POLICY TITLE: Inclusion and Diversity - students

DATE RATIFIED: August 2026

REVIEW DATE: August 2030

ENPS MISSION: We maximise the potential of all; empowering independence, excellence, innovation and engagement with the world.			
Critical Engagement with the World	Academic Excellence	Inclusive Learning Environment	Personal and Social Wellbeing

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Essendon North Primary School works to make sure every member of our school community is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or personal attributes. 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 Essendon North Primary 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: 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) have 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

Essendon North Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. At Essendon North Primary School, our vision is to be 'Global learners and leaders, exceeding expectations.' Our mission is 'We maximise the potential of all; empowering independence, excellence, innovation and critical engagement with the world.' We believe in our Guiding Statements, and as a learning community, are committed to embedding these within the fabric of our school. We are Brave, Bold and Connected. Our school is proud to be a member of the Council of International Schools (CIS), which is reflective of our commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that Essendon North Primary School believes is important for our students.

The entire school community is actively involved in the life of the school and shares a commitment to being an innovative leader in education. The School Council and the Executive Team are partners in providing a unified purpose and direction for achieving a quality education for every child. Parent involvement and engagement in student learning is valued and actively promoted. Parents are encouraged to assist with classroom programs and are involved in regular whole school events.

Essendon North Primary School is located in Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, approximately 12 km north-west from Melbourne's Central Business District and our Local Government area is the City of Moonee Valley.

Our school continues to offer a broad curriculum and an extensive co-curricular program that enables our students to experience new challenges and opportunities beyond the classroom. From Foundation to Year Two, our focus is on establishing solid foundations in Literacy and Numeracy, and from years Three to Six our focus builds breadth and depth. This approach, complemented by a clear focus on student achievement, provides solid foundations for students to access rich and diverse learning experiences. The focus on an inquiry-based curriculum that utilises and extends the application of contemporary learning technologies in collaborative learning environments provides engaging and stimulating opportunities for students to extend themselves and maximise their potential. These learning opportunities and improvements are supported through a lens of wellbeing.

Our school offers a range of specialist and extracurricular programs including languages education in Chinese (Mandarin), Visual and Performing Arts, Health, Physical and Sport Education, Health and Wellbeing, English as an Additional Language (EAL) support, interschool sport, Perceptual Motor Program (PMP), instrumental music tuition, student agency, leadership and voice, Buddy Program, Lunch Clubs, Camping Program, incursions and excursions, and an Out of School Hours Care Program.

We have developed a comprehensive program and service structure for students with additional needs including participation in the Victorian Student Excellence Program and external opportunities (Gateways, ICAS, Science Talent Search) and comprehensive support for students with disabilities (Disability Inclusion and PSD) and students at risk.

At the very heart of our purpose is to provide every child with the best possible education. We recognise that this will be achieved by our staff, and are committed to delivering high quality teaching practice so that every child learns and achieves high standards.

Essendon North Primary 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.

Essendon North Primary 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 Essendon North Primary 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.

Essendon North Primary School:

- actively nurtures and promotes a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensures that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, excursions and camps) on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledges and responds to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourages empathy and fairness towards others
- provides a consistent model of education, valuing engagement and student voice
- challenges stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contributes to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- responds to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensures that students are not victimised.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes is not tolerated at Essendon North Primary School. 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. Our Student Diaries and commitment to the Respectful Relationships program provide avenues and resources for students to approach and address behaviours of concern.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Essendon North Primary 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 in accordance with the department's Students with Disability Policy. Reasonable adjustments are 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, Learning Support Group meetings 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 coordinator for Student Engagement and Wellbeing for further information.

NDIS-funded therapy and external practitioner requests

Essendon North Primary School recognises that some students access support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Requests for NDIS-funded therapy on school grounds or during school hours will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in line with Department of Education guidance, taking into account student needs, duty of care, and the impact on teaching and learning. Where appropriate, requests will be discussed through Student Support Group or Learning Support Group processes.

The school may also receive requests from external practitioners for information or documentation. In line with Department of Education guidance, staff may provide relevant educational information with parent/carer consent directly to practitioners. Requests will be met using existing school records and professional observations, within reasonable timeframes, and with consideration of staff workload.

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
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Essendon North Primary School Guiding Statements
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Respect for School Staff

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 on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

- Child Standards
- Disability Inclusion Funding and Support
- Disability Inclusion Profile
- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- Koorie Education
- Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC)
- LGBTQIA+ Student Support
- Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools
- Refugee Education Support Initiatives
- Safe Schools
- Schools - culturally safe environments guidance
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- Student Leaders for Multicultural Inclusion
- Students with Disability

HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Essendon North Primary School on (03) 9379 3979.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy Last Reviewed	August 2026
Approved By	Kate Barletta
Next Scheduled Review Date	August 2030