



GLADESVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL No 5066 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

This policy aims to provide a welcoming, supportive, emotionally and physically secure learning and working environment for every member of the Gladesville school community.

RATIONALE:

Gladesville Primary School is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities and life experience of the whole school community.

We aim to maintain and develop an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote school community wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential. Consequently, discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated at Gladesville Primary School under any circumstances.

This school supports the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic), which states that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone, including school community, because of their actual or assumed:

• age	• marital status
• breastfeeding	• parental status
• carer status	• physical features
• disability/impairment	• political belief or activity
• gender	• pregnancy
• gender identity	• race
• industrial activity	• religious belief or activity
• lawful sexual activity	• sexual orientation
• personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.	

No member of the school community should be treated less favourably because they possess any of the above personal characteristics nor will such characteristics affect access to benefits and services Gladesville Primary School provides.

We will support members of the school community where there has been a misinterpretation of actions (verbal, written, text).

DEFINITIONS THAT APPLY TO THIS POLICY

Direct discrimination means treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of one of the personal characteristics listed above or because of their association with someone identified with one of those characteristics.

Indirect discrimination happens when a rule, policy or requirement unnecessarily or unreasonably disadvantages a group of people because of a protected personal characteristic they share.

Harassment is behaviour (through words or actions) based on the personal characteristics listed above that is unwanted, unasked for, unreturned and likely to make school an unfriendly or uncomfortable place by:

- humiliating (putting someone down)
- seriously embarrassing
- offending (hurting someone's feelings) or
- intimidating (threatening someone so they behave in a certain way)

Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sex or any other sexual behaviour that a reasonable person would know or expect would offend, seriously embarrass or humiliate another.

Vilification is behaviour (through words, text or actions) that incites hatred, contempt or ridicule of another person because of their race or religious belief.

Bullying is unreasonable behaviour that is intimidating, threatening or humiliating and repeated over time or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour. Bullying can be physical, text, verbal or indirect, and creates an unfriendly, threatening or offensive environment.

Victimisation means treating someone unfairly or otherwise disadvantaging them because they have made an Equal Opportunity complaint or might do so in the future.

GUIDELINES

- Every member of the Gladesville Primary School community has the right to feel welcomed, supported and emotionally and physically secure at school. Therefore, this policy covers the whole school community, including staff, students, parents, caregivers, school council members, contractors and volunteers.
- The wellbeing of all school community is important. It is understood that a person cannot achieve his/her full potential whilst being treated unfairly, discriminated against, vilified, harassed or victimised.
- Under this policy, every member of the Gladesville Primary School has the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Along with this right comes the responsibility to respect the rights of others by behaving according to this policy.
- This policy applies to:
 - education (e.g. teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
 - the provision of goods and services (e.g. extracurricular activities, camps, student conferences, access to facilities)
 - school sport, after school sport
 - employment at the school (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions, access to benefits such as training, promotion and leave).
- On behalf of the whole school community, the Principal, the School Council President, the Community Group and the Student Representative Council support this policy and the principles and practice of equal opportunity, inclusion and mutual respect for diversity that it articulates.
- The leadership of the school will take immediate and appropriate action to address and resolve Equal Opportunity issues and complaints.
- Discrimination may be direct or indirect – both are unlawful

- Under this Policy no member of the Gladesville school community is to use social media to humiliate, embarrass, offend, intimidate or inadvertently harass other members of the Gladesville School Community. Social media includes facebook, twitter, Kik, Instagram, email, text messages etc.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- The Principal of Gladesville Primary School is accountable for implementation of this policy.
- The Principal of Gladesville Primary School will appoint an Equal Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Coordinator to support implementation of this policy.
- All members of the Gladesville School Community are encouraged to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school if possible. It is also the right of individuals to seek help from outside the school. For example, by making contact with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's regional office, the Ombudsman or the Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria (EOCV) for information, advice or to make a complaint.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved as speedily as possible.
- Only people directly involved in the issue or complaint will be told about it.
- Each complaint will be investigated to work out whether it is more likely the behaviour happened than not and, if so, how serious it is. Appropriate action to resolve the problem will be taken.
- Any member of the school community who raises an issue of discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification in good faith will not be victimised or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged.
- The following complaints procedures are designed to explain what to do if an individual believes there has been an occurrence of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, vilification or victimisation as explained earlier in this policy.

1. STAFF MEMBERS

Staff members are to refer to the school's Prevention of Bullying in the Workplace policy, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures and Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct in relation to:

Teachers

Principals

School Services Staff; and

Victorian Public Service staff

These guidelines are located on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD).

2. PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Parents or caregivers are to refer to the school's Complaints and Procedures policy, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Parent Complaints guidelines and the school's *Healthy Relationships* policy.

3. STUDENTS

Students are to be referred to the Student Code of Conduct document that is distributed at the commencement of each school year.

- The Principal has responsibility for investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

- The consequences of proven behaviour involving discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification will depend on the severity and frequency of the behaviour.

1. For students this will include parental/caregiver involvement and may involve counselling, the removal of privileges, suspension or expulsion. Gladesville Primary School will endeavour to arrange support, for any student who has experienced bullying or harassment. Counselling may also be provided for a person who has bullied or harassed another.

2. For staff members, the consequences will be guided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures.

3. For Gladesville School Community, the consequences may involve apologies, conciliation meetings, referral to counselling services, referral to police and court action.

- Complaints involving the school Principal are to be referred to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Regional office.
- The Leadership team will monitor how a complaint has been resolved and the wellbeing of those involved. Further action will be taken if the problem behaviour continues.
- Any party involved in a complaint may seek a review of the decision in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) procedures.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Gladesville Primary School's Equal Opportunity policy is one component of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) broader policy framework for the promotion of safe and inclusive schools.

EVALUATION:

- This policy will be evaluated in line with School Council cyclical review of policy documents and school and DEECD priorities.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in June 2013.