

## **INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY 2020 (includes Equal Opportunity & Sexual Harassment)**

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to explain Hume Valley School's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. Hume Valley School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. For staff, this policy should be read alongside the Department of Education and Training's [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 Hume Valley School.

### **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:* humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability.

*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**

Hume Valley School is a dual campus special school catering for students from 5 to 18 years of age with mild intellectual disabilities, and associated disabilities and impairments, in the North Western Victoria Region. Students are funded under the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD).

The school population reflects a rich cultural diversity of 14 Nationalities and 18 language groups with 149 students from English as an Additional Language backgrounds, 7 students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds and 14 students from refugee backgrounds. There is also a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds in our student population with our Student Family Occupation (SFO) density at 0.7560 and the Student Family Occupation Employment (SFOE) at 0.6474. Many families require a high level of support to address medical, social and educational issues.

Our 2020 enrolment of 331 students comprised of 106 female and 225 male students and a staffing profile comprised of 5 Principal Class Officers, 57.96 EFT teachers and 40.15 EFT Education Support Staff.

The school is divided into seven sub-schools that approximate the stages of learning. Our Koroit Avenue Campus caters for students from five to fifteen years of age, our Pre-Cal campus caters for year 10 students and our Tanderrum Way (VCAL) campus, located within the Hume Central Senior Secondary College, caters for our Years 11 and 12 students and staff.

Hume Valley School 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.

Hume Valley School 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 Hume Valley School 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.

Hume Valley School 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, caps, excursions, work placements and Community Connections Programs 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.

In 2020 Hume Valley School continues to strengthen its child safe culture and whole school approach to supporting the health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement of all students. We set behaviour expectations, continue to build staff consistency in positive behaviour support, implement trauma informed practices and foster parent, community and school partnerships to enhance wellbeing programs and student support.

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 Hume Valley School. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying* 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**

Hume Valley School 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 will 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 the relevant Principal Class Officer, Subschool Leader or Wellbeing Team Member, for further information.

### **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#)

Other relevant Department policies and resources on the School Policy and Advisory Guide are:

- Inclusive Education

- Koorie Education
- Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture
- Program for Students with Disabilities

**REVIEW PERIOD**

<b>Ratified at School Council:</b>	February 2020 (Not required)
<b>Review Date:</b>	February 2023