



## PARK ORCHARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Inclusion and Diversity Policy

**(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)**

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Park Orchards Primary School's (P.O.P.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 P.O.P.S.

#### 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:* 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).

##### Inclusion and Diversity

P.O.P.S. strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

P.O.P.S. 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.

P.O.P.S. 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 P.O.P.S. 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.

P.O.P.S. 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 (eg schools sports, concerts, school assemblies, school discos, interschool sports 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.
- fosters positive cultural change in attitudes and beliefs about disability, in and beyond the school environment

At P.O.P.S. , we are committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment that celebrates the uniqueness of every individual within our school community. This policy outlines our dedication to creating a culture of respect, understanding, and appreciation for differences, and highlights specific programs and initiatives that contribute to this commitment.

We acknowledge and celebrate the rich diversity within our school community. Our commitment is rooted in creating an environment that values and respects the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of all individuals, including students, staff, and parents.

We are proud to be an advocate for the Safe Schools Guide, ensuring that our school is a safe and inclusive space for everyone. This guide serves as a foundation for our commitment to creating an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

As a Resilience Project school, we actively promote the development of emotional resilience and positive mental health within our community. Our engagement with the Resilience Project reflects our dedication to fostering a supportive atmosphere for all individuals.

Our staff is actively involved in implementing the Respectful Relationships Program. This initiative provides a safe and inclusive framework that focuses on cultivating a common language within our school community. By fostering respectful relationships, we aim to create an environment where every individual feels valued and heard.

We recognise that promoting inclusion and diversity is an ongoing process. We are dedicated to regularly reviewing and updating our policies and programs to ensure that they reflect the evolving needs of our school community.

At P.O.P.S., we believe that an inclusive and diverse environment is essential for the holistic development of our students. By embracing and celebrating our differences, we aim to create a school community that values every individual and promotes a sense of belonging for all.

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 P.O.P.S. We are committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all members of our school community.

We will take prompt and appropriate measures, consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying policies to address instances where students demonstrate behaviours that go against our commitment to inclusion and diversity. These measures may include disciplinary actions, education, support pathways for appropriate counselling, or other interventions as deemed necessary.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour are strongly encouraged to speak up. We foster an environment where students feel comfortable reporting incidents to their teachers, parents, or carers. Reporting is essential to ensure that inappropriate behaviour is promptly addressed, and the wellbeing of all students is safeguarded.

Through the practice of Restorative Practice, we provide students with the opportunity to engage in open and

constructive discussions about challenging situations. This approach allows individuals involved to express their feelings, thoughts, and perspectives. It also promotes empathy and understanding by allowing all sides of the situation to be heard.

Students engaged in bullying or harassment based on personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour. Our school is committed to fostering a learning environment that promotes empathy, understanding, and personal growth. We aim to educate and guide students involved in inappropriate behaviour to help them develop positive relationships and contribute positively to the school community.

We will implement education and prevention programs to proactively address issues related to bullying, discrimination, harassment, and inappropriate behaviour. These programs will be designed to promote understanding, respect, and empathy among students, fostering a culture of inclusivity and acceptance.

We are dedicated to the continuous review and improvement of our policies and practices related to bullying and inappropriate behaviour. This commitment ensures that our approach remains responsive to the evolving needs of our school community and aligns with best practices in promoting inclusion and diversity.

P.O.P.S. is committed to compliance with all relevant legal requirements pertaining to inclusion and diversity in Victoria, Australia. This policy is designed to uphold the principles and regulations set forth in local, state, and federal legislation, including but not limited to the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act and the Disability Discrimination Act.

The school has established a comprehensive structure and process to ensure compliance with legal requirements related to inclusion and diversity. This includes designated personnel responsible for overseeing and implementing the inclusion policy, conducting regular assessments to identify potential gaps, and collaborating with relevant stakeholders to address any issues that may arise.

All members of the school community, including students, staff, parents, and carers, have both rights and responsibilities outlined in the Inclusion and Diversity Policy. These rights encompass the expectation of fair and equitable treatment, freedom from discrimination, and access to a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Simultaneously, responsibilities include promoting a culture of respect, reporting incidents of discrimination or harassment, and actively participating in initiatives that contribute to the school's inclusive vision.

Our commitment to inclusion extends beyond legal compliance to fostering an educational environment where all students have equitable access to a challenging and enriching curriculum. We aim to create a learning community that values diversity, promotes cultural understanding, and embraces the inclusive education model that allows all individuals to be who they are and co-exist in a respectful and understanding community.

The following principles provide guidance for all members of the school community on the main features of inclusive education.

#### **S: Student-centred**

- Inclusive education involves students, in collaboration with their peers and/or carers, in decision making processes as respected partners in education.

#### **H: Human rights focused**

- Inclusive education is supported by and is the realisation of a human rights based approach to education. International human rights principles and Victoria's Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 provide a framework for every Victorian to be treated with dignity and respect and to enjoy their human rights without discrimination.

#### **A: Acknowledges strengths**

- Inclusive education recognises that each child and young person is unique. It focuses on a strengths-based, personalised approach to education that celebrates and welcomes difference to maximise learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes.

**R: Respects legal obligations**

- Inclusive education enables schools to uphold legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments for all students with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments assist all students to participate in education on the same basis as their peers without a disability.

**E: Evidence-based**

- Inclusive education uses contemporary evidence-based practices known to be effective in responding to individual student needs and improving student outcomes.

**Inclusive Education at Park Orchards Primary School:**

- Acknowledgement of Aboriginal students and their cultural plans
- The Marrung Lead is involved and initiates cultural activities for our Koori students
- Proudly displaying the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander flags
- Celebrating Harmony day
- Providing differentiated learning for students
- Engaging in respectful relationship lessons and social and emotional learning lessons
- Providing Inclusive Education Policy ratified based on 'DET Education for All' policy
- Provision of ongoing training is available with the Disability Inclusion Leader and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, who are able to give one-on-one support to all staff
- Whole-school implementation of Structured Literacy (Prep to Year 2: decoding focus using Little Learners
- Love Literacy resources & Years 3-6 encoding focus supported by SoundWaves)
- Specialist Setting visits for staff as part of professional learning and development
- Specialised staff training for students with medical needs
- Extensive Early Transition Program
- Whole school Social & Emotional Learning Program- The Resilience Project
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support implementation
- P.O.P.S. Annual Implementation Plan and Strategic Plan have an Inclusive Education focus, aligning with the Australian Professional Standards
- Access to the G.E.M. Centre and the Pettet Centre, a space that welcomes everyone and is inclusive of all individual needs and interests. A rostered timetable of activities is available, but options for students to choose alternate activities such as: drawing, board games, chess, fidget toys and sports are also on offer.
- 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.

**Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities**

P.O.P.S. 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 Disability Inclusion Leader for further information.

**COMMUNICATION**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual

- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

#### RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Statement of Values
- 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 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

Policy last reviewed	May 2025
Consultation	Policy was reviewed and consulted in May 2025 by the school council School Community via Newsletter and Compass
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2028