



KEW
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kew Primary School Equal Opportunity Policy

Rationale

At our School we aim to create an inclusive culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding, promote student and staff wellbeing, and help everyone achieve their full potential. This school is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of our whole school community.

Implementation

This school supports the Charter of Human Rights and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), which says that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone, including students and school staff, on the grounds of:

- age
- breastfeeding
- carer status
- disability/impairment
- gender identity
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation

No member of the school community will be treated less favorably regarding the above, nor will such characteristics affect access to benefits and services provided by the school.

We will not accept discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation at our School. What constitutes discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation is set out in detail in the DEECD *Equal Opportunity Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools*.

The principal:

- is accountable for implementation of this policy
- may appoint an Equal Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Co-ordinator to support implementation of this policy
- has responsibility for investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimization

Who and what this policy covers

This policy covers the whole school community, including staff, students, parents, school council members, contractors and volunteers.

This policy applies to:

- employment at the School (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions, access to benefits such as training, promotion and leave)
- education (teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
- the provision of goods and services (extracurricular activities, camps, parent–teacher interviews, access and use of facilities)
- school sport

Rights and Responsibilities

Under this policy, every member of our school has the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimization. Along with this right comes the responsibility to respect and promote human rights and responsibilities by behaving according to this policy. The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 prohibits amongst other things, practices such as racist graffiti, speeches or posters in public places, engaging in racist or religious vilification in public places, or making offensive racist comments in publications including the internet or email.

Complaints Procedures

We encourage all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the School. All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved in a timely manner. Any member of the school community who raises an issue of discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification in good faith will not be victimized or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged. All complaints of victimization will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as quickly as possible.

Complaints procedures exist to provide an avenue to address unacceptable behavior. Complaints procedures are designed to explain what to do if you believe you have been discriminated against, harassed, sexually harassed, bullied, vilified or victimized as explained earlier in this policy. The procedures will apply if your complaint is about your education or employment at the School **or** goods, services or sport provided by the School.

If you are a member of staff:

Please refer to the Department's [Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct](#) guidelines.

If you are a parent or guardian:

Please refer to Kew Primary School's Parent Complaints Policy DEECD's [Parent Complaints](#) guidelines.

If you are a student:

You have the right to be part of a safe and inclusive school that is free of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, vilification and victimization. If you believe someone is discriminating, harassing, bullying, vilifying or victimizing you and it is safe for you to do so, tell the other person to stop their behavior. Let them know that their behavior offends you. They may not realize this.

If the behavior doesn't stop or you are not sure what to do, report it to a trusted adult, such as a teacher, the year level coordinator, the principal or the Student Welfare Coordinator. Remember, you are not alone. If you have a problem or complaint, talking to someone, especially your parents can help. If you do not want to talk to anyone about it, you can find more information at The Kids Help Line, telephone 1800 55 1800.

If the unfair treatment or harassment persists, you can call the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) for free and confidential advice. Advice can be given over the phone or in person. If your issue is covered by Equal Opportunity law, the Complaints Officer will discuss it with you. They will then explain how the Commission can help you and the information you would need to include in a complaint should you decide to make one.

Consequences:

If proven, the consequences of such behavior may include counselling, the removal of privileges, a parental interview, suspension or expulsion. The School will arrange counseling and support, where appropriate or where requested, for any student who has experienced bullying or harassment. Counselling may also be provided for a person who has bullied or harassed another. The School may also need to discuss the incident with parents.

We will monitor how the complaint was resolved and the wellbeing of those involved and take further action if the problem behavior continues.

We encourage all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the School if possible, and understand it is also your right to seek help from outside the school.

Right to appeal/review

If you are unhappy with the decision about your complaint, you may seek a review of the decision in accordance with departmental procedures. **A complainant may also** contact the Department's regional office, the Ombudsman or the VEOHRC for information or advice, or to make a complaint. (Check that this aligns to other policies, any changes made to all regards policies)

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and ratified by the school council.

This policy was endorsed by School Council in 2015