



## Terms of Reference

# Children and Young People Wellbeing & Safeguarding Consultative Committee

## Mission and Values

*“As partners in Catholic education and open to God’s presence, we pursue fullness of life for all”*

We support this spiritual vision through: proclaiming and witnessing to the Good News of Jesus Christ; ensuring quality learning that promotes excellence and fosters the authentic human development of all; living justly and with mercy in the world, in relationship with each other and in harmony with God’s creation; exploring, deepening and expressing our Catholic identity in diverse and authentic ways and enabling each one of us to reflect more fully the image of God; in each of the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) school communities. At the heart of this vision is our commitment to the ongoing duty of care that we have for the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people, especially those entrusted to our care.

## Context

All members of DOBCEL Consultative Committees and Working Parties are called to make a specific contribution to our Catholic education mission, in support of these Terms of Reference.

The DOBCEL Board, in exercising its function of governance, is duty bound to implement universal standards of good governance through a Gospel lens.<sup>1</sup> To that end it has established Consultative Committees which will assist the Board in developing policy for DOBCEL schools and in identifying procedures for the implementation, monitoring and improvement of those policies.

These committees provide opportunities for members of the diocesan education community, and others with relevant expertise, to participate in the mission of DOBCEL, to assist its governance and decision making and to inform faithful stewardship of the mission.<sup>2</sup> Active participation in them will enable many gifts of the Holy Spirit to be utilised in the service of God and in the mission of the Church. Dialogue with families, made seeking fullness of life for all, will enrich the spirit of communion and cooperation in pursuing the goals of Catholic education.

The DOBCEL Board reviews and finalises policy for ratification by the Bishop.

The Executive Director and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) assist the Board in the implementation of DOBCEL policies and ensure that procedures are established, implemented, and monitored.

The Executive Director and CEB support the Board Consultative Committees in fulfilling DOBCEL’s corporate governance and oversight responsibilities, school financial reporting, compliance oversight,

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<sup>1</sup> See Implementation Advisory Group and the Governance Review Project Team, *The Light from the Southern Cross: Promoting Co-responsible governance in the Catholic Church in Australia*, A Report and Recommendations on the Governance and Management of Dioceses and Parishes in the Catholic Church in Australia, 2020, §5.1.1 p.38.

<https://www.catholicreligious.org.au/light-from-the-southern-cross>. Accessed 02/09/2020.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, §6.1, p.56.

internal control structure, risk management systems, audit functions and in reporting obligations through the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA).

The VCEA is an approved school system and funding authority for Victorian Catholic schools established with the support of the Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat. In accordance with the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and the VCEA, the VCEA is authorised as a Review Body under section 4.3.2(c) of the Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (ETR Act) to review and report on the compliance of Catholic schools with the minimum standards for registration. DOBCEL has responsibility for provision of reporting to the VCEA on the compliance of Catholic schools governed by DOBCEL in the Diocese of Ballarat.

## **Authority**

The Board authorises the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee (through the Chair of the Committee for non-Board members) to:

- Make any recommendations to the Board, including seeking the engagement of any professional advisers that the Committee may require to assist in their duties
- Seek any information it requires from DOBCEL employees (and /or its agents) or from external parties
- Investigate any matter brought to the Committee's attention or requested by the Board

## **Purpose**

The role of the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee is to:

- assist to promote a culture of wellbeing and safeguarding across DOBCEL ;
- monitor the status of the DOBCEL Schools in relation to child safeguarding, including Ministerial Order No. 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises and reportable conduct;
- provide strategic advice on matters pertaining to child safety and wellbeing;
- receives reports on the implementation of the Wellbeing Framework as a means of informing the strategic oversight of policies, procedures and programs in the DOBCEL Schools;
- review and/or recommend policy related to wellbeing and safeguarding children and young people to the DOBCEL Board;
- monitor areas of risk associated with wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people and provide a report of risk to the DOBCEL Assurance and Risk Consultative Committee
- regularly report to the DOBCEL Board on the Consultative Committee's work and submit recommendations for consideration.

## **Chair of Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee**

The Chair, appointed by the Board, will have specific expertise in Wellbeing or Safeguarding. The Chair will be responsible for calling meetings, setting the agenda and ensuring that minutes are recorded, approved and distributed to the Committee members and the Board.

## Membership

The DOBCEL Board Chair proposes members for the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee for approval by the Board.

The Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee will consist of:

- one DOBCEL Board Director;
- at least two subject matters expert from the Wellbeing and/or Safeguarding field;
- a Principal or relevant senior leader from a DOBCEL secondary college;
- a Principal or relevant senior leader from a DOBCEL primary school;
- a parent of a current student/s in a DOBCEL school;

With the following being in attendance:

- Executive Officer: CEB Leader: Wellbeing
- CEB Deputy Director: Stewardship
- CEB Deputy Director: Catholic Education
- CEB Assistant Director: People & Development
- CEB Manager Safeguarding & Standards

Membership of the Committee is for an initial period of three (3) years. Members may seek re-appointment for up to a further three (3) year term. DOBCEL reserves the right to offer a one-year re-appointment where necessary for membership continuity and to restructure the Committee membership when appropriate.

Members of the Committee must abide by the DOBCEL Code of Conduct for Directors which includes Safeguarding Children and Young People.

## Meetings

### Frequency

The Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee must meet a minimum 4 times a year.

Further meetings may be held as the Committee considers necessary and consequently directed by the Committee Chair.

### Attendance

All Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee members are expected to attend each meeting in person, or through other approved means, such as teleconference or video conference.

Members of the Committee should value and respect differing views, mindful of the diversity of communities and individuals across the Diocese.

### Quorum

A quorum shall comprise not less than 50% membership and must include either the Committee Chair, or their respective delegate.

## **Voting**

Any matters requiring decision, will generally be decided by consensus, or if consensus is not achievable, then by a majority of votes of members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has a right to a second vote as a casting vote.

## **Invitees**

The Wellbeing and Safeguarding Consultative Committee may invite other people to attend as it sees fit and consult with other people, or seek any information it considers necessary, to fulfil its responsibilities. Non-members who attend meetings by invitation of the Committee may take part in the business of, and discussions at, the meeting but have no voting rights.

## **Agenda**

CEB, in collaboration with the Committee Chair, will distribute a detailed agenda with supporting papers to all Committee members at least 5 business days before each meeting to facilitate members' preparation for the meeting.

## **Minutes**

Secretariat/administrative duties will be provided by the Minute Secretary (or another appropriate designated person) from CEB. The Minute Secretary will prepare the minutes of the Committee meeting within two weeks of the meeting. After the Committee Chair has read and given preliminary approval, the draft minutes will be circulated to all Committee members. The Minutes must be ratified and signed by the Chair at the next Committee meeting.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

Committee members will be invited to disclose to the Committee Chair conflicts of interest at the commencement of each meeting in accordance with DOBCEL's Conflict of Interest Policies and Procedures. Ongoing conflicts of interest need not be disclosed at each meeting once acknowledged.

## **Reporting to the Board**

The Committee Chair is to provide a written report to the Board following each Committee meeting. The report will include distribution of a copy of the agenda, minutes and any other necessary information such as submissions, draft policies and proposals requiring Board action and/or approval.

The Committee Chair, or DOBCEL Board member, may present the report to the Board with the assistance of CEB where necessary such as upon request from the Board Chair.

The Committee, through the Committee Chair, will prepare an annual report to the Board and Committee members on all matters considered by the Committee in that 12-month period. The report will be presented to the Board within three months of the end of each calendar year.

## **Review**

The Committee will review their performance against these Terms of Reference on an annual basis. The review may be conducted as a self-assessment and will be co-ordinated by the Committee Chair. The assessment may seek input from any person. Training needs will be monitored by the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will report the review findings to the Board including any proposed amendments for Board approval.