



## MELBOURNE GIRLS' COLLEGE – INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY (Includes Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment)

### INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY (Includes Sexual Harassment and Discrimination)

#### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to explain Melbourne Girls' College (MGC) 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 and Training 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 MGC.

#### 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

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



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### School Profile and Diversity

Melbourne Girls' College was established in 1994 on the Birrarung (banks of the Yarra River) in Richmond, Victoria, and is a leader in innovative education. It provides enrolment opportunities for local, wider-Melbourne and international students to study inquiry and trans-disciplinary units in Years 7-9, followed by many Year 10, VCE, and VET subjects in the senior years. The Melbourne Girls' College values provide the foundations of our strong community and guide students to "Lead and Achieve".

We value: Excellence - In our achievements and aspirations while always striving to give and be our best. Teamwork - Together, we know we can achieve so much more. We strongly believe that effective communication and the celebration of individuality within the team are crucial elements to developing an effective team-based and collaborative environment.

Diversity - We are a richer community when we consider all perspectives and recognise and celebrate our differences. We challenge our students to think critically about their own beliefs and examine the world in fresh ways to promote creativity and innovation in an authentic, inclusive environment. We are proud of our commitment to inclusiveness and work to ensure all our policies, practices and programs are united. In 2022, the school's enrolment was 1410 with representing diverse backgrounds including over 60 nationalities and a cohort of international students. Melbourne Girls' College has a low Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE) indicating a low level of social disadvantage for the student population.

The staffing profile of Melbourne Girls' College is made up of a College Principal, 2 Assistant Principals, 7 Leading Teachers, 6 Learning Specialists, 82.47 Teachers, 23.91 Education Support staff, and a Business Manager. There are no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the College in 2022. The pandemic and its impact on international border closures, remote learning and our International Student Program has been significant. At MGC, we have the capacity to offer 65 positions of enrolment to full fee-paying international students through DET's program and service. In 2022, six full fee-paying international students were enrolled at MGC.

In the second half of 2022 significant time and energy was devoted to recreating our platform internationally and rebuilding opportunities and partnerships for 2023 and beyond. The academic achievements of Melbourne Girls' College are strong and many of our students participate in the Student Excellence Program and the MGC Learning Extension and Advancement Program (LEAP). The curriculum at Melbourne Girls' College is designed to equip students with depth and breadth of knowledge, skills, and capabilities needed for success. Students are encouraged and challenged to strive for personal excellence, and we explicitly teach strategies, habits and dispositions that are deeply connected to a growth mindset.

The school community takes pride in teaching students the transferable skills required to be global citizens and to challenge stereotypes, particularly in women's leadership, intercultural and ethical understandings, sustainability, and philanthropy. While our academic achievements are a publicly recognised strength of Melbourne Girls' College, we are equally committed to the personal, social, and emotional wellbeing of our students. We recognise the intrinsic link between wellbeing and effective learning and have adopted a whole-school approach to wellbeing. The College prioritises and celebrates success and growth in the whole person and MGC has a strong focus on co-curricular endeavours, particularly in rowing, aerobics, dance, and other school sporting programs. The College invests in creative, and artistic endeavours and experiences for students, particularly in the performing and visual arts. In



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In addition, MGC has a thriving Australian Airforce Cadets program. The sustainability collective and environment projects are well known in the local and wider community.

MGC 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.

MGC 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 MGC 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.

MGC 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, formals, clubs, teams, student leadership 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.
- Promote diversity and inclusion through clubs such as Diversity, having Diversity Captains and running events such as Harmony Day, Pride Lunch etc...

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 MGC. 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.

Our Wellbeing Program, Home Group Program, Health curriculum and general teaching practice support students to understand the impacts of bullying and where to seek out support.

### **Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities**

MGC 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 Services 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



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disability, please refer to our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact Administration to ask to speak to our Inclusion Learning Specialist, Integration Leader or our Student Engagement and Wellbeing Leaders for further information.

### COMMUNICATION:

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Held MGCs Intranet > One Drive > Staff Folders > Domains > School Documentation > Policies for all staff to access/review
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums, assemblies, Wellbeing
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions - as required
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request



#### Help for non-English speakers:

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact: 9428-08955

### RELATED POLICIES:

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy,
- 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 for staff are 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](#)

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

Policy last reviewed	July 2023
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Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	3-4 Years July 2027