



# ANTI-RACISM POLICY

## RATIONALE

Oak Flats Public School community rejects all forms of racism. It is committed to the elimination of racial discrimination – including direct and indirect racism, racial vilification and harassment – in its organisation, structures and culture, in its curriculum, and in the learning and working environments for which it is responsible.

No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience racism within the learning or working environments of Oak Flats Public School. Eradicating expressions of racism in learning and working environments, and challenging the attitudes that allow them to emerge, is the shared responsibility of all staff of Oak Flats Public School.

All teaching and non-teaching staff of Oak Flats Public School contributes to the eradication of racism by promoting acceptance of Australia's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, challenging prejudiced attitudes and ensuring that sanctions are applied against racist and discriminatory behaviours.

## WHAT IS RACISM?

The Human Rights Commission defines racism as follows:

Racism can take many forms, such as jokes or comments that cause offence or hurt, sometimes unintentionally; name-calling or verbal abuse; harassment or intimidation, or commentary in the media or online that inflames hostility towards certain groups. At its most serious, racism can result in acts of physical abuse and violence.

Racism can directly or indirectly exclude people from accessing services or participating in employment, education, sport and social activities. It can also occur at a systemic or institutional level through policies, conditions or practices that disadvantage certain groups. It often manifests through unconscious bias or prejudice.

On a structural level, racism serves to perpetuate inequalities in access to power, resources and opportunities across racial and ethnic groups. The belief that a particular race or ethnicity is inferior or superior to others is sometimes used to justify such inequalities. — Australian Human Rights Commission, National Anti-Racism Strategy, July 2012, Page 4 Racism can directly or indirectly exclude people from accessing services or participating in employment, education, sport and social activities. It can also occur at a systemic or institutional level through policies, conditions or practices that disadvantage certain groups. It often manifests through unconscious bias or prejudice.

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## INDICATORS OF RACISM IN SCHOOLS

Recognising racism in schools may be difficult, as racism manifests itself in a range of ways, some more clearly discernible than others. Some indicators of racism include the following:

- hostility or lack of co-operation between groups
- appearance of racist graffiti
- promotion of racist propaganda
- display of racist behaviour including comments, ridicule or abuse, cyber-racism as well as physical harassment and assault
- existence of discriminatory practices including: low expectations for some groups of students, non-inclusive policies, curriculum and pedagogy, and denying certain groups access to a wide curriculum.

## ANTI-RACISM CONTACT OFFICER

The principal is required to nominate a member of the teaching staff to be the school's ARCO. The ARCO should be an experienced teacher who:

- has good communication and mediation skills
- is trusted by parents, teachers and students
- does not have an advocacy role in the school
- is willing to further develop their understanding of racism
- is a full-time experienced member of staff.

## THE ROLE OF THE ARCO

The ARCO role has three major aspects:

### 1. Complaints support role

Complaints of racism may be made to any member of staff including the ARCO. If a complaint of racism is made to the school principal, executive member or any other member of staff, the complainant is encouraged to discuss the matter with the ARCO, or advised that the ARCO can assist. The ARCO supports the handling of complaints of racism in a number of ways by:

- managing complaints of racism made by students against other students in accordance with the Behaviour Code for Students and the school's discipline and wellbeing procedures
- referring complaints of racism made by staff and community members to appropriate executive staff members
- providing advice on the complaints handling process to students, staff and community members
- supporting the complainant during the complaints handling process
- providing advice to the principal and/or nominated complaints manager. All complaints of racism are managed by the ARCO according to the Complaints Handling Policy and procedures. On receiving a complaint the ARCO, in certain circumstances, may attempt to negotiate a resolution. This is only when the complaint does not involve a staff member or members of the community. For complaints of racism involving staff members or members of the community, the ARCO provides advice to the complainant on the complaints handling procedures and supports the complainant in the process. The ARCO may be asked to assist in seeking a resolution using the appropriate procedure but it is not the ARCO's role to lead the process. The principal will nominate a complaints manager to lead the process for resolving the complaint.

## 2. Educational role

The ARCO assists the principal to: Anti-racism education | Advice FOR schools | May 2017 ensure the school community knows who the ARCO is and what the ARCO role involves. Posters promoting awareness of the role of the ARCO are available on the Department's website.

- promote anti-racism education in the school
- develop anti-racism education strategies in school planning
- ensure that staff are aware of relevant policies including the Anti-Racism Policy; the Multicultural Education Policy; the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy; the Complaints Handling Policy and complaints procedures as they relate to complaints about racism the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated Partnership Agreement and The Wellbeing Framework for Schools.

## 3. Monitoring role

The ARCO assists the principal to:

- maintain records of complaints and allegations concerning racism
- decide what data regarding complaints about racism should be collected
- identify significant statistical trends in relation to complaints about racism
- implement actions arising from complaints of racism.

## AUDIENCE AND APPLICABILITY

The policy applies to all staff employed at Oak Flats Public School It also applies to students who attend oak Flats Public School and has implications for the whole school community.

## CONTEXT

The NSW Anti-Discrimination Act (1977) along with the Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act (1975) make racial discrimination and vilification illegal in New South Wales. These Acts provide the legislative context and foundation for the *Anti-Racism Policy* of the NSW Department of Education and Training.

The Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act (2000), the NSW Government's Aboriginal Affairs Plan 2003-2010: Two Ways Together, the Ministerial Statement, Values in NSW Public Schools (2004), as well as the Department's Aboriginal Education Policy (1996), Cultural Diversity and Community Relations Policy (2005) and Code of Conduct (2004) provide related policy requirements that complement implementation of the *Anti- Racism Policy*.

Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations (2001) establishes the standard approach to resolving suggestions, complaints and allegations about racism that is required to be used in all learning and working environments of the Department of Education and Training.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS

The Principal and staff of Oak Flats Public School are responsible for ensuring the implementation and monitoring of the policy so that racism does not occur at Oak Flats Public School or in its policies, practices and structures.

The school is responsible for examining practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy.

The school is responsible for implementation of the policy at Oak Flats Public School including strategies for anti-racism education in regional plans and providing training for Anti- Racism Contact Officers.

Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy, nominating an Anti-Racism Contact Officer and including anti-racism education strategies in school plans.

All staff at Oak Flats Public School are responsible for monitoring their own behaviour to ensure that it does not result in anyone experiencing racism.

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact on individuals and the broader community.

### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The school will report progress in implementing the *Anti-Racism Policy* through the schools webpage and annual school report

The Department of Education and Training will report progress in implementing the *Anti-Racism Policy* through the Department's *Annual Report*.

Equity Programs and Distance Education Directorate, through the Multicultural Programs Unit, will monitor the implementation of the *Anti-Racism Policy* and report on achievement of relevant targets over time through the Department's annual *Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement (EAPS) report*.

The school will maintain records of complaints concerning racism in accordance with *Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations*.