

# Inclusion and Diversity Policy

(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)



## Rationale

At Wantirna College, 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. Our core value is Respect: respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment. We have a strong commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of background or personal abilities, is treated with respect and dignity. We strive to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment, which values the human rights of all students and staff.

This policy refers to inclusion and diversity in relation to students and their families and should be read in conjunction with the **Wantirna College Anti Bullying Policy** and the **Student Behaviour Management Policy**.

*For policies that relate to staff the Department of Education's Respectful Workplaces policy covers guidelines related to Equal Opportunity and Anti Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying. These policies apply to all staff at Wantirna College.*

## 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

At Wantirna College, we value the diversity of our school community and work to ensure the school is inclusive of all students, staff and their families.

Our community is quite diverse with approximately:

- 1% of our student population having indigenous heritage
- 27% of students who have a language background other than English (LBOTE)
- 40 different languages other than English spoken in family homes

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- 60 students from China and Vietnam in our International Student Program.

Our Individual Needs team works to support our students with funding within the Department Program for Students with Disability (PSD) and other students with high needs. They work within the Student Wellbeing team and Sub school teams to facilitate regular Student Support Group (SSG) meetings and communication with parents. A team of teachers and Education Support staff accommodate the needs of students with developing English Language skills and cultural knowledge to assist with access to the curriculum.

As a founding member of the Safe Schools coalition, we work to create an environment within the school where students can feel safe to be themselves and to develop their sense of identity through a well-resourced Student Wellbeing Team.

## Guidelines

- 1.1 Wantirna College is committed to creating a school community where all members 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.
  
- 1.2 The College will focus on the attitudes and behaviours that demonstrate respect, to create and maintain a calm and safe learning environment that contributes to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students regardless of difference.

## Program

- 2.1 The College Value of respect for others frames all our interactions with the community and will form the bases for how all members of the community interact with each other.
  - 2.1.1 The College will ensure our overall communication has positive messages regarding inclusion and diversity that promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- 2.2 Programs and communications at Wantirna College will acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students.
  - 2.2.1 All College committees and teams will address the need to provide a learning environment free from discrimination and/or harassment.
  - 2.2.2 The Sub School Teams and the Curriculum Teams will keep equal opportunity issues before the staff, students and parents/guardians and will actively promote non-discriminatory attitudes and behaviour by:
    - Organising student, staff and guest speakers to address assemblies and meetings
    - Promoting the implementation of policies and procedures on harassment in conjunction with the Year Level Leaders, Assistant Principals and classroom teachers
    - Participating in curriculum design and review processes to ensure that criteria for analysis of inclusiveness, gender balance and appropriate terminology are applied

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- Participating in policy review processes to ensure that criteria for analysis of gender balance, non-discriminatory language and merit and equity principles are applied.
- 2.2.3 The traditional owners of the land on which the school is built will be acknowledged in formal meetings such as parent information sessions and assemblies.
- 2.2.4 We will provide interpretation services for parents who require them to communicate with the College.
- 1.3 The College will provide a safe environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment and will actively encourage positive non-discriminatory attitudes and behaviour in all its members.
- 2.3. 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 Wantirna College. This includes language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others in our community.
- 2.3.1 Students who may have experienced or witnessed bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment or vilification on the basis of their personal attributes are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know to ensure they can be supported, and the inappropriate behaviour of others can be addressed.
- 2.3.2 Student perpetrators of discriminatory behaviour will be dealt with in line with the Student Behaviour Management and Anti Bullying Policies.
- 2.3.3 Parents of students who are concerned about unlawful discriminatory actions of staff towards students should raise the issue with a member of the Principal Team. The Principal will deal with the issue in relation to DET processes and procedures.
- 1.4 Wantirna College will ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) on the basis of a recognised personal attribute, and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities.
- 2.4 The College will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.
- 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.
- 2.4.1 Reasonable adjustments will be made for students on the basis of their personal attributes in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners.

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- 2.4.2 In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable the College will balance the needs of the individual student with the needs of other students and staff and take into account:
- The nature of the student's disability
  - His or her preferred adjustment
  - Any adjustments that have been provided previously
  - Any recommended or alternative adjustments.
- 2.4.3 School events such as camps, excursions, concerts, formals etc will be adapted to ensure students with identified special needs are able to access the learning provided by these programs.
- 2.4.4 Consultation will be undertaken to ensure the College can provide the appropriate facilities for students. Consultation will occur with the Principal team and Student Wellbeing and other relevant industry experts.
- 2.4.5 A Student Support Group (SSG) will be convened for consultation with the student, their parent/s or caregiver, the teacher and any other experts to determine how best to make adjustments to support the student whilst maintaining the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student.
- 2.4.6 Where the nature of the program makes the adaptations unreasonable, the teacher in charge will ensure there is a program available that will provide an equivalent learning program.
- 1.5 The College's learning program will actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- 2.5 School programs will provide opportunities for teachers to explicitly and implicitly teach and encourage empathy, equity and fairness.
- 2.5.1 The College will develop and implement programs and practices such as Respectful Relationships, which challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices.
- 2.5.2 Students will develop an understanding of other cultures and points of difference through the explicit and implicit delivery of the Victorian Curriculum, VCE and VCAL.
- 2.5.3 An appreciation of the Chinese and Spanish cultures will be taught specifically through our Languages core curriculum in year 7 and 8 and the elective curriculum in year 9 and 10.

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

[Inclusive Education](#)

[Koorie Education](#)

[Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)

[Safe Schools](#)

[Supports and Services](#)

[Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

<b>Policy Drafted by</b>	Catherine Ford Assistant Principal
<b>Ratified by College Council on</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2020