



Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Meeniy Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

Table of contents

1 SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT	1
2 WHOLE-SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT	2
3 RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS	5
4. SHARED EXPECTATIONS	7
5. SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES	9
6. BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT	11
7. REFERENCES	12
8. APPENDICES	13

Policy

1. School profile statement

Meeniy Primary School is set in the rural district of South Gippsland and has an enrolment, which fluctuates between 100 and 120. The school is based in Meeniy and provides for students from Meeniy, Dumbalk, Stony Creek, Buffalo, Middle Tarwin and neighbouring districts.

The school has made significant progress in improving school connectedness, student behaviour and student wellbeing through policies and programs that are proactive, responsive and consistent. The *Attitude to Schools* and *Parent Opinion* surveys reinforce the efforts of the school community to improve school connectedness with *connectedness to school and peers* being an issue for a small numbers of individuals rather than the cohort.

Students enjoy a curriculum that explicitly and successfully teaches fundamental skills in authentic, inclusive and challenging contexts. At Meeniy we believe that education should be engaging and authentic and our classroom programs reflect this by embedding learning in rich and purposeful educational experiences that develop and apply strong literacy and numeracy skills within and beyond the classroom. The Meeniy Primary School curriculum has evolved to making learning interesting and purposeful with the introduction of a sequential, consistent and practical approach to the Thinking Curriculum and Information and Communication Technology and the use of rich contexts to make learning meaningful.

The school has made a significant impact on school safety through the introduction and regular updating of the Right to Learn and Anti-Bullying policies and the consistent and ongoing implementation of these policies. The student data indicates a very high opinion of school safety with student safety, classroom behavior, student morale and absence of student distress well above the state average.

2 Whole-school prevention statement

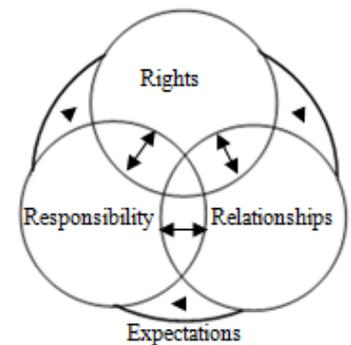
Preventative School Culture

Meeniyani Primary School promotes and develops academic excellence within a school culture that values and nurtures active participation, positive relationships, student voice and life-long learning. Our school actively develops a strong culture of learning, inclusiveness and respect which provides a strong basis for learning. The school's initiatives reflect its priority focus on the wellbeing of students, and are designed to assist in developing skills for life-long learning. The development of positive self-esteem and empathy for others is crucial to student wellbeing.

The values which form the basis of the school's actions are *Respect, Responsibility, Doing your Best, Care and Compassion, Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion*. They include the 'You Can Do It' Foundations of *organisation, persistence, getting along, and confidence*, all of which promote resilience.

The school endeavours to develop and implement curriculum and student wellbeing policies, programs and teaching strategies that maximise behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement thus increasing attendance, improving behaviour and enhancing learning. These actions foster students' self-esteem and empathy of others through :

- The development of supportive relationships
- Fulfilment of rights
- Responsible actions
- Shared expectations
- Inclusive practices that allow all members of the school community to feel they belong and develop within the school community



The school believes all students have the right to learn and develop academically, physically, artistically and socially in a safe, secure, supportive and collaborative environment. We recognise that when student behaviour varies from expectations, it is dealt with in a way that encourages students to reflect on their behaviour, school expectations, and the effect it may have on others and to understand the consequences of their behaviour.

The school has successfully implemented the 3Rs (Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships) Code of Conduct and an Anti-Bullying policy. Improvements in the Parent Opinion and Student Attitudes to School Survey has been achieved through the provision of a number of engaging, inclusive and purposeful curriculum activities, a variety of instructional practices and respectful classroom environments that are collaborative and respect student voice. An expanded student leadership program and student representative body have also contributed to the improvement in data and more importantly a positive school culture.

Meeniyani Primary School has a well-designed, sequential and purposeful curriculum that employs the use of thinking tools and IT to engage students cognitively. The school is currently implementing new instructional practices that will cater for the changing learning needs and preferences of our students.

- take account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable; and make reasonable efforts to accommodate the matters referred to in clause 6(a).

Prevention Programs and Initiatives

Inclusion

- Provide curriculum delivery, wellbeing and school connectedness practices that take into account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.
- **Student Health and Wellbeing Overview.** The school has audited and scheduled all student health and wellbeing programs and activities.
- **Attendance:** The School understands that full attendance is a key to engagement and maximises every student's ability to learn and our teachers' ability to teach effectively. The School closely monitors attendance and lateness of students and this data is recorded daily and attended to.
- **Positive Behaviour Support:** The School offers various programs to support positive behaviour and engagement, respect and responsibility and to build pride in each individual student. These include the You Can Do It program, Circle Time, Individual Learning and Behaviour Plans, and targeted social skill classes. Student wellbeing is an agenda item at all staff meetings.
- **Chaplaincy:** In 2013 the school introduced school Chaplain to support students' wellbeing, leadership development, families and the promotion of an enriching and healthy school culture

- **Intensive literacy and numeracy:** The School’s English and Maths courses are designed to be inclusive and allow all students to reach their potential through differentiation of content and teaching practice.
- **Inclusion, Wellbeing and Transitions:** A number of transition programs operate at Meeniy Primary School including kindergarten –Prep transition program, Year 6/Prep buddy program, Yr5 Leadership Program to transition to Year 6 leadership and Year 6 to secondary school transition program including the camp program which supports student wellbeing, attendance, engagement and learning. The School also employs a number of practices to support all students’ transitions through their primary school years including effective management and transfer of achievement data and whole staff transition meetings.
- **Professional Learning:** Teacher Professional Learning is given high priority at Meeniy Primary School to ensure the strategies and approaches adopted are implemented with consistency. The literacy and numeracy improvement processes are led by respective leaders through teacher mentor and classroom coaching programs. Opportunities exist for collegiate classroom visits to observe different strategies and approaches used

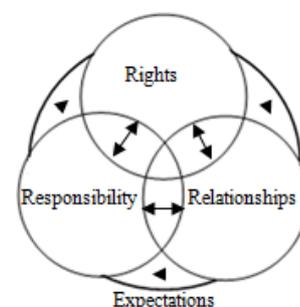
3 Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships

3.1 Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The school will fulfil its obligation to legislated rights of students, staff and parents. (see appendices). The School also specifically supports the right of all students and staff to work and learn in a place free from bullying which is addressed in a separate Anti Bullying policy. (see references and appendices)

3.2 Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Meeniy Primary School acknowledges the strong partnerships between the school and parents/caregivers that supports students to participate in school activities appropriately and to the best of their abilities. The school ensures families are involved with any social, behavioural and academic concerns by maintaining strong communication. This communication is reflected in our policies and practices including the use of Parent/Student/Teacher meetings.



Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work and play in a safe, secure and inclusive environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment, they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition • To be happy and respected • Participate fully in the school’s educational program 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold the rights of others including the right to learn, which will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. • Participate fully in the school’s educational program with support and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. • As students progress through school, they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged • Parents/carers have the right to work in partnership with the school to support their child/ren 	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child’s educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours. • Ensure their child’s regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child’s learning. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. • To take advantage of the opportunities to have input into curriculum programs and community building events

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
Teachers have a right to <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environmentBe informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student	Teachers have a responsibility to <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policy.Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively.Know the content they teach.Know their students.Plan and assess for effective learning.Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

Relationships

Relationships are the basis of our school culture and are connected to, and influenced by, the rights and responsibilities of the school community members.

Promoting Healthy Relationships

The school strongly believes in establishing strong and positive relationships between all stakeholders to nurture our school's culture and support individuals when needed.

- Clear and open communications in a variety of modes
- Inclusiveness and openness
- Developing pride in our school (promotions, grounds, maintaining standards)
- Community activities
- PST Meetings

Repairing Relationships

We view misconduct not just as school rule-breaking, failure to fulfil one's responsibilities or as a breach of our rights, but as a infringement against people and relationships in the school and the wider school community. We also view it as teaching opportunity- a chance to support the student in learning the appropriate behaviour.

Our intent, in managing misconduct, is always to maintain or repair relationships and to educate.

- That respectful, fair and pro-social behaviour is expected from all members of our school community and encouraged, developed and reinforced within our school.
- That in a restorative school, everyone is accountable for the impact of their actions on others. Accountability means being able to take responsibility for those actions, being prepared to apologise and make amends for the harm done, and learning from the situation so that things are done differently another time. The emphasis is on repairing the harm done and on re-building relationships so that effective teaching, learning, work and play can continue.
- That it is essential for students to develop cooperative and responsible attitudes to school and learning and to respect person and property.
- That all students are individuals and treated fairly ... we separate the person from the behaviour & understand that what works with one student may not work with another.
- That it is important to develop helpful characteristics such as independence, self-reliance and responsibility for effort, achievement and success at school and in life, now and into the future. To this end we aim to:-
 - Recognise and develop students' intrinsic motivation, which is the internal motivation that comes from the pleasure a person gets from the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing or even working on a task. We aim to avoid the use of extrinsic rewards.
 - Allow students to experience 'life lessons' (eg how their actions affect themselves and others, including natural and logical consequences) and encourage and support them to learn from these
 - Encourage students to make smart choices
 - Provide opportunities for students to experience participation in decision-making and in leadership
 - Expect students to develop the skills that they will need for success in school and in employment (e.g. Punctuality, responsibility and care for their personal belongings and learning resources)

4. Shared expectations

Effective schools share high expectations for the whole-school community. Shared expectations are:

- Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community, including students
- Clear and specific
- Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- Focused on prevention and early intervention
- Supported by relevant procedures
- Consistent, fair and reasonable
- Linked to appropriate actions and consequences.

Shared expectations are seen as the drivers for members of the school community to fulfil their responsibilities, have their rights met and maintain relationships. [This is a sentence...ignore the bullet]

Schools – principals, teachers and school staff

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.

The school's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values for Australian schools, which are:

Care and Compassion-*Care for self and others*

Integrity -*Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds*

Doing Your Best-*Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, and pursue excellence*

Respect-*Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view*

Fair Go-*Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society*

Responsibility -*Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment*

Freedom-*Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others*

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion-*Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others*

Honesty and Trustworthiness-*Be honest, sincere and seek the truth*

School expectations include:

- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- Provision of appropriate student services
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Diversity in the school community

The school aims to address diversity by:

- Providing a range of curriculum programs and activities that complement and expose student to life opportunities and interests.
- Maintaining a highly skilled, motivated and energetic workforce who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse school community
- Attracting highly skilled and diverse staff making the school a preferred employer
- Increasing the range of knowledge, skills and experiences available in the workforce
- Enhancing the capacity for effective decision-making due to the greater diversity of perspectives and inputs
- Creating more effective work teams due to increased participation levels and an increased capacity to solve problems.

Expectations required of Staff

The School Leadership will:

- Ensure all children have equal access to an education
- Ensure the school complies with its duty of care to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation.
- Collaborate with the school community to develop policies and procedures consistent with its values and aspirations and the department's Guidelines.

The teachers will:

- Develop flexible teaching styles to engage different learners
- Deliver curriculum and assessment that challenges and extends student learning
- Develop positive and meaningful relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning
- Provide a safe and caring school environment which supports learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem.

Behaviour

The School Leadership team will:

- lead by example by modelling appropriate behaviour
- Lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues incorporating student wellbeing as an integral part of school business
- Monitor behaviour issues and the effectiveness of implemented strategies
- Provide professional development opportunities to staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours

The teachers will:

- Lead by example by modelling appropriate behaviour
- Use the student engagement policy and the 3Rs (rights, responsibilities and relationships) policy as a basis for negotiating class expectations and rules with students
- Teach students social skills and resilience through curriculum and classroom activities
- Use behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students and which focus on supporting positive behaviours
- Share strategies and support one another to reflect on one's own behaviour management approach
- Involve appropriate specialist expertise where necessary.

Expectations required of Students

All students are expected to:

- Have high expectations for their own learning
- Uphold the values of the school and comply with the 3rs (rights, responsibilities and relationships) policy
- Respect differing views and understand the rights of others to hold points of view differing from their own beliefs and value systems.

Attendance:

- All students are expected to attend school every day that the school is open to students. If students cannot attend, they must provide an explanation from their parents/carers to their teacher. Students should arrive at each class on time and ready to learn.

Behaviour:

All students are expected to:

- Support each other's learning by behaving in a way that is conducive to an energetic and respectful learning environment
- Be motivated to learn and be engaged in the learning process
- Demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contribute to a safe, inclusive and happy environment
- Understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students, is unacceptable

Expectations required of Parents/Carers

All parents/carers are expected to:

- actively participate in supporting their child's learning by building a positive relationship with the school and teachers through attendance at parent-teacher meetings, student activities, school celebrations, student support groups, community events and respond to communications in a timely manner
- Work in an educational partnership with school staff committed to the academic growth and wellbeing of their child
- Support their child's learning by being actively involved in the homework activities set by the school

Attendance:

Parents/carers are expected to ensure that their children attend school regularly, on time, and that, when a child under their responsibility is absent from school, to advise the school as soon as possible.

Behaviour:

Parents/carers should understand the school's behavioural expectations and work with it to promote a consistent approach that supports their child's learning and engagement.

5. School actions and consequences

Meeniyana Primary School promotes and ensures student engagement, student safety, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required.

Cohesive and consistent policies and practices ensure the whole school community is aware of school expectations and associated practices.

Actions and consequences endeavor to be educational and foster positive relationships and retain the dignity of the student. The school employs a staged-in, 3 step approach (see 3Rs policy).

- Step 1: Developing a positive, pro social culture
- Step 2: Managing behaviour that impinges on others' rights
- Step 3: Managing ongoing, serious and/or dangerous and/or repeat behaviour that breaches one or more rights

When students don't respond to the staged in approach, repeat and/or participate in very serious and/or dangerous behaviour/s the consequences may be:-

- Exclusion from Camps/Special Activities and Events (in consultation with staff). See note below.
- In-school Suspension (this may be on a school day or a student-free day or a day that involves a special event or activity for other students, etc.)
- Detention, Suspension and Expulsion as per current DEECD Central and Regional School Policy and Advisory Guidelines and the TVPS Student Engagement and Wellbeing policy.

A specific Anti Bullying policy contributes to this policy. It defines various forms of bullying and the preventative and reactive practices of the school.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours will be supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- Establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- Ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- Providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- Consistently acknowledging all students
- Empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- Providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- Open communication with parents/caregivers

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance or regular lateness, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- Understanding the student's background and needs
- Ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- Providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program.

Broader support strategies will include:

- Involving and supporting the parents/carers,
- Involving the student wellbeing coordinator or managed individual pathways tutoring/peer tutoring
- Mentoring and/or counselling
- Convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- Developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- Providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- Involving community support agencies.

Policies and practices reflect department policy and legislative requirements including:

- Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- Disability Standards for Education
- Safe Schools
- Charter of Human Rights
- Equal Opportunity Act
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- VIT Teacher Code of Conduct

Policies and Practices

3Rs (Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships) (see attached)

Anti-Bullying (see attached)

Attendance (see attached)

Positive Practices

Happy Box reward system

Profiling of positive student behaviour in Newsletter

Student of the Week Awards

Sport Team Competition and Rewards

Engaging purposeful curriculum

Thumbs Up Recognition

Bucket Filling

6. Bullying and harassment

Definitions

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings)

Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading of rumours online
- Sending unwanted messages
- Defamation.

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that they witnessed the incident and suggest the person report it to an appropriate person. However, if that student sees a friend harassing another person, they should let their friend know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Subtle: (The most common)

They include:

- Offensive staring and leering.
- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
- Questions about another's sexual activity.
- Persistent comments about a person's private life or family.
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body.
- Offensive name calling.

Explicit: (obvious)

They include:

- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc.
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing.
- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal.
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail.
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.
- Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography.
- Requests for sexual favours.

Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

Bullying can involve such things as

- Grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving.
- Publicly excluding a person from your group
- Taking or breaking a person’s property
- Knocking a person’s books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- Teasing a person because of their looks

Cyberbullying

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

- The language you use and the things you say
- How you treat others
- Respecting people's property (eg copyright)
- Visiting appropriate places.

Behaving safely online means:

- Protecting your own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')
- Selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- Protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- Being proactive in letting someone know if something is 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher.

If you are being harassed or bullied you should:

- Tell the person you don’t like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that you feel comfortable with.
- **Discuss the matter with a parent/carers if it is happening at home.**

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoo/eoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf

APPENDICES

Rights

3.2 Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Under the act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes:

- age
- breastfeeding
- gender identity
- impairment
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status or status as carer
- physical features
- political belief or activity

- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes).

3.3 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

3.4 Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- Costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- Costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- Benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- Any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

This policy was last updated on 16/09/2019 and is scheduled for review in September 2021.