



# Elwood Primary School No 3942

Scott Street, Elwood 3184 Telephone 9531 2762 Fax 9531 5497

## DIVERSITY AND EQUAL AND OPPORTUNITY POLICY

### PURPOSE

1. To raise and maintain awareness among students, teachers, other staff, families and the wider community:
  - (a) of our rich and diverse school community and the significant educational benefits this brings; and
  - (b) 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:
  - (a) are respectful and supportive of this diversity, being a model of mutual respect, harmony and tolerance, free of bias, discrimination [and harassment] of any kind;
  - (b) give students equal access to school facilities and resources, and the opportunity to make the most of their educational opportunities at Elwood Primary School, regardless of gender, racial, cultural or socio-economic background or level of ability;
  - (c) present a view of history, and the world around us, that includes the contributions made by both women and men of various cultures, values, races and social and economic backgrounds;
  - (d) offer students the opportunity to expand and challenge their understanding of the world beyond the school; and
  - (e) adopt a flexible and adaptive approach, so that new areas of diversity that may arise in our school community can be embraced.

### BROAD GUIDELINES

1. At Elwood Primary School, we recognise and embrace the rich diversity that exists in the School and surrounding community and we believe that education is enhanced by a community that supports and celebrates this diversity.
  
2. We acknowledge that diversity can take many forms including:
  - (a) cultural and linguistic diversity, different religious beliefs, different ethnic backgrounds and origins, including the people and elders, past and present, of the Yalukit Willam and Kulin Nations, the traditional owners of the land on which Elwood Primary School is situated;

- (b) different levels of ability and disability affecting physical, sensory, intellectual and learning capacities;
  - (c) different levels of sensitivity and tolerance to the environment and other external factors, such as food allergies;
  - (d) different family structures and living arrangements, including periods of instability and upheaval;
  - (e) different gender orientations; and
  - (f) different economic and financial situations, including periods of hardship and ill-health.
3. To support and encourage diversity at Elwood Primary School, we adopt equal opportunity practices, [regardless of the kinds of differences set out in clause 2], by providing:
- (a) a comprehensive curriculum that is inclusive, flexible and adaptable to the needs, interests and abilities of students;
  - (b) educational materials and programs that support equality of opportunity;
  - (c) specific curriculum programs to develop effective communication and conflict resolution skills;
  - (d) positive role models including other students, teachers and parents;
  - (e) education about the negative effects of racism, sexism, bullying, religious intolerance, stereotyping and other forms of social injustice; and
  - (f) school procedures which deal effectively with issues relating to diversity and equal opportunity when they arise.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Diversity and Equal Opportunity Coordinator (DEO Coordinator):

The [Principal] will appoint one or more EPS staff as DEO Coordinator/s at the commencement of each school year to have responsibility for the implementation of the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Policy as part of their responsibilities.

2. Diversity and Equal Opportunity Working Group (DEO Working Group):

The DEO Coordinator will convene a working group at the commencement of each school year. The DEO Working Group may include staff, students, families and community members.

3. Annual Review:

Each year, the DEO Working Group will identify, document and promote activities that support a diverse school community and will incorporate the following objectives:

- (a) the School will acknowledge significant events from a variety of cultural, religious

and other backgrounds via assemblies, newsletters, special weeks, and school activities;

- (b) individual children's needs, attitudes and willingness to be identified or not identified with any group are taken into account and families are encouraged to inform the school of any culturally sensitive issues;
- (c) class teachers are encouraged to openly discuss difference and identity;
- (d) School programs will be designed to present to students diverse cultural and other views and experiences and, where possible, students from differing backgrounds are given the opportunity to present information on their cultures and values;
- (e) the School will ensure that communication strategies are inclusive and accessible to all families: for example, multiple documentation for students with more than one home;
- (f) Strategies across the curriculum to achieve these objectives may include the following:
  - teaching and learning strategies which address gender inclusiveness and different learning styles
  - discussion of Student Code of Conduct
  - development in students of an awareness of racist or sexist language and stereotyping
  - activities which stimulate active participation by all students e.g. role-playing, simulations, co-operative discussions
  - special educational needs supported with school resources e.g. Reading Recovery, Integration
  - encouragement of participation in non-traditional gender roles
  - encouragement of all students to become proactive class members and to participate in leadership opportunities
  - equitable allocation of equipment and other resources
  - invitations to speakers to address students, staff and parents on diversity and equal opportunity issues
- (g) Areas for development are noted and resources provided to achieve that development.

#### 4. Staff Support:

Professional development is conducted as needed to ensure all staff are familiar with:

- (a) diversity awareness programs; and
- (b) their rights and school procedures for dealing with complaints.

## 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
3. DEECD Schools Reference Guide Section 6 ‘Management’
4. DEECD Addressing Parents Concerns and Complaints
5. Victorian Public Authorities (Equal Employment Opportunity) Act 1990
6. Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995
7. Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
8. Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986
9. Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975
10. Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984
11. EPS Policy No 37 Promoting a Safe and Supportive School Environment
12. EPS Policy No 2 Student Welfare
13. School based curriculum and materials

## POLICY HISTORY

<b>Version Approval Date:</b>	<b>Summary of changes:</b>	<b>Next Review:</b>
May, 2018	Policy Created by amalgamation of former Diversity Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy , council approved	3 year cycle or as needed

These elements of the policies have not been included – FOR DISCUSSION

## **Equal Opportunity**

### **Definitions**

Equal opportunity promotes recognition and acceptance of everyone's rights to equality of opportunity and is based on respect for diversity, tolerance and a belief in the value of all individuals

Harassment is defined as any verbal, written, physical or psychological behaviours that are unwelcome, uninvited, repeated, hostile, offensive or degrading. This includes bullying, teasing and intimidation.

Gender based harassment is the unwanted imposition of behaviour that is based on sex stereotyping.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, acts of physical intimacy, oral or written remarks with sexual connotations and gestures, actions or comments of a sexual nature. Racial vilification describes verbal or non-verbal statements which express racial intolerance such as offensive words, ethnic jokes, stereotyping, offensive symbols or gestures.