



# Elwood Primary School No 3942

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## **PROGRAM : DIVERSITY**

**POLICY NO: 19**

**Date : February 2011**

### **PREAMBLE AND GUIDELINES**

Elwood Primary School recognises and embraces a diverse Australian population. We acknowledge that our own school community – students, teachers, other staff, families and the wider community –encompasses a broad range of diversity and we ensure that our curriculum and extra curricular programs support and celebrate that diversity.

We value the richness that a diverse community brings. We value the new learning experiences that students can gain, the new perspectives about the world that people bring to our community, the different stories that can be shared. We believe that a diverse community fosters tolerance and understanding of difference, and that education is enhanced by a community that supports and celebrates difference.

In particular, we recognise the significant cultural and linguistic diversity of our community, people with different religious beliefs, and people from different ethnic backgrounds. We acknowledge people and elders, past and present of Yalukit Willam and the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which Elwood Primary is situated. We acknowledge and uphold their relationship to the land that they bring different stories explaining the world.

We understand that people have come to Australia in many ways, as original inhabitants, as early migrants, as recent arrivals, as refugees, through adoption, and through family sponsorship. We acknowledge that refugee families may have survived trauma in their own country, and now face learning all the ways of a new society, as well as a new language, new food and new cultures.

We understand that people have different levels of ability and disability; physical, sensory, intellectual and learning. We know that people can have periods of impairment of different extents, and that people can experience more than one disability at a time.

We recognise that there are many different ways to make a family –single parent families, families with two or more homes, adoptive families, foster families, families with two mums or two dads, intergenerational families, families who live with other families in group homes, families who live in the same place forever, and families who move around a lot. We understand that there are sometimes unstable times in families, and this may cause a change of homes and changes in family structure. We acknowledge that occasionally families may be without a home for a period of time.

We acknowledge that people identify in different ways and have different orientations, and that gender stereotypes are not useful. In particular, we encourage students to be happy with who they are and what they want to be, and we ensure that a variety of role models, relationship choices and career choices, are available to them.

We understand that at different times in life, people can be subject to economic distress, and we strive to provide support in a variety of ways, to ensure that students' learning and wellbeing is not affected.

We recognise that students and families can suffer illness that is short-term or long-term, and we also understand that different people in the community may experience a period of mental ill-health at some point in their lives. We know that there are many children with food and other allergies, and we ensure that they are as safe as possible at all times.

#### **PURPOSE**

1. To raise and maintain awareness with students, teachers, other staff, families and the wider community of our rich and diverse school community and the significant educational benefits this brings, and that others have the right to hold points of view differing from their own beliefs and value systems.
2. To ensure that our curriculum and extra curriculum programs are respectful and supportive of this diversity, being a model of mutual respect, harmony and tolerance.
3. To ensure that we have a flexible and adaptive approach to all of our work, so that we can embrace new areas of diversity that may arise in our school community.
4. To ensure that we operate in a non-discriminatory way at all times, and that we are aware of indirect and direct discrimination

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Annual Review: Activities that support a diverse school community are identified, documented and promoted each year. e.g. cultural and religious celebrations, special weeks. Areas for improvement are noted and resources provided to make those improvements.
2. Diversity Working Group: A working group is convened as necessary to oversee the review. This may include staff, students, families and community members as appropriate.
3. Diversity Coordinator: One or more EPS staff have responsibility for the implementation of the Diversity Policy as part of their responsibilities.
4. The school acknowledges significant events from a variety of cultural, religious and other backgrounds via assemblies, newsletter and school activities.
5. Individual children's needs, attitudes and willingness to be identified or not identified with any group are taken into account. Families are encouraged to inform the school of any culturally sensitive issues.
6. Class teachers are encouraged to openly discuss difference and identity, and are encouraged to participate in diversity awareness programs as part of their professional development plans.
7. School programs present to student diverse cultural and other views and, where possible, students from differing backgrounds are given the opportunity to present information on their cultures and values.
8. Discussion is encouraged about other languages with a view to developing appreciation of the various ways of expressing ideas.
9. The school ensures that communication strategies are inclusive and accessible to all families: for example, multiple documentation for students with more than one home.
10. Aspects of diversity are regularly incorporated into all curriculum areas as they arise.

#### **RESOURCES**

1. Staff, students and parents
2. Reference material. eg Interfaith calendar, Kath Murdoch & Julie Hamston *Knowing Me, Knowing You – exploring identity and difference through integrated curriculum*

#### **REVIEWS**

Implementation review -November 2011.  
Policy review in 2013