



Somers School Camp



INCLUSION & DIVERSITY POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Somers Outdoor 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. 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 Somers Outdoor 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) 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

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



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Somers and Woorabinda campuses of Somers Outdoor School draw students from across Victoria and actively seek to include schools and students from diverse backgrounds. Somers Outdoor School understands the diversity of students within its school community and works to include all students, taking into consideration the specific needs of vulnerable students.

Somers Outdoor 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.

We acknowledge and celebrate 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 Somers Outdoor 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.

Somers Outdoor 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 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.

Our staff will work together with visiting schools to meet the needs of students. Student supports, such as Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Student Support Plans and Student Support Groups will be sought from the home school to inform decision and the reasonable modifications made to lessons, programming, facilities, equipment and staffing.

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 Somers Outdoor 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.

Students that are involved in bullying or harassing others on the basis of their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour.

LGBTQIA+ Inclusion



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At Somers Outdoor School we believe that the wellbeing of the student over the course of their visit is paramount to successful outcomes. We will support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, and Queer and questioning (LGBTQIA+) students attending our programs by consulting with the student, their parents, teachers and principal on a case-by-case basis to ensure the best possible and the most appropriate support is available. To promote a positive and inclusive community at Somers Outdoor School, the leadership team will actively ensure:

- privacy and confidentiality are maintained through only sharing information with the permission of the student and their family.
- we record trans and gender diverse students' affirmed name, gender identity, and pronouns (he, she, they etc.)
- staff are encouraged to use non-gender specific language wherever possible when organising groups and /or working partners
- all students are briefed on appropriate use of showers, toilets and change rooms to ensure respect for privacy of others.
- the use of toilets, showers, change rooms and sleeping arrangements meet the needs of the student. This should be based on the student's gender identity and whichever facilities they will feel most comfortable using. Students without a disability should not be required to use disabled toilets or facilities.
- staff are supported through professional learning and briefings on the arrangements for the student where appropriate
- all forms of bullying, discrimination or harassment are responded to, eliminated and managed appropriately in accordance with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy.
- school policies are updated to include support for transgender and gender diverse students and responses to transphobic bullying.

Somers Outdoor School will work with students who have affirmed and are affirming their gender identity to implement existing student support plans (that have been developed with their home school) in a manner that reflects the needs of the student.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Somers Outdoor 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. 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 Somers Outdoor School for further information.

Support for staff

Staff members who have transitioned or affirmed their gender identify or are in the process of doing so will receive the full support of Somers Outdoor School. Staff are encouraged to speak with the Campus Principal if they believe that they may benefit from assistance to ensure that they feel



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comfortable, safe and supported our school. Further support information is available here: [Human resources: LGBTIQ \(education.vic.gov.au\)](#).

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/Referenced in staff handbook/manual

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Other relevant policies at Somers include: *Student Wellbeing and Engagement*, *Statement of Values* and *Bullying Prevention* policies.

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:

- [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](#)

Department Resources

School Policy and Advisory Guide, Student Health and Wellbeing policies: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/default.aspx>

Safe Schools Unit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-schools>

Respectful Relationships Resource

<https://www.vic.gov.au/respectful-relationships>

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2028