Inclusion and Diversity Policy

(includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact your child's school.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain the Federation's and member schools' works to make sure every member of our school communities is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. 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 and Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying) as these Department policies apply to all staff at our member schools.

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.

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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

The Federation and its member schools strive to provide safe, inclusive and supportive school environments which value the human rights of all students and staff.

Our member schools are committed to creating a school community where all members 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.

The Federation member schools acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school communities and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At our member schools we value the human rights of every student and staff member and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

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The Federation and its member schools will:

- actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, ceremonies) on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students and staff
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students and staff are not victimised.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated in our school communities. Each member school takes appropriate measures, consistent with their *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* Policy and the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools' Bullying Prevention Policy to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our schools.

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 who are involved in bullying or harassing others on the basis of their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

The Federation and its member schools 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 member schools may consult through Student Support Group

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processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with our member schools in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our member schools' Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy or contact the student's office and speak with the relevant school staff member for further information.

COMMUNICATION

This policy may be communicated to our school communities in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our member school's website and The Federation website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from our member school administration upon request.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Each member schools' Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools' Parent Complaints policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools' Child Safe Policy
- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools' Bullying Prevention Policy.

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:

- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- Students with Disability
- Koorie Education
- Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture
- Safe Schools
- Supports and Services
- Program for Students with Disabilities

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POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October 2026
Consultation	
Approved by	
Next scheduled review date	22/10/2028

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