DOMINICAN EDUCATION AUSTRALIA LTD
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure:

- the protection of children, young people and other vulnerable people who receive the services of Dominican Education Australia (DEA) and its Education Ministries
- the maintenance of environments that safeguard children and vulnerable adults in all aspects of DEA's work and the work of its Education Ministries
- that there are overarching principles that guide DEA's approach to child protection and which apply to DEA and the Education Ministries for which it is responsible.

This Policy applies to anyone working or volunteering on behalf of DEA and its Education Ministries, including the Board of Trustees, College or School Board Members, paid staff, volunteers, seasonal workers, agency staff and students.

DEA believes that:

- children, young people and other vulnerable people should never experience abuse of any kind and DEA has zero tolerance for any abuse committed against them
- it has a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and other vulnerable people to keep them safe and to act in ways that protect them.

As such, the DEA Safeguarding Committee has been established to give effect to this Policy.
Refer *DEA Safeguarding Committee Terms of Reference*.

Further, DEA recognises that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse
- some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of a disability, previous experience, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues related to their environment or upbringing
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare and safety.

Overarching Principles

- **DEA is the Head of Agency for all of its Education Ministries and is subject to audit by Australian Catholic Standards Ltd (ACSL)**

- **DEA adheres to and applies the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) developed by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) in its work and interactions with its Education Ministries.**

- **DEA expects that its Education Ministries also apply these standards in their work with young people and vulnerable adults and that they comply with requests from DEA to provide evidence of their compliance as required.**

DEA and its Education Ministries are to:

- promote safe and nurturing cultures that are evident in its work and in ways that comply with current State and Federal legislation
- employ rigorous screening, employment and formation policies and practices that are reviewed regularly
- provide all people engaged in their work as Trustees, staff, volunteers or consultants with effective management through supervision, support, and mandated and additional training
- conduct regular reviews of policies and procedures related to ensuring a child safe environment
- use stringent procedures to appropriately manage any allegations against staff, volunteers or other adults engaged by individual Ministries
- ensure that effective complaints procedures and whistleblower measures are in place
- provide prompt and proper disclosure of abuse of any kind to the relevant Church, State and Commonwealth authorities
- offer a compassionate and just response to victims and their families
- securely stores all information in accordance with the relevant legislation
- provide safe, physical environments for children, young adults and vulnerable people, staff, volunteers and other people by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guides.

General Practices

- ❖ DEA expects that each Education Ministry fulfils its responsibilities, set out in 4. Safe Places of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in the *DEA Introduction and Framework of Accountabilities*. This may include developing its own policies and procedures for safeguarding children, young people and other vulnerable people which are rigorously implemented. Education Ministries must also report regularly to Catholic and State Education bodies, as well as to DEA, and comply with relevant legislation.

- ❖ Safeguarding Children is to be a standard Agenda items for all Education Ministry Board meetings, and reports of critical incidents and their management must be provided to DEA immediately.

- ❖ Safeguarding Coordinators are to be appointed for DEA and each Education Ministry.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

DEA Introduction and Framework of Accountabilities, specifically 4. Safe Places of Excellence in Learning and Teaching for relevant reporting responsibilities of Education Ministries to DEA.
DEA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
DEA Safeguarding Committee Terms of Reference
DEA Privacy Policy – Information management practices
DEA Referee Checks – screening of potential Directors of Education Ministries
ACSL National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

****

Document History

TITLE: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE POLICY			
Date	**Created/Updated**	**By Whom**	**Version No.**
March 2019	Implementation	Board of Directors	1.0
August 2020	Updated	Board of Directors	2.0
August 2022	Review - Updated	Board of Directors	3.0
July 2025	Review – No Amendments	Board of Directors	4.0
Review: July 2027			