

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

## RATIONALE:

- The Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (1995) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of the following attributes: - age, disability, industrial activity, lawful sexual activity, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital, parental or carer status, physical features, political beliefs or activity, pregnancy, race, religious belief or activity, sex personal association (with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes) or breastfeeding.
- Further more, the Act prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, makes it unlawful to sexually harass a person at the institution (includes students), promotes equality of opportunity between persons of different sex, age, marital status, race and other specified attributes, and provides redress for those who have been subject to discrimination.
- While both men and women can experience discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation, Baden Powell College P-9 (BPC) acknowledges that several forms are experienced either solely or disproportionately by women (i.e. pregnancy, carer status, sexual harassment). BPC will work to address gender inequity as the root of these forms of discrimination.

## AIMS:

- To provide a working environment that does not tolerate unlawful discrimination and provides equal opportunity for all.
- Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 all organisations have a **positive duty** to be proactive about discrimination and take steps to prevent discriminatory practices. BPC recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and is committed to building a school culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequity.

## IMPLEMENTATION:

- Our school values diversity and provides equal opportunity for all.
- A staff member will be appointed as the Equal Opportunity representative at our school, and will be provided with professional development appropriate to the role.
- Over time, all staff will be given the opportunity to be Merit and Equity trained.

- This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Managing Diversity and Sexual Harassment policies of the school.
- The school's position as an Equal Opportunity Employer and workplace should be communicated to the wider community via the newsletter.
- The school's policies and practices will be regularly reviewed to ensure consistency with the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010).
- All staff members will be provided with a copy of this policy, and will be reminded of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010).
- Any complaints can be lodged with the Equal Opportunity representative, Principal, Regional Director, Merit Protection Boards, or Equal Opportunity Commission.
- All complaints will be investigated promptly, confidentially, and with impartiality. All complaints will be managed in a manner consistent with Department of Education and Training (DET) 'Local Complaints Resolution Procedures' handbook.
- The School Council president will be informed of all Equal Opportunity concerns, on a confidential basis.
- BPC encourages all staff and students to report actions or behaviours that contravene our values, policies and Code of Conduct, and take appropriate bystander action to intervene safely and respectfully when they see or hear about sexist language, sex discrimination, sexual harassment or a potentially violent situation within the school community.

<b>EVALUATION:</b>
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- This policy to be reviewed as part of the school's two year review cycle, individually, in teams and with the community in 2017 or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.