

CODE OF CONDUCT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (**DOSCEL**) Secretariat and their interactions with visitors and contractors at the workplace, including primary and secondary Catholic schools managed and operated by DOSCEL (**Schools**).

This Code of Conduct affirms the intent of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning. In performing their duties, it is expected that employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat will uphold the mission of the Catholic Church by espousing the teachings and values of the Gospels.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Code of Conduct provides employees with a clear understanding of the personal and professional behaviour expected of them whilst employed by DOSCEL.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat with guidance on the professional standards of behaviour expected of them in performing their duties of employment, including in all physical and online environments used by students.

These standards exist alongside the standards of behaviour and performance required of employees under their contract of employment, DOSCEL policies, industrial agreements and relevant state and Federal legislation.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

- 3.1** The DOSCEL Secretariat is committed to providing a workplace where expectation of behaviours and performance is commensurate with its values, policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 3.2** The DOSCEL Secretariat will comply with relevant legislation and regulations.
- 3.3** The DOSCEL Secretariat will ensure all employees are aware of their responsibilities under this Code of Conduct.
- 3.4** The DOSCEL Secretariat will respond appropriately to any breach of this Code of Conduct in a timely and confidential manner.
- 3.5** The DOSCEL Secretariat is committed to the safety of all children and young people and to implementing Victoria's Child Safe Standards under *Ministerial Order 1359: Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*.
- 3.6** Employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat have a responsibility of reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, when a reasonable belief is formed that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed.

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 Professional conduct

Employees must:

- 4.1.1** Respect and uphold the strategic priorities and directions for Catholic education in the Diocese of Sale as outlined in *Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning*
- 4.1.2** Perform duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence
- 4.1.3** Maintain a high standard of integrity and professionalism
- 4.1.4** Abide by policies and procedures, reasonable instructions, and legislation
- 4.1.5** Act in accordance with legal requirements that pertain to their profession, in particular in relation to:
 - Discrimination and harassment
 - Mandatory reporting
 - Privacy
 - Occupational health and safety
 - Grooming
 - Cybersafety
 - Regulatory bodies
 - Commission for Children and Young People – *Reportable Conduct Scheme*
 - Department of Justice and Community Safety – *Working With Children Clearance*
 - Victoria Police – *National Police Record Check*
 - Victorian Institute of Teaching – *Teacher Registration*
 - Responding to police
 - Protection of children and disclosure of abuse
- 4.1.6** Not harass, bully or discriminate against colleagues, members of the public and DOSCEL employees
- 4.1.7** Maintain a professional relationship with Schools, employees, students and families
- 4.1.8** Treat colleagues, visitors, contractors and members of the public with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness, and have proper regard for their interests, rights, safety and wellbeing
- 4.1.9** Contribute to a harmonious, safe and productive work environment
- 4.1.10** Foster positive professional workplace relationships.

4.2 Child Safety

The DOSCEL Secretariat supports the DOSCEL Commitment to Child Safety. Employees are expected to actively contribute to the promotion of child and young person safety at all times.

4.2.1 All employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat are expected to:

- Uphold the DOSCEL Commitment to Child Safety at all times and adhere to the DOSCEL Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Adhere to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy of each school at the time of visiting.
- On their first visit annually, employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat must read, sign off and adhere to each School's Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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, intersex, queer/questioning and/or asexual (LGBTIQ+) students.
- Ensure, 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 responsible adult.
- Complete child safety training identified by the DOSCEL Secretariat, including but not limited to:
 - 'Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and other Obligations' – Department of Education and Training Victoria Online training module. Completed annually.
- Be familiar with and abide by the requirements of the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- Understand and comply with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting), in accordance with the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) and the following DOSCEL policies and procedures :
 - Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
 - Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
 - Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
 - Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
 - Mandatory Reporting Policy
 - Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
 - Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure

- Act upon any suspected or disclosed child abuse, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

4.2.2 All employees of the DOSCEL Secretariat **must not**:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- Display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context.
- Ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance.
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or young people, for example, personal social activities.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children or young people.
- Express personal views on culture, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- Treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- Communicate directly with a student or their family through personal or private contact channels (including social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) without the knowledge and consent of their manager at the DOSCEL Secretariat. For example, unauthorised contact could be after-hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching. Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, would not be seen as unauthorised contact.
- Photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except where written consent has been obtained or where required for duty of care purposes
- Use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account for work related purposes.
- Where avoidable, exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses. This may include, but is not limited to, colleagues, children and families of students and/or employees.

4.3 Dress code

4.3.1 Employees are required to:

- dress in professional attire that is neat, tidy, appropriate to the workplace and properly maintained
- wear appropriate safety apparel where required.

4.3.2 Safety and Protective Clothing

Where safety and protective clothing is provided, these items must be clean and neatly pressed at all times. All provided clothing is required to be returned on ceasing employment.

4.3.3 Prohibited Clothing / Appearance

Employees are not to wear any clothing, jewellery, or tattoo that conveys a negative statement toward a race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, or is otherwise considered harassing or offensive.

4.4 Alcohol and drugs

The DOSCEL Secretariat recognises alcohol or other drug abuse can impair short-term or long-term work performance and is an occupational health and safety risk.

The DOSCEL Secretariat is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy and productive workplace for all employees, visitors and contractors. The DOSCEL Secretariat does not tolerate attending work under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol.

- 4.4.1** Employees must not attend work or drive DOSCEL Secretariat vehicles whilst under the influence of illicit drugs.
- 4.4.2** Illicit drugs shall not be consumed whilst in the Sion House or Masterson Court precinct, other work-related business premises, including DOSCEL Schools, or in work vehicles.
- 4.4.3** It is understood that employees may take prescription medication for legitimate medical reasons. If these drugs are likely to affect performance or behaviour, the relevant manager/deputy director must be notified.
- 4.4.4** The responsible consumption of alcohol will be permitted in certain prescribed circumstances (which have the approval of the Chief Executive Officer) for employees, Diocesan staff, visitors and contractors, over the age of 18.

On these exceptional occasions the consumption of alcohol by employees, Diocesan staff, visitors and contractors' legal limits must be observed.

4.5 Smoke free workplace

The DOSCEL Secretariat is a smoke free workplace. Smoking is not permitted in DOSCEL buildings and grounds, including Sion House, Masterson Court and DOSCEL Schools or in DOSCEL Secretariat vehicles.

4.6 Privacy and Confidentiality of information

Employees are required to respect others' rights to privacy and must maintain the integrity, confidentiality and privacy of any information provided to them in the course of employment. All employees must:

- 4.6.1** Not disclose any confidential information outside of the legitimate performance of their duties.

- 4.6.2** Not misuse official information for personal or commercial gain.
 - 4.6.3** Respect the confidentiality and privacy of all information.
 - 4.6.4** Ensure the secure storage of sensitive or confidential information.
- Employees may be required to disclose confidential information by law.

4.7 Fraudulent and corrupt behaviour

Employees must act responsibly when using the DOSCEL information, funds, equipment and facilities. Employees must:

- 4.7.1** Not engage in fraud or corruption.
- 4.7.2** Report any fraudulent or corrupt behaviour to the relevant Executive member of their Staff Group.
- 4.7.3** Report any breaches of this Code of Conduct to the relevant Executive member of their Staff Group.

4.8 Conflict of interest

All employees of DOSCEL are expected to effectively identify, disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the DOSCEL Conflict of Interest Policy. Where such a situation arises DOSCEL Secretariat employees must:

- 4.8.1** Disclose the conflict of interest to by completing the *Conflict of Interest Declaration Form* or the *Gift Notification Form* and submitting the form to their manager.
- 4.8.2** Discuss circumstances of the conflict of interest situation with their manager.
- 4.8.3** Follow the conflict of interest management strategy decided upon by their manager.
- 4.8.4** Monitor the conflict of interest situation on an ongoing basis, informing their manager of any change to circumstances of the conflict of interest situation.

4.9 Acceptable use of Information Communications and Technology

All use of Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) resources must be legal, ethical and consistent with the vision, mission and values of the DOSCEL Secretariat. Employees are responsible for exercising good judgement regarding the appropriate use of DOSCEL Secretariat ICT resources and must act in accordance with DOSCEL policies and relevant legislation.

4.10 Intellectual property and security

All intellectual property developed by employees during their employment will remain the property of the DOSCEL Secretariat. Employees that have access to confidential information, data, or other related property in order to perform their duties must protect this information and only use it in the interests of the DOSCEL Secretariat, Schools, employees and students.

5.0 BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- 5.1 An employee who, in good faith, raises a concern or discloses an alleged breach will not be disadvantaged.
- 5.2 If any employee has a genuine concern about the conduct of another employee it is important their concern is raised with the relevant Executive member of their Staff Group.
- 5.3 If an employee makes an intentionally false or malicious claim, they may be found in breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 5.4 All alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct will be investigated in accordance with Clause 13 – Managing Employee Concerns of the *Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited Schools and Secretariat Agreement 2022 (DOSCEL Agreement)*, applicable legislation and/or DOSCEL Policy (for example, Whistleblower Policy) as varied or replaced from time to time.
- 5.5 Any employee in breach of this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from a warning, demotion or termination of employment for serious breaches.

6.0 EXPECTED OUTCOME

- 6.1 Employee conduct is aligned to DOSCEL's values, DOSCEL policies and procedures.
- 6.2 The DOSCEL Secretariat delivers outcomes that are best practice because standards are clear and guided by sound ethics.
- 6.3 All breaches are managed in accordance with relevant legislation.

7.0 RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Vic.)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic.)*
- *Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014 (Vic.)*
- *Serious Offenders Act 2018 (Vic.)*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)*
- *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*

- *Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017 (Vic.)*
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)*

8.0 RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Related policies and documents may include but are not limited to:

- *DOSCEL Acceptable Use of ICT Policy*
- *DOSCEL Anti-Bullying Policy (Employees)*
- *DOSCEL Child Protection and Safety Policy*
- *DOSCEL Complaints Policy: Complaints Concerning the Chief Executive Officer*
- *DOSCEL Commitment Statement to Child Safety*
- *DOSCEL Conflict of Interest Policy*
- *DOSCEL Cyber Safety Policy*
- *DOSCEL Duty of Care Policy*
- *DOSCEL Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme*
- *DOSCEL Mandatory Reporting Policy*
- *DOSCEL Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *DOSCEL Privacy Policy*
- *DOSCEL Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy*
- *DOSCEL Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy*
- *DOSCEL Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy*
- *DOSCEL Safe and Sound Guidelines (Occupational Violence)*
- *DOSCEL Sexual consent, disclosure and school obligations Guidance*
- *DOSCEL Social Media Policy*
- *DOSCEL Whistleblower Policy*
- *DOSCEL Workplace Equal Opportunity Policy*
- *DOSCEL 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan*
- *Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited Schools and Secretariat Agreement 2022*

9.0 REVIEW

Implementation Date: September 2014

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