

# Mernda Hills Christian College

## Culturally Safe Environments Policy



### Document Control

Revision Number	Review Date	Implementation Date	Description of Changes	Prepared By	Approved By
0	Jun 2023	Jan 2024	New	Principal	ASV Head Office

## Policy Statement

At Mernda Hills Christian College we are committed to the well-being, safety, and overall development of all students, inclusive of their cultural backgrounds and diversity. We adhere to a framework that respects, acknowledges, and encourages the cultural diversity of our school community.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create an environment where students from all cultures, ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds feel safe, respected, and valued. This includes creating a space that acknowledges the traditions, languages, and cultures of all individuals within the school environment.

## Policy Details

**Culturally Responsive Practices:** We pledge to integrate practices in our curriculum, learning environment, and administrative systems that are inclusive and respectful of all cultures. This includes celebration and education of various cultural events and history.

**Non-Discrimination:** No student, parent, staff member, or volunteer will face discrimination based on their culture, language, religion, or ethnicity. Actions or behaviors promoting discrimination will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately as per our code of conduct.

**Representation:** We will ensure fair representation of diverse cultures in our staff and in positions of leadership within the school.

**Language Assistance:** We will offer language assistance programs to support non-English speaking students and parents. All important information will be communicated in a manner that is understandable to all.

## Racism

### Definition of Racism

For the purpose of this policy, racism is defined as any behavior, action, attitude, or institutional structure which systematically and adversely affects individuals, groups, or communities based on their cultural, ethnic, racial, or religious backgrounds.

This can manifest in various forms, such as:

- a. **Direct Racism:** Deliberate and explicit actions demonstrating prejudice or bias against an individual or group based on their racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious identities. This can include derogatory comments, harmful stereotypes, physical harm, or overt exclusion.
- b. **Indirect Racism:** Practices or policies that appear neutral but have a disproportionate impact or disadvantage on certain racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious groups.
- c. **Structural/Systemic Racism:** Systems and structures within the institution that create or perpetuate unequal outcomes for different racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious groups.

Racism, in any of its forms, is not tolerated at Heritage College. We are committed to promoting a culturally safe environment that values respect and equity.

## Implementation

The principal and leadership team are responsible for the implementation of this policy and will:

- Create awareness of the policy within the school community.
- Provide necessary training to staff for understanding and implementing the policy.
- Establish a process to report any breach of the policy.
- Regularly review the policy to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

## Breach of Policy

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action as per the school's code of conduct. The disciplinary action may range from counseling to expulsion or dismissal, depending upon the severity of the breach.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, practical, and that it is being effectively implemented. The policy may also be revised in light of any changes to the regulatory environment or school circumstances.

## Related Policies, Registers, Plans, Templates, Programs

- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safe Protection Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Risk Management Strategies Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Community Code of Conduct
- Community Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Digital Technologies Policy & Procedures
- Diversity of Learners Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Agreements – Students, Staff
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- OH&S Policy
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy
- Respectful Behaviours Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Working with Children Clearance Policy

## Relevant Documentation or Legislation

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018 (Vic)
- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)
- Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018 (Vic)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)