



WARRINGA PARK SCHOOL

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Warringa Park 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. Warringa Park 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 Warringa Park School.

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).

POLICY

Warringa Park School is a specialist school, catering for students aged 5 to 18 years who have been diagnosed with intellectual disability ranging from mild to profound.

Warringa Park 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.

Warringa Park 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 Warringa Park 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.

Warringa Park 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 (eg schools sports, concerts, formals) 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, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Warringa Park School. 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.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

An inclusive education system enables all students to be welcomed, accepted and engaged so that they can participate, achieve and thrive in school life. Inclusive education:

- ensures that students with disabilities are not discriminated against and are accommodated to participate in education on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledges and responds to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- occurs when students with disabilities and additional needs are treated with respect and are involved in making decisions about their education
- benefits students of all abilities in the classroom and fosters positive cultural change in attitudes and beliefs about disability, in and beyond the school environment
- contributes to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students.

VICTORIAN SHARE PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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 maximize 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.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Schools have legal obligations that include the provision of educational opportunities, duty of care, occupational health and safety, upholding of human rights, and the prevention of discrimination, see: [Legal Obligations](#)

All schools, as education providers, must comply with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) and also the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth) (the Standards), see: [Disability Standards](#)

The Standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services and the elimination of harassment and victimisation, and provides guidance for schools on:

- the rights of students with disabilities
- the legal obligations on education provider
- some of the measures that would demonstrate compliance.

The Standards apply to all students with disabilities, not just those who are eligible for support under targeted funding programs. Additional resources provided to schools do not define or limit the support provided for student disabilities.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Warringa Park 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 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RELATED POLICIES

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Digital Learning Policy (Internet, Social Media, Digital Devices) and Acceptable Use Agreements
- Enrolment Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy
- Student Welfare and Engagement 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.

DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

- [Abilities Based Learning and Education Support \(ABLES\)](#) provides a suite of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting resources
- [Autism Friendly Learning](#) for learning initiatives and resources
- [Disability Standards](#) includes fact sheets and links to eLearning resources
- [Koorie Education](#) - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education
- [Language and Learning Disabilities Support Program](#) for supporting students with language disorders and difficulties
- [Legal Obligations](#) for information on the provision of educational opportunities, duty of care, occupational health and safety, human rights and discrimination obligations
- [Medical and Accessibility Support](#) includes Schoolcare, Medical Intervention Support, Equipment Grants for Students with vision Impairments and Accessible Buildings Program
- [Nationally Consistent Collection of Data](#) includes links to resources
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#) for further information on the additional support within the Student Resource Package for eligible students with disabilities in regular and specialist schools
- [Learning Difficulties and Dyslexia](#) for assessments and focused teaching strategies that can assist in supporting and monitoring a student's learning and progress in reading
- [Engagement Support for Specific Groups of Students](#) includes resources, strategies and supports for specific groups of students who have additional needs, or may face particular barriers to engage with school
- [Safe Schools](#) - The Safe Schools program helps schools foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTI students.
- [Student Support Groups](#) guidelines to assist schools in supporting students with disabilities and additional learning needs
- [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
- [Transitions \(Careers Pathways Programs\)](#) for transition and pathways information
- [Supports and Services](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's **three-year review cycle** but also occurs on a regular basis prompted by changing circumstances and raised concerns.

This policy was reviewed and shared with the school community on **9th June 2021** and is *scheduled for review in June 2024*.