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Inclusion & Diversity Policy

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to explain Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. Roberts McCubbin Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment for all students and members of our school community.

**Policy**

### **Definitions**

*Personal attribute*: a feature of a person’s background or personal characteristics that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. For example: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion etc.

*Inclusion:* the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure.

*Diversity:* refers to understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising individual differences, along the dimension of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, intellectual abilities and other ideologies.

**Our Commitment**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School is committed to creating a school community where all members 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.

Roberts McCubbin 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.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will:

* ensure that all students and members of our school community are treated with respect and dignity
* ensure that students and all members of our school community are not discriminated against and where necessary, are accommodated to participate in education and all school activities (e.g. schools sports, concerts, school productions, art shows, school disco, camps, excursions etc.) on the same basis as their peers
* instil the school values of: *Creativity, Endeavour, Respect, Honesty, Trust and Friendliness*
* acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students and members of our school community
* 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 and all members of our school community.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School ensures that all students are educated with their peers, have equitable access to learning and achievement, and are welcomed, valued and supported in the public school system. Inclusion promotes participation, friendship and interaction.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School is committed to having a strong and vibrant education system that celebrates diversity, and is committed to supporting the achievement and participation of all students. Education for all acknowledges that some children and young people have intersecting identities or additional needs that schools may need to take into consideration.

These identities may relate to:

* having a disability or additional learning needs
* gender identity
* sexual orientation
* being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
* race
* cultural identity
* speaking a language other than English
* social factors
* economic factors
* experience of abuse, neglect or family violence.

Bullying, harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated in our school community. Students and members of our school community who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, other staff members, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be appropriately addressed.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School also understands that it has a special obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students and all other members of our community with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist all to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students and all other members of our community with disabilities through our PSD (Program for Students with Disability), SSG (Student Support Group) processes 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, please refer to our school’s *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* Policy or contact Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ Wellbeing Co-ordinator for further information.

**Who and what this policy covers**

This policy covers the whole school community, including staff, students, parents, school council members, contractors and volunteers.

This policy applies to:

* education (teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
* the provision of goods and services (extracurricular activities, camps, parent–teacher interviews, access to facilities and school sports)
* employment at the school (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions, access to benefits such as training, promotion and leave).

**Policy framework and relevant information**

Relevant policy may include:

* [Managing Diversity and Inclusive Workplaces](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/divman.htm) - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Manage-Diverse-Inclusive-Workplace.pdf>
* [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/respectfulsafe/default.htm) - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx>
* Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
* Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ Bullying Prevention Policy

For further information on inclusion and diversity, please go to the following link - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/default.aspx>

This link has access to the below topics;

* [Indigenous Employment](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/Aboriginal-Employment.aspx)
* [Cultural and Linguistic Diversity](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/culture.aspx)
* [Disability](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/disability.aspx)
* [Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/default_eeo.aspx)
* [Flexible Work for Work-Life Balance](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/balance.aspx)
* [Gender Identity](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/gender_id.aspx)
* [Managing Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/divman.aspx)
* [Same-sex Attracted Employees](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/orient.aspx)
* [Sexual Harassment](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/SexualHarassment.aspx)
* [Workplace Contact Officer Network](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/WCONet.aspx)

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

Under this policy, every member of Roberts McCubbin 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 and promote human rights and responsibilities by behaving according to this policy.

The principal of Roberts McCubbin Primary School is accountable for implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by Amanda Wigg (the principal), Peter Watson (the assistant principal) and ratified by the school council.

# **Complaints procedures**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will take appropriate measures, consistent with its *Student Engagement* and Wellbeing and *Bullying Prevention* policies to respond to anti-inclusive and discriminatory behaviour at our school.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School encourages all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school.

All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved as speedily as possible.

Any member of the school community who raises an issue of anti-inclusion, harassment, discrimination, bullying or vilification in good faith will not be victimised or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged. All complaints of victimisation will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as quickly as possible.

Every student and staff member at Roberts McCubbin Primary School should feel welcome, supported and emotionally and physically secure at school. The wellbeing of all students and staff is a priority for Roberts McCubbin Primary School. We understand that you cannot achieve your potential if someone is treating you unfairly, discriminating against you, vilifying, harassing or victimising you.

Complaints procedures exist to provide an avenue to address unacceptable behaviour. Complaints procedures are designed to explain what to do if you believe you have been discriminated against, harassed, vilified or victimised as explained earlier in this policy and your complaint is about your education or employment at Roberts McCubbin Primary School or goods, services or sport provided by Roberts McCubbin Primary School.

If you are a member of staff:

Please refer to the Department’s [Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/workm/perform/conduct.htm) guidelines OR Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ *Complaints Policy.*

If you are a parent or guardian:

Please refer to DET’s [Parent Complaints](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/complaints.htm) (guidelines OR Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ *Complaints Policy.*

Parent Complaints Link: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/parentcomplaints.aspx>

If you are a student:

You have the right to be part of a safe and inclusive school that is free of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. This includes treating you unfairly, excluding you or making you feel bad because of your:

* [sex](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/sex/default.asp)
* [race](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/race/default.asp)
* [sexual orientation](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/sexual%20orientation/default.asp)
* [physical features](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/physical%20features/default.asp)
* [religious belief or activity](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/religious%20belief%20or%20activity/default.asp)
* [carer status](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/carer%20and%20parental%20status/default.asp)
* [disability/impairment](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/disability/default.asp)
* [gender identity](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/gender%20identity/default.asp)
* [lawful sexual activity](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/sexual%20orientation/default.asp)
* [political belief or activity](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/political%20belief%20or%20activity/default.asp)
* [pregnancy](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/pregnancy%20and%20breastfeeding/default.asp)
* [personal association](http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/personal%20association/default.asp) with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

If you believe someone isn’t being inclusive, is discriminating, harassing, vilifying or victimising you and it is safe for you to do so, tell the other person to stop their behaviour. Let them know that their behaviour offends you. They may not realise this.

If the behaviour doesn’t stop or you are not sure what to do, report it to a trusted adult, such as a teacher, the year level co-ordinator, the principal or the Student Wellbeing Coordinator. Remember, you are not alone. If you have a problem or complaint, talking to someone, especially your parents can help. If you do not want to talk to anyone about it, you can find more information at (insert appropriate electronic links and other relevant contacts, for example, the Kids Help Line, telephone 1800 55 1800) OR Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ *Complaints Policy.*

If the unfair treatment or harassment persists, you can call the Commission for free and confidential advice. Advice can be given over the phone or in person. If your issue is covered by Equal Opportunity law, the Complaints Officer will discuss it with you. They will then explain how the Commission can help you and the information you would need to include in a complaint should you decide to make one.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will treat all reports of misconduct fairly, confidentially and quickly. 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.

The principal (or someone else they appoint) has responsibility for investigating complaints of anti-inclusion, harassment, discrimination, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

**Consequences**

Roberts McCubbin Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by anti-inclusion, harassment, discrimination, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management incidents.

If proven, the consequences of such behaviour may include:

* A restorative practices meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of restorative action on the part of the person who has been harming someone and forgiveness by the person who has been harmed
* Implement disciplinary consequences for students, which may include removal of privileges, in line with our *Safe and Happy Book* and *Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy,*
* Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students
* Roberts McCubbin Primary School will arrange counselling and support, where appropriate or where requested, for any student who has experienced anti-inclusion, harassment, discrimination, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Counselling may also be provided for a person who has bullied or harassed another.
* The school may also need to discuss the incident with parents.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School will monitor how the complaint was resolved and the wellbeing of those involved. Further action will be taken if the problem behaviour continues.

Roberts McCubbin Primary School encourages all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school if possible. It is also your right to seek help from outside the school. For example, you can contact the Department’s regional office, the Ombudsman or the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) for information or advice, or to make a complaint.

**Related policies AND RESOURCES**

* School Policy and Advisory Guide (click on the below for access to links):
  + [Inclusive Education](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/studentswithdisability.aspx)
  + [Koorie Education](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/Pages/koorie.aspx)
  + [Teaching Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Culture](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx)
  + [Safe Schools](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/safe-schools-coalition.aspx?Redirect=1#link8)
  + [Supports and Services](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/needs/Pages/supportservices.aspx)
  + [Program for Students with Disabilities](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/psdhandbook.aspx)
* Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
* Roberts McCubbin Primary Schools’ Bullying Prevention Policy
* School complaints contact(s)
* DET contacts including the regional office and Student Wellbeing Branch
* VEOHRC contact details
* School Council contacts
* Parent support contacts
* Student contacts [helplines]

**Review period**

**Evaluation**

The Inclusion and Diversity Policy Evaluation will occur as part of a regular review process.

This policy was reviewed in September 2018.