

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is explain Athol Road Primary 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. Athol Road 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 and diversity

Athol Road 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.

Athol Road 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.

Athol Road Primary School will:

- ensure that all students and members of our school community are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against and where necessary, are accommodated to participate in education and all school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, etc.) 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.

The role of leadership in supporting inclusive practices:

- The school curriculum, leadership and management practices will promote and affirm principles of inclusion
- Learning experiences will recognise, value and build on students' backgrounds and experiences.
- Our school Code of Conduct, Discipline Policy, Dress Code and our school Strategic Plan will all acknowledge and cater for our diversity
- All groups who are affected by decision-making outcomes will:
 - be consulted
 - be represented as members of decision-making bodies
 - will have their input treated fairly
 - will benefit from decision-making processes and outcomes that are meritorious and non-racist
- Applications for funding to support students with special needs will be completed in a timely manner through the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD), if deemed eligible.
- Student support group (SSG) meetings, an integral part of the process for catering with students with a Disability, will occur each term and include the child's teacher, parents/carers, principal or nominee. Others may be invited, such as education support staff and student support services staff.
- Teachers will be supported to create personalised individual learning plans (ILPs) ensuring that goals are
 - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound
- Appropriate professional development will be made available to teachers, leadership, education support staff and, where possible, to the school community.

- As particular needs are identified, appropriate resources will be sought and teaching and learning modified so that the school can continue to meet the needs of each child. These will be offered in the form of written materials and books, physical materials in classrooms and professional development.
- Celebration of diversity will be encouraged and promoted
- Eligible newly arrived students from another country who are recognized as being non English speaking will be referred to the English Language School
- Students in the Program for Students with Disabilities program will be included in the induction information for new staff and casual relief teachers.

The role of the teacher to support inclusive practices:

- All staff will model culturally inclusive behaviour and report to the principal any behaviour that appears racist, discriminatory, prejudiced or culturally biased
- Multiculturalism will be celebrated through:
 - Whole school multicultural events which showcase our various community cultures
 - Visiting artists from a variety of cultural/linguistic backgrounds
 - Parents being invited to participate in school activities, excursions and committees
- Essential notices, newsletters, student reports, permission forms, etc. will be provided in languages consistent with the needs of community members
- Interpreters will be arranged for interviews and meetings as required
- As particular needs are identified, appropriate resources will be sought so that the school can continue to meet the needs of each child
- While teachers are responsible for program development, input will be sought from the family and other key stakeholders
- Opportunities for discussion with all students in the home group/learning space will be encouraged to facilitate greater understanding and respect
- An individualised learning environment will be established to cater for students with additional learning needs in the form of visuals, sensory equipment, mini breaks in between learning, wheelchair access, slope boards for writing and noise cancelling headphones, if required
- Accommodations such as the use of computer technology and safety measures which support visually impaired students will be put in place to minimise any foreseeable injury
- Teachers are encouraged to access the school's variety of resources on inclusion for staff in the form of written materials and books, physical materials in classrooms and professional development.
- Individual learning plans must be developed and reviewed regularly for the following students:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
 - Students who are funded under the Program for Students with Disabilities
 - Students in Out of Home Care
 - Students who are performing 1 year or more below and 2 years or more above their expected level.
 - Students who receive support for English as an additional Language (EAL)
- Adjustments will be made to all school activities eg. school camps, excursions, performances and specialist programs to enable access for every student
- Every student will be provided with a curriculum based at their level. This will be in the form of the Victorian Curriculum or Abilities Based Learning and Education Support curriculum (ABLES), based on assessments completed by the school and professional recommendations
- Designated teachers will review recommendations by professionals for students for which they are responsible
- Teachers are encouraged to develop regular communication between families of students they support

The role of Education Support Staff (ESS) to support inclusive practices

- Education Support Staff (ESS) are responsible for implementing the program developed by the teacher and adjusting the delivery to best support the needs of the student
- ESS are encouraged to develop regular communication between families of students they support.
- Communication is to be fed back to the teacher

Support from Service Providers

- The school will access support from the region's Autism Coach, Koorie Education Officer and Student Support Services Officer (SSSOs).
- The school will liaise with Early Childhood Centres to support students with a disability before their commencement at school.

- The school will work closely and collaboratively with health professionals such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, the school nurse and paediatricians to support all students' needs.
- The school will maintain ongoing communication with Early in Life Mental Health Services (ELMHS) as required or if a student is using that service.

Inclusion Support for Parents of our School

- A reduced time fraction at school for students with additional needs may be implemented as agreed between parents and the principal or nominee and signed off, the aim always being to build up to full time hours for the student at school as soon as possible.
- The school will support families in accessing 'Child First', to support families going through separation, mental illness and economic or social disadvantage.

Bullying, harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated in our school community. 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.

Athol Road Primary School will take appropriate measures, consistent with its Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying Prevention policies to respond to discriminatory behaviour or harassment at our school.

Athol Road Primary School also understands that it has a special obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist all students to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities through our 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 the school on 9547 1224 for further information.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- ARPS Student Engagement, Well-Being and Inclusion Policy
- ARPS Values
- ARPS Bullying Prevention Policy
- School Policy and Advisory Guide:
 - Inclusive Education
 - Koorie Education
 - Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture
 - Safe Schools
 - Supports and Services
 - Program for Students with Disabilities

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy is scheduled for review in line with the school's 2 year policy review schedule.