DSM Policy

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Deutsche Schule Melbourne Inc, ABN 52 936 931 854

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Help for non-English speakers: If you need support to understand this policy, please contact the Principal.

2. Purpose

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation including the Child Safe Standards, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

3. Legislative and Policy Framework

This Child Safety Code of Conduct has been developed in accordance with:

- Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises
- The Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme

This Code also aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and should be read in conjunction with DSM's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related procedures.

4. Overview

- Deutsche Schule Melbourne (DSM) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and nurturing environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

- Staff, contractors and volunteers are responsible for keeping a professional role with children and establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect children. This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour which DSM expects from all people associated with or representing it and supports compliance with Ministerial Order 1359 - the Child Safe Standards.

- DSM is committed to embedding a culture of child safety and zero tolerance for child abuse, in line with legislative and regulatory requirements.

5. Upholding this Code of Conduct

5.1 The Principal, Assistant Principal(s) and Child Safety Champion will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly learning environments. The Principal, Assistant Principals and Child Safety Champion of DSM will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

5.2 All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps, excursions, digital technology and online environments.

5.3 All staff, contractors and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Principal or Assistant Principals. All allegations of child abuse will be reported swiftly to statutory authorities, such as Victoria Police or Child Protection, as per the Four Critical Actions for Schools (available at https://www.vic.gov.au/4-critical-actions-schools). We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for all people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. All staff are responsible for ensuring that racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated in the DSM School Community. This commitment ensures DSM's compliance with Child Safe Standard 1: Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of children and young people are respected and valued.

5.4 This Code of Conduct has been developed in consultation with staff and will continue to be reviewed with input from the school community, including students and families, to ensure it remains effective and responsive.

5.5 This Code of Conduct is publicly available to the school community and is communicated to all staff, contractors and volunteers through induction and annual training processes. All personnel are required to acknowledge their understanding of this Code on an annual basis.

6. Acceptable Behaviours

As DSM staff, contractors, volunteers, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

6.1 Conducting ourselves in a manner that is consistent with the core values of DSM: integrity, respect, trust, honesty and kindness.

6.2 Upholding our DSM commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

6.3 Treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment, for example during social and community activities.

6.4 Providing a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, parents, staff and volunteers to support DSM's ethos and commitment to comply with the Child Safe Standards.

6.5 Following and reporting any concerns of child abuse in accordance with DSM's Reportable Conduct Policy and Serious Incidents and Mandatory Reporting Policy, as well as the Four Critical Actions for schools, including reporting to relevant authorities or services including Victoria Police, the Department of Health and Human Services- Child Protection and the Commission for Children and Young People as required. All reportable allegations will also be managed in accordance with obligations under the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme, including notification to the relevant regulatory authority as required.

6.6 Keeping all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures.

6.7 Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LQBTIQ+) students.

6.8 Ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.

6.9 Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.

6.10 Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling me that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.

6.11 Self-assessing own behaviour, actions, language and relationships with children.

6.12 Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns, including racist or discriminatory behaviour, to the Child Safety Champion and/or Principal and/or School Board.

6.13 Understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with school policies and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions. If child abuse is suspected, ensure as quickly as possible that the student(s) is/are safe and protected from harm.

6.14 Ensuring any contact with children and young people is appropriate when viewed on its own and when viewed against the context of the relevant program, event or setting.

6.15 Ensuring language is appropriate and inclusive and not offensive, discriminatory or racist.

6.16 Promoting a zero-tolerance attitude to racism and child abuse or harm.

6.17 Providing examples of good conduct in daily activities.

6.18 Challenging unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse.

6.19 Providing a comfortable and safe environment where children, young people and adults are encouraged to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like, in accordance with Child Safe Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

7. Unacceptable Behaviours

As DSM staff, contractors, volunteers and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

7.1 Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, discriminate or degrade children or young people, in person or on social media.

7.2 Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm.

7.3 Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context.

7.4 Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate, racist or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.

7.5 Ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student.

7.6 Ignore racist or discriminatory behaviour from students, staff or parents of the DSM School Community.

7.7 Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform leadership first and be as open as possible in my behaviour.

7.8 Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children.

7.9 Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts).

7.10 Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.

7.11 Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance.

7.12 Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.

7.13 Display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context.

7.14 Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.

7.15 Have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

7.16 Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy (see ICT Policy) or where required for duty of care purposes.

7.17 Consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events when supervising students

8. Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All DSM staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training, Four Critical Actions for Schools, Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police. The school maintains child-focused complaint and reporting processes that are accessible, culturally safe and responsive to the needs of children and young people.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the DSM's Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the DSM Principal. If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact the Head of the School Board.