

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY and ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Introduction

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the bullying prevention policy.

Rationale

We recognise and promote human rights, and value the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities and life experience of the whole school community.

Aims

Mordialloc College aims to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential. This school is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of our whole school community. That is why discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated at Mordialloc College under any circumstances.

Mordialloc College is committed to ensuring that the working environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

This school acknowledges that in society some people are treated unfairly or unfavourably because of irrelevant personal characteristics such as their sex or race. This school supports the Charter of Human Rights and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010(Vic), which says that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone.

Discrimination is unacceptable at Mordialloc College. Discrimination may be direct or indirect – both are against the law.

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 person or group of people because of a protected personal characteristic they share.

Harassment is unacceptable at Mordialloc College

Harassment is behaviour (through words or actions) based on the personal characteristics listed above that are 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, humiliate, seriously embarrass or humiliate another.

Vilification is behaviour (through words or actions) that incites hatred, serious contempt or ridicule of another person or group of people because of their race or religious belief. Racial and religious vilification is unacceptable at Mordialloc College.

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Bullying is unacceptable at Mordialloc College.

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, 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 EO complaint or might do so in the future.

Mordialloc College will take action to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and to promote a safe and inclusive school.

A human rights based approach means taking steps to assess the school's decisions and actions within the framework of the Charter of Human Rights and also taking proactive steps to encourage and promote wider school discussion and student learning on the key Charter themes of Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.

Implementation

- All staff will be made aware of the legislative requirements relating to harassment
- All staff will complete DET online Workplace Discrimination & Sexual Harassment training
- Professional development relating to harassment will be provided for all staff, who in turn will model and practise appropriate behaviour
- All staff and the wider community will be familiar with the school's approach to harassment and will be provided with information relating to their rights and responsibilities
- Staff members will not allow themselves or their colleagues to be subjected to harassment from other staff, parents, students or others – all such incidents will be recorded, evidence compiled and reported to the principal or independent authority
- The principal will immediately investigate all complaints of workplace harassment
- Staff members who harass others will be subjected to DET disciplinary processes
- Students who harass others will be subjected to consequences consistent with our Student Code of Conduct and the bullying prevention policy
- Parents or community members who harass members of our school will be managed in accordance with the law
- Unresolved school-level issues may be referred by the principal, or other parties involved, to the appropriate authorities
- All claims of harassment will be treated confidentially, documented, and promptly and constructively addressed
- The privacy, rights and sensitivities of all individuals will be protected

Evaluation:

This policy was originally formed, and will be reviewed in consultation with all staff members as part of the school's three-year review cycle, or at times that the principal forms an opinion that the school situation warrants a review

This policy was last ratified by School Council in

November 2015