

Student Diversity Policy

Vision Statement

Mountain Creek State High School is committed to providing all students with a safe and supportive environment that celebrates diversity where all students can learn free from discrimination based on sex, gender identity, sexuality, language, culture, ethnicity, religion, health, disability or socioeconomic background.

Goal

To provide a supportive and inclusive environment to promote the mental health and wellbeing of all students. This includes providing safe environments where diversity is valued and positive social interactions are promoted to ensure all students are provided with equal opportunities to reach their potential, irrespective of sex, gender identity, sexuality, language, culture, ethnicity, religion, health, disability or socioeconomic background.

Implementation

Mountain Creek SHS staff, students and the school community will aim to:

- ensure all students receive equal respect and equal opportunities to succeed
- recognition that every student is different and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis
- create a working and learning environment that is inclusive of all students and staff and where all school community members are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect
- promote compliance with relevant legislation concerning discrimination and privacy
- create a safe learning environment through a prompt response to bullying, harassment or discrimination
- support staff in the ongoing development of inclusive curriculum which incorporates perspectives from all cultures and backgrounds
- work collaboratively with local community members to support students and families
- support the right of each child to dress in accordance with their gender and cultural identity
- provide professional development for staff to deliver a supportive and inclusive environment to promote the mental health and wellbeing of all students
- use respectful and inclusive language at all times and support students to use their preferred name or pronoun. Pronouns may include, but are not limited to, she/her, he/him, they/their, zie/zehn
- ensure privacy of student information – All students are entitled to the same confidentiality and privacy as any other student. The decision to disclose of personal information such as gender diversity or sexuality is an individual matter and must be treated respectfully and in accordance with confidentiality and privacy requirements

Support

Support is available to students and members of the school community. Students and or Parents/Carers can contact the Student's Head of Year; Guidance Officer, Dean of Students or Head of Department Student Services.

External organisations that students, parents and carers can contact if they need support,

- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [beyondblue](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Bullying. No Way!](#)
- [True Relationships and Reproductive Health](#)
- [Open Doors Youth Service](#)
- [GenderQueer Australia](#)
- [Transcend](#)
- [Headspace and their "Purple Pack"](#)
- [LGBTI Legal Service](#)
- [Open Doors Youth Servicehttp://www.opendoors.net.au/](http://www.opendoors.net.au/)
- [Parent and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Brisbane \(PFLAG\)](#)

Trans and Gender Diverse Students

Student transitions

Mountain Creek State High School will accept the gender identity of each individual student. Students who wish to transition while at school will work with the school Guidance Officers and Principal, along with their parents, to customise their own individual transition plan. This will include time frames of the transition, their name and pronouns, camps and sport arrangements, and consideration on toilet and change room use. Each student will have a unique process for transitioning and the school will work with them to ensure they understand the options before them. This will ensure that it is a student led process.

Counselling support

Transitioning at school, or even developing a stronger understanding of one's gender identity, can be a very challenging time for students. The school Guidance Officers can be utilised to provide assistance to help make it a less difficult time for young people. They can create support plans for the individual students during their time of transition.

Student name

Respecting a young person's request to change their name and pronoun is an essential part of validating and supporting their identity. Students may refer to themselves by a name of their choosing. School staff will use the name, personal pronouns and preferred gender when requested by the student. Academic reports may use the student's preferred name if requested by the student/parent/carer.

School uniform

All students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity and expression. Students are therefore permitted to wear the uniform of their choosing. The same uniform standards and guidelines apply to all students and it is an expectation that they will adhere to all uniform dress codes.

Curriculum

All curriculum is facilitated in a manner that promotes inclusivity. When developing and delivering curriculum around gender, relationships and sexuality, teachers should avoid making generalisations and assumptions about sexuality or gender identity. Teachers will be up to date with the most current resources and they promote inclusivity, acceptance and care for all.

Toilet and change room use

The use of toilets and changing rooms by students will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in discussion with the individual student. This will be discussed with the school Guidance Officers or Principal with the goal being to maximise social integration, minimise stigmatisation and ensure safety and comfort. The options available to the student are: the unisex toilets available around the school or the toilet of the gender that they identify with. Considerations will be made that best suit the student in supporting them to feel safe and comfortable when at school.

Camps and excursions

When determining school camp arrangements, students will be consulted over their choices about the sleeping arrangements, toilets and change areas. Whenever possible, students should be able to sleep in accommodation and use facilities appropriate to their gender identity. Some transgender young people may not feel comfortable doing this and in such cases alternative sleeping arrangements will be made.

When participating in physical activities on outdoor education days and camps, the student will negotiate with the staff about what degree of participation is appropriate. Activities that cause a great degree of discomfort will be discussed and alternative arrangements will be made if it is appropriate. Risk assessments can be carried out prior to outdoor education days in order to make any reasonable adjustments which will enable participation for the individual student.

Physical education and Sport

All students have a right to participate in sporting activities. Physical education teachers are familiar with differentiating their lessons and considering the range of size, build and ability in the class to keep all students safe and so the same principles can be applied. These considerations should be discussed with individual students themselves and if appropriate, with their parents or guardians. The type of sport, level of ability and physical contact rules will be considered when deciding what is appropriate. Wherever possible, when teams are segregated by gender, students should be enabled to participate in the activity which corresponds to their gender identity if this is what they request. However, for children over 12 years of age competitive sporting activities, in Queensland it is only lawful to restrict participation to either males or females if the restriction is reasonable having regard to the strength, stamina or physique requirements of the activity. What constitutes competitive sport is not prescribed by legislation, but intra-school sport (i.e. sports played with other students of the school, such as PE lessons or athletics carnivals) would not be considered competitive. Social grade sport is also generally open to everyone. What is considered competitive sport will depend on the particular circumstances. Swimming can be problematic for young people identifying as a gender different from the physical development of their body. Flexibility may be required in either the swimming costume or participation in swimming. Refer to the Anti-Discrimination Act Section 111 Sport for additional information.

Parental collaboration

The parents and guardians of transgender and gender non-conforming students play a crucial role in establishing a safe and supportive school environment. Whenever possible, parents will be key contributors to the formulation of a plan for helping their child be supported to learn free from discrimination at school. According to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 concerns regarding the views of the person's parents or other members of the school community do not provide exemptions from the legal requirement to either directly or indirectly discriminate (treat differently) a person due to their gender identity.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination

Mountain Creek SHS takes bullying, harassment and discrimination very seriously. We are committed to ensuring that all students have a safe school environment. Therefore, any complaint alleging discrimination, harassment and bullying based on a student's actual or perceived gender identity, and expression, will be taken very seriously. The incident of discrimination will be given immediate attention and appropriate action will be taken following the Bullying and Harassment policy.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this document the follow terms are defined but it is acknowledged that they are general terms.

Gender - part of how a person understands them self. A person's gender does not necessarily mean that they have particular sex characteristics.

Sex - refers to a person's biological and hormonal sex characteristics. Sex is different from gender.

Cisgender - A word used to describe people whose gender agrees with their body sex or assigned sex.

Discrimination – treating a person in a way that results in that person receiving less favourable treatment because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

~phobia (as in: homophobia, transphobia and biphobia) – the fear, intolerance, and/or discrimination of people who identify as: same-sex attracted (homophobia); transgender, gender diverse or gender nonconforming (transphobia); bisexual (biphobia).

Transgender (or Trans) – an umbrella term used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex.

Sistergirls and Brotherboy – terms used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe a person assigned male or female at birth and living partly or fully as the other gender. Use and spelling of the terms may vary across different groups and communities and other cultures will use different terms to describe gender diversity.

Intersex – a long-established medical condition where an infant is born with reproductive organs and/or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male or female.

Gender expression – is the outward signs they present to the world around them. This could include their choice of name and preferred pronoun, their style of dress and appearance and/or mannerisms.

Gender diverse – used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex. Includes people who identify as transgender, a-gender (having no gender), bi-gender (having two genders), and non-binary (not strictly woman or man).

Gender transition/affirmation – is the process whereby a transgender person commences living as their true gender identity.

Gender identity – a word or series of words that a person of any sexuality may use to describe their gender – for example: girl, boy, woman, man, transgender, gender diverse etc. Gender identity can be a fixed and unchanging characteristic for some, however it can also be fluid or evolving for others.

Non-binary – Any gender identity that sits within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine, agender, bigender etc.

Same-sex attracted – any person who identifies as being same-sex attracted. This may include people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Sexual orientation / Sexuality – the underlying direction of sexual attraction towards people of a particular gender or genders. Sexual orientation can include being heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Having a homosexual or heterosexual orientation does not always mean people will have a gay, lesbian or heterosexual identity.

Sexual identity – how you see yourself sexually and how you present yourself to others. It includes being gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.

(Definitions have been resourced from: Australian Human Rights Commission, Safe Schools Coalition Australia, Victorian Department of Education and Training, Queensland Department of Education)

Legislation:

The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991(Qld) prohibits state schools from discriminating on the attribute of sex; relationship status; pregnancy; parental status; breastfeeding; age; race; impairment; religious belief or religious activity; political belief or activity; trade union activity; lawful sexual activity; gender identity; sexuality; family responsibilities

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth) also prohibits discrimination on the basis of a person's sex, gender identity, intersex status or sexual orientation in the area of education. Schools must provide all students who identify as same-sex attracted, intersex or transgender with access to high-quality schooling that is free from discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation.

Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) protects the right of every child to access primary and secondary education appropriate to their needs. It also says that every person has the right to have access, based on their abilities, to equally accessible further vocational education and training.

Links to relevant legislation:

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1991-085>
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00880>
- Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013 www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2013A00098
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2009-014>
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-039>
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/asmade/act-2019-005>

Links to relevant documents resources and source documents

- [Diversity in Queensland schools Policy template](#)
- [Diversity in Queensland schools - Information for principals](#)
- [Supporting Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing procedure](#)
- [True Relationships and Reproductive Health](#)
- [Trans @ School A guide for schools, educators, and families of trans and gender diverse children and young people – Queensland Human Rights Commission](#)
- [A GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS Information on supporting Trans, Gender Diverse or Non-binary Students to affirm their gender - Transcend](#)
- [Bullying. No Way!](#)
- [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#)