

Policy & Procedures – Inclusion and Diversity



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Campus Principal

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain Outdoor School’s commitment to making sure every member of our school community is treated with respect and dignity. Outdoor School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. For staff, this policy should be read alongside the Department of Education and Training’s [Respectful Workplaces](#) policies (including [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#)) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Outdoor School.

Policy

Definitions

Personal attribute:

A personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute

Direct discrimination:

Unfavourable treatment because of a person’s protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination:

Imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Sexual harassment:

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

Disability harassment:

Humiliating comments or actions about a person’s disability.

Vilification:

Conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation:

Subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).

Inclusion and diversity

Outdoor School is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect. Outdoor School is inclusive of people from all races, languages, religious beliefs, gender identities, disabilities or sexual orientations.

Outdoor School acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others.

Outdoor School will:

- actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students.
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Bullying, harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated in our school community. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school. Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

To promote a positive and inclusive community at Outdoor School, the leadership team will actively ensure that:

- All students are briefed on appropriate use of showers, toilets and change rooms to ensure respect for privacy of others.
- Outdoor School supports students in using the toilets and facilities (including dormitories) that they feel most comfortable with.
- All bathrooms and toilets remain gender neutral with their signage and operation where possible. Planning for future bathroom and toilet facilities will take this into account.
- Staff are encouraged to use non-gender specific language wherever possible when organising groups and or working partners.
- Staff are provided with assistance to support gender diverse students through professional learning and briefings.
- All forms of bullying, discrimination or harassment will be responded to, eliminated and managed appropriately in accordance with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.
- All staff actively promote and model building Respectful Relationships within our school.

Support for students

Where necessary, the Campus Principal will facilitate the development of a Student Support Plan for gender diverse students to ensure that they feel safe and supported at School. Through this process, we will ensure that:

- The plan is developed in consultation with the student, their parents (or carers) and the school principal of the student's 'home school'. The student is at the centre of creating their own support plan, and will be consulted in all decision making.
- The use of preferred pronouns (for example he, she, they) and names will be used in consultation with the student.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to protect privacy and confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those who have an appropriate reason to know, i.e. to provide the student with support. In some circumstances, a communication plan may be prepared in consultation with the student that includes what information staff members and other students need to know to best support the student.
- Effort will be made to consult with the student's treating practitioners, where necessary, to properly understand the student's needs.
- A review of all lessons plans will be completed to eliminate (where possible) all references to boy/girl terminology and grouping that may cause the student concern and/or distress. Lessons or activities that require gender groupings may also be reviewed to be non-gender specific where possible.

Outdoor School is committed to supporting and respecting all aspects of a student's identity.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Outdoor School also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our school's [insert names of any relevant documents eg: Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy].

Support for staff

Staff members who have transitioned or affirmed their gender identify, or are in the process of doing so will receive the full support of Outdoor School. Staff are encouraged to speak with the Campus Principal if they believe that they may benefit from assistance to ensure that they feel comfortable, safe and supported at camp.

DET Perspective

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995 it is unlawful to discriminate in education on the grounds of:

- A student's actual or assumed sexual orientation
- A student's gender identity
- The sexual orientation or gender identity of a student's parents, friends or family members

therefore...

Schools must support and respect a student's choice to identify as their desired gender when this does not align with their designated sex at birth.

- respect privacy and confidentiality in relation to gender identity and intersex status.
- the use of toilets, showers and change rooms should be based on the student's gender identity and whichever facilities they feel most comfortable using.
- give proper consideration to the impact of any requirement to participate in school activities according to gender identity or an assumption of heterosexuality (e.g. school, formals, sports activities, camps).

Related policies and resources

For more information about our school policies as below go to our website - <http://www.outdoorschool.vic.edu.au/policies/3699/>

- Child Safety
- Code of Conduct
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Bullying Prevention

School Policy and Advisory Guide:

- [Inclusive Education](#)
- [Koorie Education](#)
- [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Supports and Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

Department Resources

School Policy and Advisory Guide, Student Health and Wellbeing policies:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/default.aspx>

Safe Schools Unit:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/safe-schools-coalition.aspx?Redirect=1>

Respectful Relationships Resource

<http://fusecontent.education.vic.gov.au/cfee82ef-67f8-488c-a167-52759afda882/respectfulrelationshipsresourceakitforvictorianschools.pdf>

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	10/02/2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	10/04/23 – noting that the recommended review cycle for this policy is 3 to 4 years