



INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY (includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school at the General Office.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Yarrabing Secondary College's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. This policy should be read alongside the following Department of Education 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 whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Yarrabing Secondary College.

CONTEXT STATEMENT

Yarrabing Secondary College was established in 2024 and is located approximately 35 kilometres west of Melbourne. When fully established, the school will have 1200 students enrolled from Grade 7 to 12 and 130 school staff members including Wellbeing staff.

Our school grounds are very close to native bushland, and we are surrounded by a supportive community. Nearly all students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. Yarrabing Secondary College has developed close ties to the local community and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

Our school is culturally diverse with 60% of students having a language background other than English (LOTE) spoken in the family home, with the largest LOTE languages being Hindi and Punjabi. The school also has very small representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

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) has 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

Yarrabing Secondary College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

Our school is culturally diverse with 60% of students having a language background other than English (LOTE) spoken in the family home, with the largest LOTE languages being Hindi and Punjabi. The school also has very small representation from the Koorie community.

Yarrabing Secondary College is a school that caters and celebrates all students and members of its community, including staff and parent/carers. Our program will provide opportunities to maximise everyone's strengths by offering a range of programs and ensuring all classes cater for all students in the classroom. Students will be supported to achieve their very best and to be proud of and celebrate each other's differences.

Yarrabing Secondary College's mission is to be a safe, supportive environment that emphasizes motivation and self-discipline. Using 21st century approaches, we provide students with the means to achieve their potential and we challenge our students to grow academically, socially, culturally and emotionally. Collaboration and positive relationships will underpin all our work.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

Yarrabing Secondary College 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.

Yarrabing Secondary College acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Yarrabing Secondary College 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.

Yarrabing Secondary College 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 (e.g. schools sports, concerts, whole school celebration days such as Harmony Day etc), on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- 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 are not victimised.

Yarrabing Secondary College will introduce a Year Level management system that will be inclusive of all students, with opportunities for all members of our community, regardless of race, ability, gender identify or sexual orientation, to participate and celebrate their achievements creating strong connections and an inclusive culture. Students will have a significant voice in the development and implementation of their Year Level management system, including activities and programs introduced.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Yarrabing Secondary College. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying Prevention 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.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Yarrabing Secondary College 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. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. 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 our Inclusion and/or Student Support Services Leader for further information. for further information.

COMMUNICATION

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

- available publicly on our school's website
- included in staff induction processes and staff training
- discussed at student forums
- discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- reminders in our school newsletter
- hard copy available from the General Office upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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.

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
 - [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
 - [Students with Disability](#)
 - [Koorie Education](#)
 - [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
 - [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)
- Related Policies:
 - Statement of Values and School Philosophy
 - Bullying Prevention Policy
- Other resources:
 - [Safe Schools | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2026 – to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 3-4 years thereafter.