

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Mount Dandenong 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. Mount Dandenong Primary 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 Mount Dandenong Primary 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.

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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

The Mount Dandenong Primary School community is made up of people from diverse backgrounds, including different nationalities, first-nations people, religious backgrounds and family types, such as single-parent and same-sex.

Mount Dandenong 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, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Mount Dandenong 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 Mount Dandenong 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.

Mount Dandenong Primary 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 (e.g. schools sports, concerts, celebration events, camps etc.) 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.

To promote an inclusive culture at Mount Dandenong Primary School, we will take the following proactive measures:

- Professional development for staff relating to diversity, inclusion, bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to diversity, inclusion, bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- 'Bounce Back' program implemented across the school.
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'Respect'.

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- The Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.

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 Mount Dandenong Primary School. We 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.

The school may choose to facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved in bullying or harassing others on the basis of their personal attributes. Students who engage in this kind of inappropriate behaviour will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour.

The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.

The school may also choose to facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

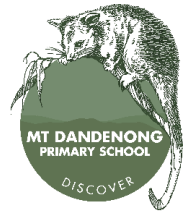
Mount Dandenong Primary School also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their 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 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 *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact the Principal for further information.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Complaints policy

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- Duty of Care Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy

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 School Policy and Advisory Guide are:

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

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on 5 May 2019 and is scheduled for review in May 2022.