

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY (EO), ANTI-HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Alice Miller and Candlebark Schools aim to provide a welcoming, supportive, and emotionally and physically secure learning and working environment for every member of the school community. The schools recognise and value the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities, and life experience of the whole school community.

OUR COMMITMENT

Our aim is to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone come as close as possible to the unrealistic goal of achieving their full potential.

The schools are enriched by and celebrate the diversity of the whole school community.

Discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation are not acceptable.

The schools recognise their obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic), which says that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone, including students and school staff, because of actual or assumed age, career, disability/impairment, gender, lawful sexual activity, marital status, parental status, physical features, political belief or activity, race, pregnancy, religious belief or activity, sex, sexual orientation, personal association with someone who has assumed to have one of the personal characteristics in this list, or because they are or are assumed to be breastfeeding.

No member of the school community will be treated less favourably because they possess any of these personal characteristics nor will such characteristics affect access to the benefits and services which Alice Miller and Candlebark provide

The schools recognise that discrimination may be direct or indirect, and that both are unlawful.

Direct discrimination means treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of one of the personal characteristics listed above or because of their association with someone identified with one of those characteristics.

Examples: refusing to enrol a student because he has Hepatitis C, refusing to allow a Muslim student to wear the hijab as part of her school uniform, or failing to hire a suitably qualified teacher because of his or her sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination happens when a rule, policy or requirement unnecessarily or unreasonably disadvantages a group of people because of a protected personal characteristic they share.

Example: Imposing a requirement that all students take notes from the whiteboard without assistance may unreasonably disadvantage a student with vision impairment.

Racial and religious vilification is unacceptable

Vilification is behaviour (through words or actions) that incites hatred, contempt or ridicule of another person because of their race or religious belief.

Examples: public threats of harm, insults, ridicule.

Bullying is unreasonable behaviour that is intimidating, threatening or humiliating and repeated over time or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, or it can consist of a single incident where a person is targeted and abused, oppressed, humiliated or hurt. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect, and creates an unfriendly, threatening or offensive environment.

Examples: taking or damaging other people's property, excluding or isolating someone, subjecting someone to homophobic abuse, deliberately withholding information so as to affect their work performance, a group targeting an individual or another group in a way which embarrasses/humiliates/hurts physically/hurts emotionally that person or members of that group.

Victimising someone who makes an equal opportunity (EO) complaint is unacceptable. Victimisation in this context means treating someone unfairly or otherwise disadvantaging them because they have made an EO complaint or might do so in the future.

Alice Miller and Candlebark will do all that they can to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and to promote safe and inclusive schools. We will take immediate and appropriate action to address and resolve EO issues and complaints.

Revised December 2017

Next Revision December 2019

Checked and altered/edited January 21 2019

John Marsden