

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Seaholme Primary School's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. This policy should be read alongside the following Department of Education and Training policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- For staff, the [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 Seaholme Primary School.

Our school's approach aligns with the [Ministerial Order 1359](#) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors. It also applies to school council members where indicated. The policy applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided for student use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers

This should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes of conduct (refer to the related school policies section at the end of this 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.

Gender identity: is broadly defined in the as meaning 'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth'.

By this definition, the *Sex Discrimination Act* therefore affords protection from discrimination for persons who identify as men, women or also as neither male nor female. It does not matter what sex the person was assigned at birth, or whether the person has undergone any medical intervention. Some terms used to describe a person's gender identity include trans, transgender and gender diverse. The *Sex Discrimination Act* does not use these labels; however, it is intended to cover these identities and more.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY



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: an action taken in relation to the person's disability that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person.

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).

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Inclusion and diversity

Seaholme Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. The school aims to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential.

Under this policy, every member of Seaholme Primary School has the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Along with this right comes the responsibility to respect and promote human rights and responsibilities by behaving according to this policy. The principal of Seaholme Primary School is accountable for implementation of this policy.

Seaholme Primary School is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders), language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Seaholme Primary 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. At Seaholme Primary School, we value the human rights of every student, and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

It is unlawful for any person or group of people to be treated less favourably because they possess any of these personal characteristics. No member of the school community will be treated less favourably should they possess any of these personal characteristics, nor will such characteristics affect access to the benefits and services Seaholme Primary School provides.

Seaholme Primary School is committed to ensuring that the working environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Seaholme Primary School. We

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying Prevention* 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.

Seaholme Primary School will support and respect a staff member or student's choice to identify as their desired gender when this does not align with their designated sex at birth. Seaholme Primary School will respect the privacy and confidentiality in relation to gender identity and intersex status.

Seaholme Primary School will:

- actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that all students and members of our school community are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against and where necessary, are accommodated to participate in education and all school activities (e.g. schools sports, concerts, excursions, camps) 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.
- take action to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and to promote a safe and inclusive school.
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.
- take action to promote a human rights approach to diversity, inclusion and Equal Opportunity, both in terms of school policy and practice and within its educational activities and culture.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Seaholme Primary 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 also consult through Student Support Group (SSG) 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 *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* or contact the principal for further information.

Cultural and Class Celebrations

Our school is a multicultural community with a broad range of political, cultural and religious beliefs and viewpoints. At the same time, our school is Australian, and we live in a predominantly Christian society with predominantly Christian views.

The school will:

- celebrate all of the typical special occasions including Christmas and Easter. Our end-of-year concert may have a Christmas theme and include Santa Claus and Christmas carols etc; but we will also ensure that the program invites other groups to participate and feature their own cultural celebrations at the same time.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

- explore other cultural celebrations that occur within families across the school, and will provide opportunities for children and families to celebrate their special occasions throughout the school year
- No child will have to partake in cultural celebrations that they or their parents do not approve of, and will instead be provided with alternative activities
- Multicultural events and occasions will be regular features of our school's calendar and our multiculturalism will be celebrated.

Class celebrations must have prior approval from a member of the principal class and, if off site, are subject to the planning and approval processes outlined in the school's Camps and Excursions policy, and are subject to the following:

- Parents are to be informed of all class parties or celebrations in writing;
- Parents will be informed in writing that food may be shared and that if their child has allergies, they should not inform the school in writing;
- The school has a focus on the promotion of healthy lifestyles, healthy foods should form the basis of all school activities involving food and drink;
- Teachers will ensure that their duty of care to the students is not compromised during a class celebration, a teacher's duty of care and legal responsibility are not diminished;
- The timing of class celebrations must be considered, and involve little or no disturbance to surrounding classes. If multiple classes are considering celebrations for the same event (eg: end of the school year) it would be prudent to hold them at the same time;
- The clean-up and disposal of rubbish associated with parties and celebrations is the responsibility of the classroom teacher and students involved.

Complaints Procedures

Seaholme Primary School encourages all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school. All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved as promptly as possible.

Any member of the school community who raises an issue of discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification in good faith will not be victimised or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged. All complaints of victimisation will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as quickly as possible.

Complaints procedures exist to provide an avenue to address unacceptable behaviour. Complaint procedures are designed to explain what to do if you believe you have been discriminated against, harassed, sexually harassed, bullied, vilified or victimised, and/or your complaint is about your education or employment at Seaholme Primary School or goods/services provided by Seaholme Primary School. (See Complaints Policy for more information)

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website and communication platform
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as a regular reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums and through SWPBS and RR
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY



FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints and Concerns Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

OTHER RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#) which apply to all staff working at our school.

Other relevant Department policies and resources on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or if DET policy changes

Policy last reviewed	September 2022
Approved by	Principal
Consultation (Recommended)	School staff/School Council September 2022
Next scheduled review date	September 2024