INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Dandenong West Primary School on dandenong.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au or 9792 2868.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Dandenong West Primary School works to make sure every member of our school community is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or personal attributes. This policy should be read alongside the following department policies:

- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- For staff, the Respectful Workplaces policies (including Equal Opportunity – Employees, Sexual Harassment – Employees and Workplace Bullying) as these whole of department policies apply to all staff at Dandenong West 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 feels 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) have 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

Dandenong West Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. Dandenong West Primary School is a vibrant, multicultural and inclusive learning community of approximately 325 students. We recognise, value and celebrate the diverse cultural, linguistic, social and educational backgrounds of our students and families. Our commitment to inclusion is grounded in the belief that **every student, regardless of their background, identity, ability or individual circumstances, has the right to feel safe, respected, valued and supported to participate fully in school life.**

Our school community reflects significant cultural and linguistic diversity, with 89% of students having a Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE), 78% speaking a language other than English as their main language at home, and 207 students (64%) identified as English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners. Across our school, 38 different languages are spoken, alongside numerous dialects. Our families predominantly originate from South Asia, with others representing communities across Africa, the Middle East and other parts of Asia. We recognise this diversity as a strength that enriches our learning environment, broadens perspectives and fosters intercultural understanding, belonging and mutual respect.

Our Student Family Occupation and Education (SFOE) index of 0.5971 and Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 931 indicate that many families experience socio-economic disadvantage. Additionally, enrolment information suggests that approximately one in six students may come from a refugee background, while many families experience high levels of mobility and transitions between schools.

We acknowledge that students and families bring unique experiences, strengths and needs that may influence their access to education, wellbeing and engagement in learning. **Our approach to inclusion extends beyond cultural diversity to embrace students of all abilities, disabilities, neurodivergent profiles, learning needs, faiths, family structures and socio-economic**

circumstances. We are committed to identifying and removing barriers to participation, providing equitable access to learning opportunities and ensuring that individual differences are recognised, respected and supported.

Through culturally responsive teaching, differentiated learning, inclusive wellbeing practices, strong family partnerships and comprehensive transition and induction processes, we strive to create an environment where every student experiences a genuine sense of belonging.

At Dandenong West Primary School, inclusion means more than welcoming diversity. It means actively ensuring that every student is seen, heard, valued and empowered to learn, participate and thrive.

Dandenong West 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.

Dandenong West Primary School acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community, and we do not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Dandenong West 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.

Dandenong West Primary School:

- actively nurtures and promotes a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensures that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledges and responds to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourages empathy and fairness towards others
- challenges stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contributes to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- responds to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

At Dandenong West Primary School, we celebrate Harmony Day as an opportunity to recognise, embrace and celebrate the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of our school community. Through meaningful activities, cultural celebrations and shared learning experiences, we promote inclusion, respect, understanding and a strong sense of belonging. Harmony Day reflects our ongoing commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where every culture, language and identity is valued, and where all students and families feel respected, connected and celebrated. We

also engage in multiple cultural groups through our community hub, extending our learning community to include parents and partner organisations.

Our staff have participated in **Cultural Intelligence (CQ) professional learning facilitated by the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)**, strengthening their understanding of cultural diversity and their capacity to engage effectively with students and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This training encouraged staff to reflect on their own cultural perspectives, recognise unconscious biases and develop culturally responsive teaching and engagement practices. Through this partnership, we continue to strengthen our commitment to cultural safety, equity and inclusion, ensuring that all students and families feel respected, understood, valued and connected to our school community.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes is not tolerated at Dandenong West Primary 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.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Dandenong West 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 in accordance with the department's Students with Disability Policy. Reasonable adjustments are 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 Diana Ma'u Wellbeing Leader

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school council induction materials
- 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

The following school policies are relevant to this policy:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Bullying Prevention policies

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:

- Child Safe Standards
- Disability Inclusion Funding and Support
- Disability Inclusion Profile
- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- Koorie Education
- Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC)
- LGBTQIA+ Student Support
- Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools
- Refugee Education Support Initiatives
- Safe Schools
- Schools - culturally safe environments guidance
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- Student Leaders for Multicultural Inclusion
- Students with Disability

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	27.10.2026
Consultation	Presented to School Council 12.11.2026
Approved by	Principal – Joshua Bourke
Next scheduled review date	27.10.2030

Dandenong West
PRIMARY SCHOOL