



Divine Mercy College
326 Yangebup Road Yangebup WA 6164

Reg. Standard
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CHILD SAFE POLICY

Policy Statement

Divine Mercy College (DMC) is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where all our students are protected from harm, abuse, and neglect. This policy aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and relevant legislation.

Purpose

This policy applies to all students, staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors at DMC. It covers all school activities, including those conducted on-site, off-site (e.g. camps and excursions), and online.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, and governing body members involved with Divine Mercy College. This policy applies in all School environments, both physical and online, and on-site and off-site School grounds (e.g. camps and excursions).

Policy Principles and Implementation

➤ Principle 1: Child Safety Culture

- Child safety is a standing agenda item at all coordinator and staff meetings, ensuring ongoing focus.
- All staff complete annual AISWA-accredited training on child protection, mandatory reporting and the Staff Code of Conduct, documented in the Professional Learning Policy.
- The complaints process, including child safety reporting, is detailed in the Student and Parent Handbook, accessible via the school website, per the Complaints and Disputes Policy.

➤ Principle 2: Child Safety Governance

- The Governing Body reviews child safety risks biannually, allocating resources for audits, training, and policy updates.
- The Principal oversees Working with Children Checks (WWC), incident reporting, and compliance with this policy.
- Quarterly risk assessments documented in the Risk Management Plan risk register, address physical environments, online safety, and off-site activities (e.g. camps, excursions),

➤ **Principle 3: Empowering Children**

- The Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (Kindy to Year 12) focuses on educating students with age-appropriate skills to recognize abuse, assert boundaries, and seek help. Key topics covered in the curriculum include consent, cyber-safety, and healthy relationships. More details can be found at DMC KS:CPC.
- In addition to the curriculum, external agencies contribute to this effort. For example, the annual Puberty Talk for students in Year 5 to 12, provided by Catholic Ed, emphasizes strategies for identifying unsafe situations and knowing how to seek help. There are also interactive sessions conducted by certified providers, such as Lithland Cyber Safety Consultants, which address essential topics like digital footprints, online privacy, and preventing cyberbullying.
- Student Voice: The DMC House Leaders, composed of elected representatives, meets monthly with the lead teacher to discuss safety concerns and propose initiatives. Additionally, there is an anonymous reporting system via a locked Suggestion Box located in the library. Annual surveys also inform policy updates.

➤ **Principles 4-5: Equity and Inclusion**

DMC recognises that equity is fundamental to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students, including those who are vulnerable due to their backgrounds, abilities, or life circumstances. The College actively promotes an inclusive environment that respects the diverse needs of all students, ensuring every child has equal access to opportunities and support. This includes providing culturally safe spaces, addressing barriers to participation, and fostering a sense of belonging for students with disabilities, and those from diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds. Our staff also come from diverse backgrounds, reflecting the multicultural nature of our school community.

To further acknowledge and celebrate cultural differences, DMC hosts an annual Multicultural Day, where students and staff engage in activities that promote cultural awareness and appreciation. Additionally, all staff participate in Professional Development on Cultural Sensitivity Training through Diverse WA to enhance their understanding of different cultural perspectives and strengthen their ability to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

➤ **Principle 6: Family and Community Engagement**

- DMC's Child Safety policies accessible on the school website and in parent handbook. Fortnightly newsletter cover grooming risks, cyber-safety, and reporting pathways.
- The school collaborates with external agencies (e.g. AISWA, Department of Education WA, and Headspace) to enhance student support.

➤ **Principle 7: Reporting and Responding**

All staff, volunteers, and community members are responsible for reporting any concerns regarding a child's safety or the well-being. DMC follows a structured approach to reporting and responding to child safety concerns:

1. Reporting Obligations

- Mandatory Reporters (Teachers, Principal, and School Counsellors):
 - Immediate Reporting: must report a belief, formed on reasonable grounds, of child sexual abuse to the WA Department of Communities' Mandatory Reporting Service as soon as practicable, per the Children and Community Services Act 2004 and Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022.
 - A flowchart detailing the mandatory reporting process is displayed in the main staffroom, teacher's diary, and handbook for easy access.
 - Maintain confidentiality while ensuring appropriate follow-up actions are taken.
 - Non-Mandatory Reporters (Support Staff, Volunteers, Parents, and Community Members):
 - Report concerns about child abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, neglect) to the Principal, who escalates to the Central Intake Team (1800 273 889) if needed, ensuring child safety and confidentiality.
 - Allegations of abuse by staff, volunteers, or contractors are reported to the Ombudsman WA under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
2. A Trauma Response Plan, led by a qualified school counsellor, supports affected students with referrals. Records are stored securely with encryption, per Australian Privacy Principles.
 3. Annual AISWA training covers reporting, trauma response, and confidentiality, with records reviewed by the Governing Body.

➤ **Principle 8: Safe Staff and Volunteers**

DMC is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are safe, suitable, and well-equipped to work with children.

- Recruitment Processes: conducting rigorous screening processes, including Working with Children Check (WWC), police clearances, and thorough reference checks. The Principal ensures all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in maintaining a child-safe environment.
- DMC implementing a clear Code of Conduct outlining expected behaviours for staff and volunteers. Additionally, encouraging a culture where staff behaviour concerns can be raised without fear of retribution.

➤ **Principle 9: Physical and Online Safety**

- Facility Safeguards: including CCTV monitoring in public areas to enhance security, secured perimeter fencing to prevent unauthorised access, and glass panels on classroom doors to allow visibility while maintaining privacy. Additionally, mandatory risk assessments are conducted for all excursions, camps, and school-related events to identify and mitigate potential hazards, ensuring student safety at all times.
- Cyber-safety measure: DMC employs IT security filters (Fortinet FortiGate Firewall) that block access to harmful or inappropriate content. Students are provided with Cyber-safety education programs to promote responsible digital citizenship and awareness of online risks. The school actively monitors school

devices to detect and prevent cyberbullying or online misconduct. Clear policies on appropriate technology use, including guidelines on social media, email, and internet safety, help students understand responsible digital behaviour and minimise risks associated with online interactions.

➤ **Principal 10: Continuous Improvement**

- Annual review: staff, student representatives, leadership team review policies using stakeholder feedback, incident data, and legislative updates.
- Independent audit every two to three years ensure alignment with national standards.

Review History

Version	Date released	Next review	Summary of Changes	Author
1	2019	2020	Document Created	Jodi Hample
2	2024	2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update the original document by complying with the 10 National Principles. ➤ Enhanced clarity. ➤ updated mandatory reporters (School Counsellor) ➤ Added Reportable Conduct Scheme. 	Yan Lau