

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY 2026- 2029

(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)



Help for non-English speakers

Watsonia Heights Primary School is committed to making information about this policy accessible to all members of our school community. If you require assistance to understand this policy, information in an alternative or accessible format, or support because of disability, language, literacy or communication needs, please contact the Front Office on (03) 9435 4617. We will work with you to identify an appropriate way to provide the information or assistance you require.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Watsonia Heights 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) apply to all staff at Watsonia Heights Primary School.

Our approach to inclusive education

Watsonia Heights Primary School's approach to inclusive education is informed by the Victorian Department of Education SHARE principles. We aim for inclusive practices that are:

- Student-centred - students are heard, involved and supported to participate in decisions affecting their education.
- Human-rights focused - every student's dignity, equality and right to participate in education is respected.
- Strengths-based - students' strengths, abilities, interests, identities and aspirations are recognised and built upon.
- Respectful of legal obligations - school practices reflect our responsibilities under relevant disability, anti-discrimination, human rights and education laws.
- Evidence-based - teaching, adjustments and supports are informed by evidence, professional knowledge and the individual needs of students.



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) 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

Watsonia Heights Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

Watsonia Heights Primary School values the diversity of its students, families and staff and is committed to inclusive practices that recognise and respect different cultural, linguistic, religious, disability, gender, family and personal backgrounds.

Watsonia Heights 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.

Watsonia Heights 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 Watsonia Heights 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.



Cultural Safety

Watsonia Heights Primary School is committed to creating and maintaining a culturally safe environment in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and community members feel welcomed, respected, valued and able to express their identity and culture. We recognise and respect the histories, cultures, knowledges, identities and continuing connections to Country and community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our school seeks to ensure that First Nations students have opportunities to participate fully in school life without experiencing racism, discrimination or prejudice, and that their individual identities, experiences, strengths and cultural connections are recognised and respected in decisions that affect them.

Watsonia Heights 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 (for example, school sports, concerts, camps and excursions) 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.

In implementing this policy, the school will promote inclusive participation, student voice and respectful relationships, and will work with students, parents and carers and relevant professionals to identify and respond to individual needs and barriers to participation.

Watsonia Heights Primary School does not tolerate racism, racial discrimination, racial or religious vilification, religious intolerance or other behaviours that demean or exclude people because of their race, ethnicity, culture, language or religion. We are committed to actively preventing racism and creating a school culture in which diversity is respected and valued.

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

Students are encouraged to speak up if something does not feel right or if they experience or witness discrimination, harassment, racism or religiously discriminating behaviour, bullying or other behaviour that makes them or another person feel unsafe, excluded or disrespected. Students can speak with their classroom teacher, another trusted staff member, the Principal or Assistant



Principal, or a parent or carer. Students may also ask a trusted adult to support them to raise a concern.

Students will be supported to raise concerns in a way that is appropriate to their age, developmental level, communication needs and individual circumstances. A student will not be disadvantaged or victimised for raising a genuine concern or seeking assistance.

Watsonia Heights Primary School encourages students, parents, carers and members of the school community to raise concerns about discrimination, harassment, vilification, racism, religious intolerance or other behaviours that may affect a person's inclusion, safety or wellbeing. Concerns and complaints will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, Complaints Policy and relevant Department of Education requirements. Where required, incidents will also be reported through Department of Education processes. Our school aims to ensure that complaint processes are accessible, student-focused, respectful, culturally safe and responsive to the communication needs of those involved.

Students who engage in discriminatory, bullying or harassing behaviour will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour, repair harm where appropriate and develop respectful attitudes and relationships, and make positive changes to their behaviour, consistent with the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying Prevention policies.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Watsonia Heights Primary School 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. The obligation to make reasonable adjustments applies to students with disability regardless of whether they receive individual disability funding or support through a targeted funding program. Adjustments are based on the individual needs of the student and are designed to support access, participation, learning, engagement and wellbeing.

Reasonable adjustments may apply across all areas of school life, including classroom teaching and learning, assessment, the playground, specialist programs, assemblies, excursions, camps, sporting activities, transition programs and other school events and activities. Depending on the needs of the student, adjustments may include changes to teaching approaches, learning materials, communication methods, the physical environment, routines, equipment, supervision or other supports.

Reasonable adjustments are made in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and, if appropriate, their treating practitioners or other allied health professionals. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. Planning and review may occur through a Student Support Group or through other appropriate consultation processes.

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments, individual learning goals, teaching strategies and agreed supports may be documented in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). IEPs are developed collaboratively and may incorporate student voice, the student's strengths and interests, agreed



adjustments, learning goals and strategies for monitoring progress. The school will maintain appropriate records of consultation and review adjustments regularly to ensure they continue to meet the student's needs.

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 or Assistant Principal on (03) 9435 4617.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal has overall responsibility for supporting the implementation of this policy. The Principal and school leadership team will promote inclusive practices and support staff to understand and meet their responsibilities relating to inclusion, equal opportunity, reasonable adjustments, cultural safety, discrimination, harassment and racism.

All staff are responsible for contributing to a safe, inclusive and respectful school environment and for responding appropriately when they observe or become aware of conduct that may be inconsistent with this policy. Staff will be informed about relevant responsibilities through induction, professional learning, staff meetings and updates to Department of Education and school policies and procedures.

The school will support implementation of this policy by:

- considering inclusion and accessibility when planning curriculum, programs, events and school activities
- consulting with students and families where individual supports or adjustments are required
- providing staff with relevant information and professional learning
- responding promptly to concerns about discrimination, harassment, racism, vilification or exclusion
- reviewing school practices where concerns identify opportunities for improvement
- considering student, family and community voice when reviewing inclusive practices.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from the Front Office upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

The following school policies are relevant to this policy:

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



- Bullying Prevention policies
- Complaints Policy
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student Support Groups

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	August 2026
Consultation by School Council on	10 August 2026
Approved by	Tony Ryan, Principal on 10 August 2026
Next scheduled review date	August 2029