

# SHOLEM ALEICHEM COLLEGE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Sholem Aleichem College (College) has a commitment to making every member of our school and Early Learning Centre (ELC) community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. The College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all students and members of our community.

The College is a Jewish school and ELC and promotes the Jewish culture and way of life, however it also aims to create an inclusive culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. The College is one of the lead Respectful Relationship Schools. For these reasons, discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated at Sholem under any circumstances. The College is committed to ensuring that the working environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation.

### **Statement of commitment to Child Safety**

Sholem Aleichem College is committed to ensuring a child safe environment exists throughout our College. The safety, wellbeing and rights of all children attending the College are paramount. Sholem Aleichem College's commitment to creating a safe environment for all students who attend the College is endorsed at the highest level by the College Council and the Principal. For more information, please refer to our Child Protection Policy.

## 2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to outline the College's commitment to diversity and inclusion and steps it will take to ensure these are built into the College culture, systems, and processes. The policy also aims to inform all parties of their rights and obligations under the sex and discrimination laws.

## 3. RELATED POLICIES

SAC Recruitment and Selection Policy  
SAC Occupational Health and Safety Policy  
SAC Staff Code of Conduct  
SAC Student Code of Conduct  
SAC Child Protection Policy  
SAC Complaints and Grievances Policy  
SAC Student Welfare and General Safety Policy  
SAC Performance Management and Disciplinary Action Policy  
SAC Privacy Policy

## 4. SCOPE

This policy applies to the whole College community, including staff, students and families, College council members, contractors, and volunteers.

This policy applies in the various school and ELC settings including:

- education (teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
- the provision of goods and services (extracurricular activities, camps, excursions,
- parent-teacher interviews, access to facilities, school events outside school hours)
- school sport
- employment at the College (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions,

- access to benefits such as training, promotion and leave).

## **5. POLICY DETAIL**

### **Equal Opportunity**

This College acknowledges that in society some people are treated unfairly or unfavourably because of irrelevant personal characteristics such as their sex or race. This College 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, including students and staff, because of their actual or assumed:

- age
- carer and parental status
- disability (including physical, sensory, and intellectual disability, work related injury, medical conditions, and mental, psychological, and learning disabilities)
- employment activity
- gender identity, lawful sexual activity, and sexual orientation
- marital status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy and breastfeeding
- race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, and ethnic origin)
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

It is unlawful for any person or group of people to be treated less favourably because they possess any of these personal characteristics. No member of the College community will be treated less favourably should they possess any of these personal characteristics, nor will such characteristics affect access to the benefits and services the College provides.

### **Gender equality**

Sholem Aleichem College recognises that gender inequality has the potential to limit and impact negatively on the safety, education, employment, family lives and opportunities of staff and students, particularly women and girls, in the immediate and long term. Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 all organisations have a positive duty to take proactive steps to prevent discriminatory practices. The College recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment and is committed to building a College culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality and a lack of inclusiveness.

At Sholem Aleichem College, all students and staff are responsible for promoting gender equality and modelling respectful relationships. All staff and students will be held accountable if they use language and/or demonstrate behaviour that:

- promotes unequal power relations between women and men
- perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes
- condones violence against women
- is not respectful towards each other and does not support our College values.

Our staff model positive, inclusive, respectful relationships at all times. The College will work to ensure all staff feel respected, safe, and valued in the workplace, and will take proactive measures to prevent and eliminate gender discrimination and provide equal opportunities for all staff. This will include promoting gender equality in College leadership, ensuring processes and policies are free of bias, and supporting all staff to balance work and family commitments.

The College actively supports and/or mentors all staff, reviewing recruitment and professional processes to eliminate unconscious gender bias, facilitating flexible work arrangements and family leave in line with government guidelines. The College will also support staff who experience domestic/family violence or sexual assault including by making reasonable efforts to grant appropriate leave, adjust work assignments or accommodate requests for flexible work hours where possible.

## **Inclusion and diversity**

Sholem Aleichem College is committed to creating College community where all members of our community are welcomed, accepted, and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders), language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve, and thrive at school.

Sholem Aleichem College acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our College community, and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others.

To be a child safe environment, the College must have and implement a variety of strategies to ensure the safety of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) students and to respect and value these students, their families, and relevant communities. In particular, Standard 5 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards requires the College to uphold equity and respect diverse needs in policy and practice.

To implement this Standard, Ministerial Order 1359 requires College Council to develop and endorse a policy, statement or curriculum document that details the strategies and actions that the College will take to meet a number of specific requirements relating to LGBTIQ+ students, including to:

- understand the diverse circumstances of students and to provide support and respond to vulnerable students
- provide access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are accessible and easy to understand
- pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable students, including in particular LGBTIQ+ students.

## **6. 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.

### **Discrimination**

Any form of discrimination is unlawful and, accordingly, is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem College. It is unlawful to discriminate even when it was not your intention to discriminate. It is also unlawful to victimise or treat unfavourably a person who has complained of discrimination. 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.

Examples: refusing to enrol a student because he has Hepatitis C, refusing to allow a Muslim staff member to wear the hijab or failing to hire a suitably qualified teacher because of his or her sexual orientation.

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.

Example: Imposing a requirement that all students take notes from the whiteboard without assistance may unreasonably disadvantage a student with vision impairment.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is unlawful under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and, accordingly, harassment is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem 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 our College 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).

Examples: name calling, stereotypical jokes and offensive comments

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

The College will take appropriate measures, consistent with its Student Wellbeing and Bullying and Harassment policies to respond to discriminatory behaviour or harassment at our College, Students that are involved in bullying or harassing others based on their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour. Students that are victims of bullying and/or harassment will be provided with support including but not limited to sessions with the College Psychologist.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is unlawful and prohibited under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth). Accordingly, sexual harassment is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem College.

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.

Examples: Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal or written.

- comments about someone's private life or the way they look
- sexually suggestive behaviour, such as leering or staring
- brushing up against someone, touching, fondling, or hugging
- sexually suggestive comments or jokes
- displaying offensive images or objects
- repeated requests to go out
- requests for sex
- sexually explicit emails, text messages or posts on social media
- sexual assault
- suggestive behaviour.

Sexual harassment is not behaviour that is based on mutual attraction, respect, and friendship. If the interaction between individuals is consensual, welcome, and reciprocated, it is not sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is not only unlawful during working hours or on College premises. Sexual harassment is unlawful if it occurs at any work-related function or activity, including conferences, work functions, business trips and social events. Sexual harassment can extend to unwanted invitations, telephone calls, emails, or SMS messages outside of working hours.

### **Racial harassment**

Racial harassment is also found in many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour
- deliberate exclusion from conversations
- displaying abusive writing and pictures
- insensitive jokes related to race
- pranks.

### **Disability harassment**

Examples of disability harassment include:

- humiliating comments or insults about a student's disability
- disparaging remarks to students who have received learning adjustments
- comments or actions which create a hostile environment for a student with a disability
- deliberately excluding a student where the disability is not an issue.

### **Gender Identity**

Gender identity has the potential for discriminatory and unfair treatment. Gender identity is broadly defined in the as meaning 'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth'. By this definition, the Sex Discrimination Act therefore affords protection from discrimination for persons who identify as men, women or also as neither male nor female. It does not matter what sex the person was assigned at birth, or whether the person has undergone any medical intervention. Below are the definitions Gender Identity and Intersex status are outlined in the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) (SD Act).

### **LGBTIQA+**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and asexual as well as minority gender identities and sexualities not otherwise mentioned.

### **Gender diverse**

"Gender diverse" is a broad term that can apply to many people who don't conform to, or identify with, traditional sex and gender norms. This term includes children and young people who may identify as transgender, genderqueer, gender questioning or who feel that their gender identity does not align with the sex assigned to them at birth and/or society's expectations. The person may identify as neither male nor female.

### **Intersex**

Under section 4 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), "intersex" means the status of having physical, hormonal, or genetic features that are:

- neither wholly female nor wholly male;
- a combination of female and male; or
- neither female nor male.

Although intersex people are often confused with transgender and gender diverse people, being intersex is not about gender identity and most intersex people identify as women or men.

Research indicates that around 1.7 percent of people are intersex.

### **Queer**

"Queer" is as an umbrella term for sexuality and gender diverse people. It is also regarded as a proclamation of fearless difference, a self-identifying commitment to counterculture.

## **Transgender**

A “transgender” person is someone whose gender identity does not match the gender that they were assigned at birth (e.g., a baby is assigned male at birth but grows up to identify as a woman). Research indicates that around 5 percent of people are transgender.

## **Transition**

The process by which a transgender or gender diverse person affirms their gender, whether through name change, clothing, changing legal documents or medical steps. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal, or physical changes. There is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo to have their gender identity affirmed and respected.

## **People with disabilities**

The term ‘people with disabilities’ is conceptualised as including those who have episodic or long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This reference to disability is based on the characterisation of persons with a disability in Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

## **Racial and Religious Vilification**

The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) prohibits any form of racial and religious vilification and, accordingly vilification is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem College. All staff will be made aware of and provided with access to information relating to the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001.

Vilification is behaviour (through words or actions) that incites hatred, serious contempt for, revulsion or severe ridicule of another person or group of people on the grounds of their race or religious belief to humiliate another.

Examples: public threats of harm, encouraging others to hate someone because of their religion, racist statements made in a public meeting, racist graffiti.

## **Workplace Bullying**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) imposes legal responsibilities on both employers and employees. These duties and responsibilities extend to risks to health and safety from workplace bullying and occupational violence. WorkSafe Victoria has released a Guide for employers on the prevention of bullying and violence in the workplace.

The Guide provides practical advice on how to eliminate or reduce the risks of harassment, bullying or violent behaviour in the workplace, whether the source of such behaviour is internal (employees, including principal class employees) or external (subcontractors and other visitors). Access to this Guide can be found on the Worksafe website (A guide for employers – Workplace bullying ([worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au))).

Workplace bullying is unlawful and, accordingly, is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem 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.

Examples include but are not limited to taking or damaging other people’s property; excluding or isolating someone; subjecting someone to homophobic abuse; deliberately withholding information so as to affect their work performance; threatening not to renew an employment contract.

What is not bullying?

Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair and reasonable manner are not bullying. Such actions could include:

Examples: setting realistic performance goals, standards, and deadlines; not selecting an employee for promotion if they are not the best candidate for the position; informing an employee about unsatisfactory work performance; informing an employee about inappropriate behaviour; setting performance goals, standards, and deadlines.

(See Bullying and Harassment Policy for more information)

### **Student bullying**

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical bullying** which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing, or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing, or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- **Psychological bullying** which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing, or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics, or cultural background.
- **Indirect bullying** which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- **Cyberbullying** which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyberbullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

- **Mutual Conflict Situations** which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation
- **One-Off Acts** (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting, or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Major behavioural changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include:

- crying at night and having nightmares
- refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- having unexplained bruises, cuts, or scratches
- an unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- feeling ill in the mornings
- a decline in quality of schoolwork
- becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- beginning to bully siblings
- acting unreasonably.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation is unlawful conduct, whereby a person is treated unfavourably or disadvantaged following the filing, or anticipated filing, of a workplace complaint, or through taking a workplace complaint to the Equal Opportunity Commission. Accordingly, victimisation is unacceptable at Sholem Aleichem College.

## **7. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Under this policy, every member of Sholem Aleichem College 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.

### **College responsibilities**

The Principal of Sholem Aleichem College is accountable for implementation of this policy.

Each Head of Department is responsible for:

- modelling and promoting appropriate standards of behaviour
- taking steps to educate and make staff aware of their obligations under this Policy and the law
- intervening quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour
- acting fairly to resolve issues and enforce workplace behavioural standards, making sure relevant parties are heard
- helping staff resolve complaints informally
- referring formal complaints about breaches of this Policy for investigation
- handling matters confidentially
- ensuring staff who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised.

### **Staff responsibilities**

All staff are responsible to:

- model and always educate students on appropriate behaviour
- deal with all reported and observed incidents of discrimination, bullying, harassment and other unlawful behaviour as defined in this Policy in accordance with this Policy
- ensure that any incident of inappropriate behaviour that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately
- be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- acknowledge the right of parents/carers to speak with the College if they believe their child is being bullied, harassed, or discriminated against as defined in this Policy.

### **Student responsibilities**

All students are required to:

- treat all students, staff, and any other person at the College professionally and with respect
- avoid behaviour that could be interpreted as discriminatory, bullying or harassing and act to prevent other students from engaging in such behaviour, where this is reasonably practicable taking into account the circumstances and age of the student
- where students have witnessed such behaviour at the College, they are encouraged to report this to a staff member.

### **Parents/guardians are encouraged to**

- Be aware of the definition of bullying.
- Not take matters into their own hands but instead direct their concerns to the College.
- Advise their child not to retaliate and work collaboratively with the College if their child is involved incidents of bullying (either as victim or bully).

## **8. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Sholem Aleichem College does not tolerate discrimination, harassment and victimisation of any type including disability discrimination.

This is achieved by:

- informing all staff and students that disability discrimination is not acceptable
- providing information and training concerning non-discriminatory methods of teaching
- ensuring staff and students are aware of appropriate actions to be taken if harassment or victimisation occurs
- establishing strategies and programs to prevent harassment and victimisation of persons with a disability
- ensuring strategies and programs extend to not only students but also to their parents/carers, who may experience discrimination as a result of their support role to a person with a disability, or who may have a disability themselves.

In implementing this policy, Sholem Aleichem College will:

- ensure that all students and members of our College 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 College activities (e.g., schools sports, concerts, excursions, camps) 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.
- will take action to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation
- and to promote a safe and inclusive College.
- will take immediate and appropriate action to address and resolve any issues and complaints
- will take action to promote a human rights approach to diversity, inclusion and Equal Opportunity, both in terms of College policy and practice and within its educational activities and culture. A human rights-based approach means taking steps to assess the College's decisions and actions within the framework of the Charter and taking proactive steps to encourage and promote wider College discussion and student learning on the key Charter themes of Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.

### **Bullying**

Sholem Aleichem College recognises that the implementation of whole-College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no-bullying' culture within the College:

- a structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyberbullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year
- education, training, and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- regular provision of information to parents/carers, to raise awareness of bullying as a College community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have related to bullying directly with the College
- promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students, and parents/carers
- promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff, and parents/carers
- reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/carers, and staff are encouraged

- regular risk assessments of bullying within the College are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff
- records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate
- statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' College diaries
- education of staff, students, and parents/carers on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear
- anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College
- promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

A key part of the College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/carers) that:

- bullying is not tolerated within the College
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- the College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:

- informing a trusted teacher
- informing the College Wellbeing Coordinator
- informing a student's year coordinator
- informing the Deputy Principal or the Principal.

Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:

- notification of/consultation with parents/carers
- offering counselling to persistent bullies/victims
- implementing effective follow up strategies
- disciplinary action, at the Principal's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of persistent bullies, or in cases of severe incidents.

## **Disability inclusion**

Sholem Aleichem College 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 the Inclusion team in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners.

Whether an adjustment is reasonable will depend on balancing the student's learning needs with the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with a disability, the College, staff, and other students.

Depending on the needs of the student, adjustments may include modifications to College's buildings or facilities, procedures, and resources.

Modifications to enable student access to College buildings and facilities and participate in everyday College life include adjustments to toilets, ramps, safety railings, the gymnasium, computer rooms and laboratories to ensure students with disabilities can access these facilities safely.

Sholem Aleichem College is not required to provide adjustments where doing so would cause unjustifiable hardship to the College.

All processes for adjustments within the College, including review and grievance procedures, will be transparent. All decisions will be made in a timely way that optimises the student's participation in education and training.

Unjustifiable hardship is determined via an individual assessment of the prospective student's needs balanced with the costs associated with additional staffing, the provision of special resources or modifications and health and safety and duty of care requirements.

For more information about support available for students with disabilities, please refer to our College's Student Wellbeing policy or contact the Head of Inclusion for further information.

## **LGBTIQA+ inclusion**

Sholem Aleichem College recognises the fundamental right of every child and young person to feel safe at the College and that a supportive and inclusive College environment is essential for providing quality learning opportunities for LGBTIQA+ students.

The College:

- fosters an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, and free from stigma, harassment and discrimination for all students including LGBTIQA+ students
- ensures that all students have the opportunity to express themselves and live authentically
- develops and implements whole school initiatives within the College with a focus on helping LGBTIQA+ students to feel safe and included
- implements bullying prevention strategies within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower Staff, students, and parents/carers to recognise bullying and respond appropriately
- regularly reviews our support and inclusion initiatives for LGBTIQA+ students against best practice.

Sholem Aleichem College is committed to fostering a culture of openness and celebration of diversity. This includes modelling exemplary behaviour, communicating the College's commitment to a safe learning environment and using LGBTIQA+ inclusive language.

## **Cultural and Class Celebrations**

Our College is a Jewish school and ELC that teaches Yiddish and Hebrew languages and celebrates Jewish cultural events. At the same time, no child will have to partake in cultural celebrations that they or their parents do not approve of and will instead be provided with alternative activities.

Jewish events and occasions will be regular features of our College's calendar and will be celebrated. The College will explore other cultural celebrations that occur within families across the school and ELC, and will provide opportunities for children and families to celebrate their special occasions throughout the school year

## **Complaints Procedures**

Sholem Aleichem College encourages all members of the College community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the College. All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly, and consistently, and resolved as promptly as possible.

Any member of the College community who raises an issue of discrimination, harassment, 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.

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, sexually harassed, bullied, vilified or victimised as explained earlier in this policy, and your complaint is about your education or employment at Sholem Aleichem College or sport provided by Sholem Aleichem College.

**If you are a staff member**, please refer to the College Complaints and Grievances policy.

**If you are a student/ parent or guardian:**

Students have the right to be part of a safe and inclusive College 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
- race
- sexual orientation
- physical features
- religious belief or activity
- carer status
- disability/impairment
- gender identity
- lawful sexual activity
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

If you believe someone is discriminating, harassing, bullying, 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 College Psychologist. Remember, you are not alone. If you have a problem or complaint, talking to someone, especially your parents can help. Speak to our School Psychologist.

If the unfair treatment or harassment persists, you can call the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission for free and confidential advice on 1300 292 153 or email [enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au). 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.

Sholem Aleichem College will treat all reports of misconduct fairly, confidentially and quickly and in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

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.

Speak to the College Psychologist or our Human Resources Manager for more information, You may also approach a Health and Safety representative.

## **9. SOURCES**

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)  
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)  
Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)  
Child Safe Standards <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/>  
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)  
Worksafe Victoria <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/bullying-workplace>  
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au>

## **REVIEW**

Date created: February 2022  
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