



Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in the Diocese of Sale through:

1 Upholding the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, international students, students with a disability, those unable to live at home, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and/or asexual (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability.

To create and maintain a safe and nurturing culture, DOSCEL Schools and the DOSCEL Secretariat will actively and continually develop and review all policies, processes and practices, informed by emerging thinking and evidence.

2 Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns

DOSCEL Schools and the DOSCEL Secretariat, in partnership with families, will ensure children and young people, are engaged and active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety.

This means that the views of children and young people, families and staff (including school employees, volunteers, contractors, clergy and the DOSCEL Secretariat), are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children and young people are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing in physical and online environments.

3 Implementing rigorous risk-management and employment practices.

Staff from DOSCEL Schools and the DOSCEL Secretariat will systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate (where possible) or reduce all potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded in school life through effective, transparent and well-understood policies, procedures and practices.

DOSCEL Schools and the DOSCEL Secretariat will employ highly competent and professional staff who are formed and challenged to maintain the safety of all students. The high-quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices, which include a demonstrated knowledge of child safety.

The DOSCEL Secretariat and DOSCEL Schools will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet their legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in their care, including meeting the minimum requirements for compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359. This is in addition to other ongoing work to support child safety including, mandatory reporting, reportable conduct, relevant Information Sharing Schemes, Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements.

References

Congregation for Catholic education 1997, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, Vatican, Vatican City, accessed 24 February 2016

Ministerial Order No. 1359: Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises (made under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.))

Commitment statement to child safety

A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Catholic schools

This Statement is intended to provide the central focus for child safety¹ across Catholic education in the Diocese of Sale, built around a unified understanding of the moral imperative and overarching commitments that underpin our drive for improvement and cultural change.

The Catholic school sets out to be a school for the human person and of human persons. 'The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school'. (Congregation for Catholic education 1997, par. 9)

Primary and secondary Catholic Schools managed and operated by DOSCEL and the DOSCEL Secretariat holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

¹ As defined by the Victorian Government Special Gazette No. 2 (2016), 'children and young people' in this document refers to those children and young people enrolled as students in Catholic schools in Victoria.

