



MOUNT HAWTHORN EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTRE

CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY

2021-2023

Policy Statement

Mount Hawthorn Education Support Centre (ESC) recognises, respects, promotes and celebrates the value of cultural diversity and will adopt and implement inclusive policies and strategies which advance cultural diversity as a positive force in the life of the school community.

Context

Mount Hawthorn ESC aspires to be a community characterized by inclusivity, understanding and empathy and ethical practice. The ESC recognizes the social and ethical dimensions of the questions it faces in teaching and learning and is guided by a fundamental concern for justice and equity, and for the dignity of all human beings.

The ESC expresses its distinctive identity by creating a welcoming community of staff and students that

- reflects its ethos
- values and celebrates the diversity of the ESC community
- expresses a commitment to access and equity
- demonstrates ethical conduct
- highlights the primary values of human respect, dignity and freedom
- appreciates the importance of cross-cultural knowledge
- demonstrates acceptance of cultural diversity
- aims to ensure that the diverse nature of Australian society is reflected in all aspects of its employment and education.

A commitment to cultural diversity embodies sensitive and ethical appreciation and recognition of cultural differences.

Policy objectives

The objectives of this policy are for the ESC, in its working, teaching, learning and community engagement to:

- recognize and value the multicultural nature of Australian society and of the ESC community
- provide a diverse, flexible and creative teaching and work environment which acknowledges, supports, values and encourages cultural diversity and assists in the development of understandings of and insights into a range of cultures
- facilitate the contribution and successful participation within the Centre and its learning activities of students and staff from diverse cultural backgrounds
- emphasise the value of cultural diversity and strengthen its commitment to cultural inclusiveness
- educate students and staff so that they are capable of responding sensitively, sympathetically and justly in any cultural context
- attempt to redress any unfair, discriminatory or illegal practices which may result or have resulted directly or indirectly from cultural difference, identity and/or context

- promote cultural activities which celebrate the diversity of its staff and students

The Centre, in its various activities, including the development and application of policies which guide its operation, will be informed by its commitment to support of and sensitivity to cultural diversity.

Policy implementation

In order to achieve the above policy objectives, the ESC will develop and adapt its policies, procedures and practices to integrate the principle of respect and support for cultural diversity. It is, however, recognized that resource constraints may affect the extent to which and/or timelines within which implementation of the strategies listed below can be achieved.

Teaching and learning

The ESC will develop strategies to fulfil its commitment to inclusive, cross-cultural perspectives in the design and delivery of curricula.

The principles of inclusive curriculum will be applied in the design and delivery of the curriculum and to teaching methodologies and methods of assessment used.

Teaching and learning activities, (including, but not limited to, curriculum design, content, delivery and assessment) will, when possible and given the limitations of our students:

assist in the transition of students facing a variety of linguistic, personal and intellectual challenges

- include cross-cultural content, value diversity, and respect and support culturally diverse approaches to learning and ways of understanding
- create an open and inclusive approach which values learning from others (particularly others from different cultural backgrounds) and respects diversity of perspectives
- be sensitive to relevant cultural protocols of subject groups, including language protocols, and generally is culturally appropriate
- be designed to engage students of diverse cultural backgrounds
- maintain a learning environment that forestalls marginalisation or isolation of students on the basis of cultural difference

The ESC will ensure that the curriculum supports a range of perspectives from groups of different cultural backgrounds, and a learning environment which is supportive of all students.

The ESC will promote the use of spoken and written language that is free from stereotyping or bias and inclusive in valuing diversity.

Professional development and learning opportunities will be structured having regard to the ESC's commitment to supporting cultural diversity.

Employment

Employment policies and procedures will, where appropriate, foster the cultural diversity of the workforce.

The ESC will conduct training and development programs of relevance to cultural diversity on the basis of need.

DECISION-MAKING

Decision-making within the ESC will, wherever reasonably practicable, be informed by input from staff and/or students from diverse backgrounds.

SCHOOL AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

The ESC will ensure that all stakeholders;

- will understand, value and have informed respect for cultural diversity in all interactions between and among students, parents/carers and staff
- are sensitive to the needs of students, parents/carers and staff whose first language is not English
- have the right, within reasonable limits, to adhere to their cultural traditions and to express their ideas and opinions, while respecting the rights of others, without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying
- will recognise that visitors to and temporary residents in Australia are entitled, subject to relevant legislative provisions, to the same consideration as Australian citizens

To the extent reasonably possible, the ESC will endeavor to make provisions;

- to assist the transition of and promote the successful adjustment of students of different cultural backgrounds to attend the ESC
- for the cultural needs of all staff and students