

DSM Strategic Overview

2018 - 2020

Deutsche Schule Melbourne Inc, ABN 52 936 931 854



Purpose of this document

The Deutsche Schule Melbourne (DSM) aims to be a leading provider of German-English bilingual education in inner Melbourne.

DSM will have a compelling offer for expatriates, German-Australian families as well as local families that have an interest in bilingual education.

This document articulates the school's strategy to 2020. It details the primary objectives and priority areas for 2018-2020 for the school board and leadership team.

School constitutional arrangements

DSM was established as an incorporated association with a stated purpose to:

- establish, operate and support a kindergarten, pre-school, primary school and secondary school in Melbourne;
- promote and conduct the teaching of children in Melbourne in the German and English languages according to a school curriculum approved by State Government and/or appropriate bodies;
- promote German language, culture, arts and literature in the European context through education and the school community; and
- carry out such activities in accordance with Christian and humanistic values.

Vision and Mission

Vision

DSM helps students to realise their individual potential and become creative and confident participants in the global community.

Mission

Inspire

- We inspire life-long learning by empowering students to lead their own learning journey.
- We inspire our students by offering learning experiences encompassing the heart, head and hands.
- We inspire our students to express themselves creatively and think critically about a world without borders.

Nurture

- We nurture the whole child in our vibrant German, Australian and multicultural community.
- We nurture mutual respect, understanding and caring for the individual.
- We nurture inclusive classrooms in which everyone feels pride and belonging.

DSM Strategic Overview

2018 - 2020

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Challenge

- We challenge our students to embrace diverse perspectives through bilingualism and by exposing them to an immersion program run by native speakers.
- We challenge our students academically by teaching according to the Victorian and the Thuringian Curricula.
- We challenge our community to live sustainably by reducing its footprint and taking care of precious resources.

Philosophy

Together we create and shape everyday school life within our small but strong international community. We value respect, trust, kindness, honesty and patience. Students and parents alike enjoy participating in a variety of school events that foster multiculturalism and life-long friendships.

Our school environment assists children to grow into balanced and confident individuals who are able to take responsibility for themselves and others. Being able to communicate in two mother-tongues enables them to perceive the world from a range of cultural perspectives. It assists them in developing a global view on life and appreciating cultural diversity.

This is fostered by the school being an integral part of local and German-speaking communities. With its strong sense of community among the students' families and its cultural activities inviting the wider community to take part in the school's life, DSM is more than an educational institution. Ultimately, the school provides students with the environment to live and learn two cultures.

The bilingual and bicultural education of children at DSM is delivered through the school's immersion program and reflects the philosophy of the school.

Governance

DSM is a not-for-profit incorporated association with more than 180 members. Members support the success of the school in various ways. They are involved in different working groups or committees, support school events or are members of the board. Parents can also seek to be nominated to the parent association.

Board of Management

The DSM constitution establishes the responsibilities of the Board of Management which include:

- Controlling the business and affairs of the school;
- Appointing the headmaster, teachers and employees of the school;
- Implementing, amending or repealing school regulations;
- Drafting the school budget and ensuring it is adhered to, including determining school fees, membership fees, and scholarship arrangements;
- Acting on resolutions passed at general meetings.

DSM Strategic Overview

2018 - 2020

Deutsche Schule Melbourne Inc, ABN 52 936 931 854



Most board members are elected representatives of the school association. In addition, the German-Lutheran Trinity Church and the German-Catholic St. Christophorus Church hold one board position each.

As per the constitution, the Board is responsible for the overall governance and performance of DSM. It supports the Principal and school leadership team. Members of the Board can incur personal liability under the Corporations Act and Common Law.

Principal and School Leadership Team

The school leadership team consists of the Principal, the Deputy Principal and the Business Manager. The team has broad responsibilities for the operations of the school that include:

- Principal: educational programs, school development, school operation, school culture, and human resources.
- Deputy Principal: daily school operation, internship program, school dog program, and German Language Certificate program (DSD).
- Business Manager: finance and accounting, compliance and reporting, risk management, human resources, building and grounds.

Parents' association

Established in 2016, the DSM Parents' Association is comprised of elected parent representatives that work to support, facilitate and enhance relationships between the school, and parents and guardians of students attending the School.

The key role of the Parents' Association is to help build and maintain a positive and productive school culture and a vibrant school community. The Parents' Association also undertakes various projects to contribute to and enhance the parent and student experience.

Strategic Challenges

As part of the Board governance responsibilities members, together with the Leadership team, undertake three planning days a year to identify strategic priorities for the continued growth and success of the school. The following priority areas have been identified to be addressed for 2018-2020.

Priority areas for 2018-2020

Primary School Operations

Key areas for investigation:

- Educational strategy
- Curriculum approach
- Appropriate class and school size

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- Building English/German as a second language programs
- Educational planning to meet Victorian and German requirements
- Demonstrating student outcomes
- Language entry points (other than prep level)

Secondary School Planning

- Stakeholder engagement
- Infrastructure and building requirements
- External facing strategy

Communications and Marketing

- Defining brand and positioning
- Website review as a communications tool
- Student growth and registering interest

Finance Strategy

- 3-5-year financial plan
- Ongoing approach to annual budgeting
- Supporting the broader school strategy

Risk Management

- Identifying best practice
- Undertaking a gap analysis
- Developing a risk matrix

School Culture

- Identifying best practice: symbols, behaviour and systems
- Communication strategy and communication plan
- Policy review and training

February 2018