that further reiterates the person's duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing. Where relevant to their role, the induction procedure will also cover the Mercy Education Code of Conduct and the Complaints and Grievances Policy (and incorporated policies and procedures).

All staff and volunteers are made aware of and are required to read and sign the Mercy Education Code of Conduct and relevant child safety and wellbeing policies prior to commencing their work with children. They are also made aware of their responsibilities to children and students, information sharing and child safe reporting obligations and record keeping obligations.

The College will ensure that staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training and development opportunities as well as supervision and management to ensure their conduct is consistent with the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

New staff

It is our policy that all applicants for school positions undergo prior screening. The College will sight, verify, and record the following information about a person who it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work:

- registration with the VIT and associated NCCHC
- WWCC for non-teaching staff
- personal identity verification and background checking
- verification of professional and other essential or relevant qualifications
- an examination of their history of child-connected work
- reference checking that addresses the person's suitability for the job and working with children.

The above requirements need not be complied with if the College has already completed this process for a prospective staff member within the previous twelve months.

Volunteers

All volunteers, including parent/carer volunteers, must undergo the following screening prior to their engagement by the school:

- personal identity verification and background checking
- verification of professional and other essential or relevant qualifications (if required)
- an examination of their history of child-connected work
- reference checking that addresses the person's suitability for the job and working with children
- WWCC where required (see guidance below regarding when a WWCC is required).

Prior to engaging a volunteer to perform child-connected work, the College will sight, verify, and record documentation relating to the above matters, unless this has already been done for that individual within the previous twelve months.

Monitoring and assessing child-related work suitability

All new staff members and volunteers are supervised regularly to ensure that their behavior towards children is appropriate and to monitor their compliance with the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. All staff and volunteers are provided with supervision and people management of in a way that focuses on child safety and wellbeing.

Information and briefing on child safety are regularly shared to all staff and include consideration and understanding of the school's Mercy Education Code of Conduct and the requirements of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Child safe recruitment and other legislation

Our recruitment practices are subject to state and federal anti-discrimination legislation and the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* when obtaining, using, disclosing, and storing information from applicants and referees.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC) CLEARANCE

Source of obligation

The Victorian *Worker Screening Act 2020* (the Act) aims to protect children from harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for them, have their suitability to do so checked by a government body.

The Act aims to prevent those who pose a risk to children from working or volunteering with them.

Who needs a WWCC?

Subject to the exemptions referred to below, any worker who engages in child-related work that involves direct contact with a child (being a person under 18 years of age) needs a WWCC.

Section 3 of the Act defines 'direct contact' as any contact between a person and a child that involves:

- physical contact
- face-to-face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

A WWCC will apply to any person who is engaged by Emmanuel College as an employee, an Advisory Council member, a self-employed person, a volunteer, a third-party contractor (who has or is likely to have direct contact with children), a supervisor of child employees, part of practical training through an educational or vocational course, unpaid community work under a court order, a minister of religion or performing duties of a religious vocation, an officer of a body corporate, a member of a committee of management of an unincorporated body or a member of a partnership.

What is child-related work?

Child-related work is defined in Section 9 of the Act as voluntary or paid work, in any of the occupational categories listed in the Act that usually involves direct contact with a child.

For the purposes of the Act, work will not be 'child-related work' by reason only of occasional direct work with children that is incidental to the work.

The Act defines child-related work for ministers of religion more broadly than for other occupations. All ministers of religion are required to get a WWCC unless the contact they have with children is only occasional and always incidental to their work.

This would include for example having children in their congregation, attendance at schools or school camps even when all their contact with children is supervised. An example of when a minister of religion would not require a WWCC is a minister conducting purely administrative roles within a church's bureaucracy.

The following are considered to be child-related work:

- mentoring and counselling services for children
- direct provision of child health services
- clubs, associations, movements, societies, or other bodies (including bodies of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature)
- educational and care services, childcare centres, nanny services, and other childcare
- coaching and tuition services for children
- any religious organisation where children form part of the congregation
- boarding houses or other residential services for children and overnight camps for children
- transport services specifically for children, including school bus services and taxi services for children with a disability and supervision of school road crossings
- commercial photography services for children unless they are merely incidental to or in support of other business activities
- commercial talent competitions for children unless they are merely incidental to or in support of other business activities
- commercial entertainment or party services for children unless they are merely incidental to or in support of other business activities.

Key exemptions

People engaged in the following types of work are not required to have a WWCC:

- teachers registered with the VIT
- students, aged 18 or 19, undertaking volunteer work organised or held at school
- Victoria Police or Australian Federal Police officers
- workers, who usually live in another state or territory, visiting Victoria to engage in child-related work (only up to 30 days within the same calendar year)

- all children under the age of 18.

Note: Some drivers accredited under the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 (Vic.) who were engaging in child-related work were previously exempt from the WWCC. These drivers must now pass the WWCC to continue this work.

At Emmanuel College, all volunteer helpers, including parents and carers, are required to hold a WWCC.

How to apply for a WWCC

A worker who engages in child-related work is responsible for applying for their own WWCC. An employer can not apply on behalf of a worker.

To apply, fill out an online application form at <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>. Upon completion of the application, you will be provided with an online receipt.

Emmanuel College obligations

The College will:

- not engage anyone in child-related work who does not have a WWCC
- not allow anyone who has an Exclusion notice to undertake child-related work, even if they are directly supervised or exempt.
- ensure workers engaged in paid work have an Employee WWCC and not a Volunteer WWCC.

Penalties

It is an offence to work with children without a valid WWCC or application receipt while your WWCC is being processed. It is an offence for anyone to apply for or engage in child-related work if they have been issued an Exclusion notice. The maximum penalty is two years imprisonment, a fine or both.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure it does not engage or continue to engage a person in child-related work who does not hold a valid WWCC. The penalty for organisations is a significant fine.

Recordkeeping obligations

The school keeps records of all WWCCs in accordance with its recordkeeping obligations (and in accordance with the [Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping Standards](#)) and updates these regularly.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as needed and will be communicated to the College community via SIMON, staff meetings, and recruitment processes.

RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS

[Mercy Education Code of Conduct](#)

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Privacy Policy

[Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping Standards](#)

Worker Screening Act 2020

MACS Recruitment Policy

Guidelines on the Employment of Staff in Catholic Schools

Guidelines on the Engagement of Volunteers in Catholic Schools

Guidelines on the Engagement of Contractors in Catholic Schools

NDIS/External Providers: Guidelines for Schools

REVIEW HISTORY

Version	Date released	Next review	Author	Approved
1.0	October 2022	October 2024	HR Director	College Leadership Team

* MACS template used for the development of this policy