

DSM Policy

Child Safe Policy

Deutsche Schule Melbourne Inc, ABN 52 936 931 854



Statement

Deutsche Schule Melbourne (DSM) – A German English Bilingual School vision is to help students realise their own potential and become creative and confident participant in the global community. The school caters for children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The school's mission includes the element of nurture: nurturing the whole child in a multicultural community, nurturing mutual respect, understanding and caring for the individual and nurturing inclusive classrooms in which everyone feels pride and belonging.

DSM is committed to the safety, wellbeing and support of all children and young people in the school and has an important role to play in supporting children and their families and in protecting their students.

DSM is committed to embed an organizational culture of child safety in the school and adopts a vigilant zero tolerance policy in regards to child abuse.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting Policy.

Rationale

New Child Safe Standards have been introduced by the Victorian Government to manage the risk of child abuse in schools. The new standards have wide-spread implications in the daily school management and are inter-related to many school policies. They promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and children from other cultural backgrounds and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as children with a disability.

Victorian schools are mandated under Ministerial Order 870 to ensure child safe standards are in place to protect children from abuse and neglect. This contains the creation of an inclusive culture, as well as screening, supervision and training of personnel to identify and respond to indicators of harm.

Scope

This policy applies to children, students, families, staff, management, volunteers, contractors and visitors of the school.

Definitions

Child

Child means a child enrolled as a students at the school and/or OSHC service.

Child-connected work

Work that is authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child Abuse

Any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and the infliction, on a child, of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, or serious neglect of a child.

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Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms or puts at risk their physical, psychological or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, or can be a number of different incidents that take place over time.

In Victoria abuse is classified into seven types:

1. Physical abuse
2. Sexual abuse
3. Grooming
4. Emotional or psychological harm
5. Neglect
6. Family violence
7. Children exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviour

Child Safety

Encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

Organisational Culture

The set of values, expectations and standards that influence the behavior of members of the school. It defines acceptable and unacceptable behavior by people within the organization.

School Environment

A physical or virtual space made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during and outside school hours. These include the school campus, the online school environment (including email and intranet systems) and other locations provided by the school for the child's use including, but not limited to locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, co-curricular events, extra-curricular activities, pre- and after school care programs, exchange programs, voluntary community work, work experience and other events.

School Governing Authority

DSM's governing authority is the school board or the principal, as authorised by the board.

School Staff

An individual working in a school environment who is directly engaged or employed by the school governing authority or a volunteer or a contracted service provider.

Child Safe Standards

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, schools and OSHC services must have in place:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

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- Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

DSM will take account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable and make reasonable efforts to accommodate this diversity in the implementation of the minimum child safe standards.

Principles

DSM's governing authority is committed to embed a culture of child safety in all facets of the school operation.

All members of the school community must agree to abide by the school's Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Teachers, staff and volunteers are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at the school and the OSHC service. We comprehend our duty of care responsibilities to protect children from all types of abuse, and adhere to our legislative obligations at all times

The school actively promotes child safety in daily school operations and takes reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. DSM understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

Goals

- Providing an inclusive and safe school environment during and outside of school hours.
- Promoting a child-safe school culture in the school community, that is sensitive to the diversity of the school community.
- Taking 'reasonable precautions' to prevent abuse.
- Providing support to students on a continuum, from primary prevention, through various stages of intervention and restoring well-being.
- Promoting practices and processes that provide resilience and connectedness in students.
- Providing students with coping and social skills that empower them to best handle a range of unsafe situations.
- Promoting programs that help students to provide for their own safety, such as personal safety and protective behaviour, peer support and mediation, healthy relationships, buddy and transition programs.

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- Empowering students to seek support, services, confidantes at school and/or externally.
- Providing students with care and support, offering assistance and helping them deal with the after-effects of any experience,
- Supporting and monitoring recovery of students and teachers involved; Counselling support will be offered to all parties in relation to a reported allegation.
- Reviewing and evaluating incident management plans regularly.

Roles

Accountability for managing the risk of child abuse lies with the school's governing authority – the DSM board.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the child safe policy, procedures and strategies on an operational level to embed an organisational culture of child safety and is responsible for all aspects of school management including assisting the teachers, child and relevant specialist authorities, if requested.

For more detailed role allocation, please refer to the Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting Policy.

Strategies

The DSM board encourages and supports the school leadership team to fulfil the schools vision and mission and to develop an organisational culture of child safety, to develop child safety strategies and to enforce expected standards of behaviour as set out in the school's Code of Conduct.

The Principal will lead the school's child safe culture and coordinate responsibilities.

The school has the following strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse in place:

School board

- The board adopts a vigilant zero tolerance policy in regards to child abuse.
- The board promotes child safety vigilance, policy and practices in the school environment.
- The board develops and approves the child safe policy.
- The board oversees the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.
- The board will be trained annually in regards to child safety at the start of each school year. The training addresses individual and collective obligations and responsibilities to managing the risks of child abuse, the risks in the school environment and the school's current child safe standards.
- Child safety is a standing item for discussion at board meetings.

Engagement and on-boarding of staff, volunteers and visitors

- Board members are screened as part of the on-boarding process by the Business Manager against the Banned and Disqualified Persons register, have to sign a declaration of good character and provide the school with a Working With Children Check (WWCC).
- Job applicants are screened as part of the HR processes for their suitability in terms of qualification requirements, work history and via reference checks.
- The school will clearly state to job applicants, that DSM is committed to child safety, has child safe standards in place and adopts a zero tolerance policy in regards to child abuse.

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- The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) also screens teachers as part of the teacher registration process.
- Other staff engagements require a policy check and a valid WWCC.
- Contractors require a WWCC and are trained in the school's child safe strategies.
- Volunteers, including parents helping in the school require a valid WWCC.
- Contactors and visitors are made aware of the school's child safe strategies.

Training and Compliance

- The school provides policies, procedures and other documentation and training and materials to assist teachers in their roles to provide a child safe and supportive environment for students.
- Teachers, interns and school staff are inducted into the school policies and procedures by the Deputy Principal with particular attention to the Code of Conduct, Child Safe, Serious Incidents and Mandatory Reporting and Anaphylaxis policies and procedures.
- The Professional Development Coordinator will assess and monitor teachers' knowledge and skills, with emphasis on Child Safety (including Anaphylaxis), Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting policies and procedures and the management thereof. These include skills and knowledge to be vigilant and identify possible harm; provide teachers with guidelines on how to respond to concerns of safety and well-being and outline how to notify Child Protection Services for persons legally mandated and also for voluntary (non-mandated) notifications.
- Child safety roles and responsibilities are included in Position Descriptions and staff members are made aware.
- Child safety is a standing item at staff meetings with particular emphasis given to the first staff meeting of year school year. At this meeting the Code of Conduct, Child Safe, Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting and Anaphylaxis Policies will be reviewed together with all teachers. The training addresses individual and collective obligations and responsibilities to managing the risks of child abuse, the risks in the school environment and the school's current child safe standards.
- Child safety training is provided on a regular ongoing basis to all staff, with additional training made available for staff with specific roles and responsibilities or staff that have been identified to have skills gaps.
- Staff are trained to detect inappropriate behaviour and encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.
- Staff are encouraged to talk to the leadership team if uncertain or in doubt.
Child safety constitutes a fixed agenda item at the compulsory staff meeting at the beginning of each school year before the commencement of classes.

Empowering students

- Teachers will provide students with programs that strengthen their ability to provide for their own safety.
- Teachers will provide students with programs that empower students to seek help and assistance.
- Discussing child safety in class and raising student awareness.
- Discuss child safety as part of Health and Physical Education.
- Children are made aware of how to detect inappropriate behaviour.
- Children are encouraged to report inappropriate behavior and seek help.
- Provide students with information about where and how they can seek help.
- Children are encouraged to talk to a trusted teacher or person at the school.
- The Principal and teachers will make themselves available to receive notifications on serious incidents from students, parents or the community on a daily basis.

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- Support students emotionally and academically.
- The school plays a central role in addressing this trauma and has a responsibility to ensure that students feel safe and supported. This should be done in partnership and with the consent of parents, carers or guardians.
- Support can include referral to wellbeing professionals and community services (such as counselling) and may involve the development of a support plan.
- The school may engage external providers from time to time and broach the issue of child safety within a project day.
Encouraging students to talk to a trusted teacher or person at school.
- Support students emotionally and academically.
- Make topical age-appropriate books available to students through the school library.

Online risk and cyber safety

- The school promotes online risk awareness in staff, students and parents.
- The IT Coordinator is responsible to educate staff, students and parents in regards to the safe use of IT and media equipment, the internet and social media.
- The school protects students from inappropriate online environments by allocating user roles for students and staff, filtering inappropriate web content, screening suitability of programs and apps for students and supervising students when working online.
- Teachers will empower students to seek help in these matters.

Physical Environment

- The school regularly reviews its physical school environment for child safety.
- The School Access Policy regulates opening times of the school, available entry points to the property and visitor screening.
- The school will monitor the main access areas with security cameras.
- As a growing school, the board and leadership teams considers child safety when adding lease space.
- Consideration to the safety and wellbeing of students with disabilities is given for renovations.
- The Principal will ensure adequate supervision of students on the school grounds and when off-site.

Communications

- The school promotes open communication between all members of the school community as part of the school culture.
- The Principal is responsible for communicating the school's child safe policy, procedures and strategies to the school community.
- Communications targets staff, contractors, volunteers, students, parents and families and the school community.
- Communications to staff take place in staff meetings, professional development sessions and via the school's management systems.
- Communications to parents takes place via newsletters, the school's website, parent evenings, information sessions, presentations and via the Parent Association.

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Assessment and Review

- The board regularly monitors and reviews risk mitigation strategies and risk management processes for their effectiveness as part of the board's risk control.
- The school will keep up to date with developments in regards to child safe standards and schedule follow up professional development training for staff members where needed.
- The Principal will proactively monitor the effectiveness of the child safe strategies and coordinate reviews of the strategies.
- The Principal will ensure that the schools Child Safe Policy and Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting policy and procedures are reviewed annually, after every incident, and updated as needed.
- The Principal will review the effectiveness of the strategies annually, or after an incident.
- Reviews are documented and recorded, opportunities for improvement identified, an action plan developed with a prompt timeframe for implementation.
- Outcomes of reviews and proposed improvements are reported to the board.
- The board will monitor the implementation timeframe of such improvements.
- Improvements or adjustments are communicated to the school community promptly.

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DSM Internal Use

Version and Approval

Status:	Approved
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Owner:	Barbara Walsh
Next Review:	Yearly
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Related Policies

Behaviour Management

Bullying and Harassment

Child Safe

Code of Conduct

Complaints and Grievances

Critical Incident Plan

Complaints and Grievances

Inclusion

On Site Supervision of Students

Professional Learning & Development

Safety and Welfare of Students learning with an external provider

School Access

Serious Incident and Mandatory Reporting

Staff Awareness

Supervision of Students Off-site

Student Welfare

Use of IT and Media Equipment

Welfare Communication

Working with Children

Privacy