

Occupational Health and Safety Policy



Reviewed: October 2020

Ratified: December 2020

Next Review: October 2023

Rationale

Dignity, safety, health and wellbeing are central to the Church's teaching and DOBCEL is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all employees, students, volunteers, visitors and external providers working or studying in DOBCEL schools or office locations. All school Principals and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) Managers have a Duty of Care to provide and maintain a work environment that is free of risk to the health and safety for all.

Definitions

CEB – Catholic Education Ballarat

OHS – Occupational Health and Safety

OHSMS – Occupational Health and Safety Management System

Staff- are those employed by the DOBCEL schools and/or the Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB). Staff are required to have VIT registration or a WWC Check.

Volunteers- approved volunteers that assist in the school environment and have a WWC Check.

Visitors- those that visit the school for a brief or single purpose. Visitors are supervised at all times.

External providers- refers to external educational and health advisors, IT specialists, chaplains and contractors such as trades people and architects. Providers are required to provide a WWCC.

Workplace - means any physical or virtual place under the control or management of DOBCEL.

Workplace hazard – these include hazardous items, equipment, locations, substances and activities.

Policy Statement

DOBCEL schools and offices are committed to:

- establishing and maintaining an Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) that is consistent with the nature and scale of DOBCEL's operations
- identifying and maintaining compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation
- providing adequate resources for implementing this policy which includes assigning responsibilities for OHS duties
- making and monitoring arrangements for the safe use, handling, storing and transport of plant and substances
- maintaining, so far as is reasonably practicable, an office that it is safe and without risks to physical and mental health
- providing adequate facilities for the welfare of all staff, students, the school community and for visitors, volunteers and external providers

- providing OHS induction, information, education and training to staff, volunteers, visitors and external providers enabling them to work in a safe and healthy manner
- maintaining physical infrastructure, including buildings, grounds, plant and equipment and DOBCEL owned vehicles in a condition that ensures it is safe to use
- Observing the COVID Safe Plan requirements in accordance with the instructions of DHHS and the *CECV School Operations Guide*
- developing and promoting a safety culture that actively engages all personnel
- maintaining effective consultation and communication arrangements with staff on decisions that may impact on workplace health and safety
- defining, documenting and communicating OHS roles and responsibilities to all personnel
- actively identifying and managing workplace hazards through the evaluation of risks and implementation of effective risk controls
- encouraging hazard/incident and near miss reporting and investigation
- providing injury management and return to work assistance to injured/ill staff; and
- establishing an OHS Issue Resolution process

The components of the OHSMS that will require OHS Planning by each school Principal or office location Manager shall include (but is not limited to) the following:

Asbestos Management	Chemical Management	Confined Space Entry
Consultation & Communication	Electrical Safety	Emergency Management
External Provider Management	Environment	First Aid & Infection Control
Hazard ID & Incident Notification	Manual Handling & Ergonomics	OHS Planning
OHS Training	Plant & Equipment	OHS Record Keeping
Risk Management	Safe Working at Heights	Tours & Excursions
Traffic Management		

DOBCEL will maintain an effective OHSMS by ensuring policies, procedures, guidelines, forms and templates are developed and maintained for each component of the OHSMS. This will assist each school and office to identify, risk assess and risk control workplace hazards.

OHS Roles and Responsibilities

DOBCEL has defined the health and safety roles and responsibilities of all school and office location leaders and staff. These include but are not limited to:

- All DOBCEL Employees
- Executive Director of Catholic Education Ballarat
- School Principal/DOBCEL Deputy Director and Assistant Directors
- Deputy Principal and DOBCEL Managers
- DOBCEL Compliance and Risk Supports Officers (CARSOs) and DOBCEL Team Leaders

Please refer to the DOBCEL *OHS Consultation, Roles and Responsibilities Guide* for details on the general and specific health and safety responsibilities.

Consultation and Communication

The organisation is committed to consultation and communication with all employees in relation to health and safety. This commitment includes:

- the provision of a guide that establishes what the consultation process is and when to consult. Refer to DOBCEL *OHS Consultation, Roles and Responsibilities Guide*
- the nomination and election of Health and Safety Representatives. Refer to DOBCEL Election of Representatives for the DOBCEL Health and Safety Committee Guide; and
- the establishment of a new DOBCEL Health and Safety Committee representative of schools and office employees and leadership . Refer to DOBCEL Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference

Principles

Common good

People are fundamentally social beings. Social, political and economic organisation has, therefore, implications for the entire community. Each social group, therefore, must take account of the rights and aspirations of other groups, and of the well-being of the whole human family. The common good is reached when all work together to improve the wellbeing of society and the wider world. The rights of the individual to personal possessions and community resources must be balanced with the needs of the disadvantaged and dispossessed.

Human dignity

Our common humanity requires respect for and support of the sanctity and worth of every human life. All other rights and responsibilities flow from the concept of human dignity. This principle is deemed as the central aspect of the Church's social teaching. The belief that each life has value is shared with International Human Rights which are universal, inviolable and inalienable.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency demands timely and accurate disclosure/reporting concerning the performance, decision making and financial health of DOBCEL to all stakeholders.

Accountability refers to the obligation of DOBCEL to accept responsibility for its activities and to disclose the results. It also includes responsibility for money or other entrusted property.

These two principles converge in the social responsibility to care for persons, resources and our planet as precious and vital to life. Responsible stewardship is integral to the mission of the Church and is a fundamental tenet of the Church's spirituality. It entails a responsibility for service that aims to nurture a gift from another. Frequently understood in relation to care.

References

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Workplace Injury and Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Occupational Health and Safety in Schools (WorkSafe)
https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/9855/OHS-in-schools-web.pdf

Related Policies and Procedures

- DOBCEL OHS Consultation, Roles and Responsibilities Guide
- DOBCEL Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference
- Anti-Bullying (including cyberbullying) and Harassment Policy (students)
- Student Care and Health Policy
- Duty of Care: Supervision of Students
- Anti-Bullying Policy (adults)
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Injury Management and Return to Work Arrangements
- Digital Technology Policy (students, staff, parents)
- Staff Handbook (such as procedures re staff illness and medicines, hazardous and dangerous goods, reporting concerns and responsibilities)
- Parent Handbook
- DOBCEL Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy
- Child Safety Commitment Statement and Code of Conduct