Preventing and addressing racism in schools

Policy Tab

This policy is for:

- Schools
- School councils

On this page you can read about:

- Policy
- Guidance
- Resources

On the last page of this document, there is a list of people you can contact to learn more.

About this **policy**

A **policy** is a set of rules that helps everyone know how things should be done.

This policy helps **government** schools stop racism.

It helps schools deal with racism and religious hate.

All Victorian government schools must use this policy.

This policy helps follow Victoria's Child Safe Standards.

Summary

All government schools in Victoria must:

- Create a safe and welcoming place for everyone.
- Work to stop racism.

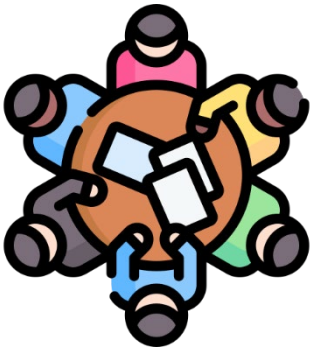
Report racism to the Department.

- Use the Child Safe Standard 1 and Child Safe Standard 5.
- Put this policy on their website.
- Tell you how to report racism to the school or the Report Racism Hotline.

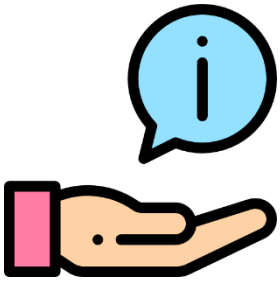
There are 3 main things all schools must do:

- Stop racism. Schools must be safe for everyone.

- Deal with racism. Schools must have clear systems to deal with racism.



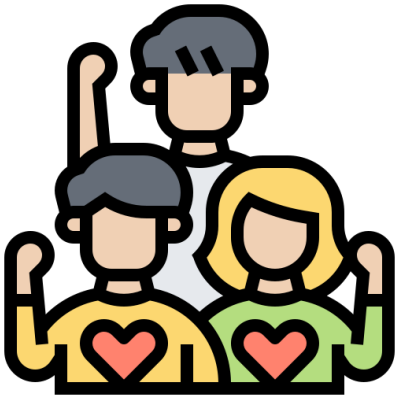
- Report racism. Schools must report racism on eduSafe Plus.



More information

How to use this policy

Everyone in government schools in Victoria must use this policy. This means staff, contractors and volunteers.



More information: Managing and Reporting School Incidents.

Staff can read more here: Equal Opportunity – Employees.

Victorian government schools do not tolerate racism

Racism harms young people's mental health and learning. I can make them feel like they do not belong.

See **Key terminology and examples of forms of racism guidance tab.** It has an explanation of racism and other words used in this policy.

First Nations students

All government schools in Victoria must be safe and free of racism for First Nations students, families and communities.

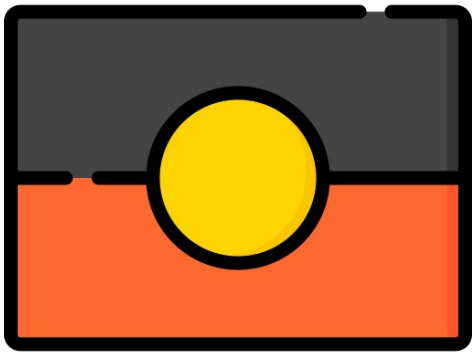
This what the Child Safe Standard 1 says.

You can read more about it in the Marrung and the Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education.

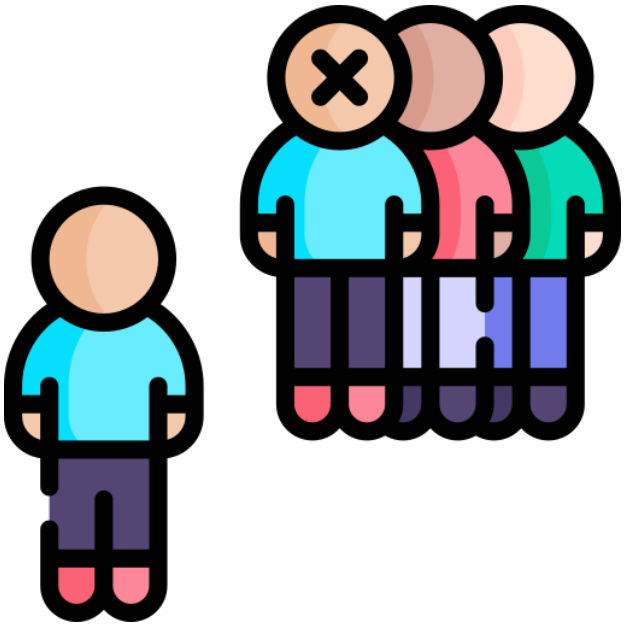
First Nations students, families and communities can experience racism in different ways.

First Nations students can have fewer chances in life if they cannot make their own choices or if we do not treat them fairly.

Racism can be made worse if we do not understand how things from the past can make people feel today. For example, taking First Nations children away from their families. This is called Stolen Generation.



Racism can make people feel left out and not safe in schools.



Students who see and feel racism more often

First Nations students, students from African and Pasifika backgrounds and students from refugee backgrounds feel racism more often than others.

Jewish and Muslim students can feel **antisemitism** and **islamophobia**.

Go to **Resources tab** for learn how to stop racism against these students.

Stop racism

Creating a safe and welcoming school

The Child Safe Standard 1 says that schools must:

- Create a safe and welcoming space for First Nations students, families and communities.'
- Take steps to stop racism.
- Create and use helpful ways to deal with racism.

The Child Safe Standard 5 says that schools must:

- Create spaces where all students feel safe and **respected**.
- Provide a safe and welcoming space for students from different backgrounds.

Go to **Preventing racism guidance tab** to learn how to be safe and welcoming.

How staff should stop and deal with racism safely

The Child Safe Standard 5 says that schools must make sure that staff and volunteers understand what students need.

They must understand how to help students that need extra support.

Schools should offer training to all staff, for example, Community Understanding and Safety Training.

Go to the **Resources tab** for more options.

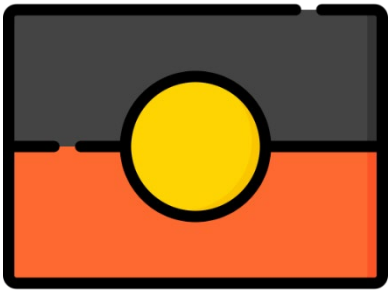
Cultural diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning

The Victorian Curriculum F-10 Version 2.0 helps to understand **cultural diversity** and **inclusion**.

Cultural diversity is when people from different cultures live together and respect each other's cultures.

Inclusion means that everyone feels like they belong.

All government schools in Victoria must teach Intercultural Capability and other programs. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.



All secondary government schools in Victoria must teach Holocaust Education, which is part of the History Curriculum.

Schools must be careful about images they use. This is explained in the Teaching and Learning Resources – Selecting Appropriate Materials policy.

Schools must have learning materials that reflect their school community.

Go to the **Preventing racism guidance tab** or **Resources tab** for more information.

Dealing with racism

The Managing and Reporting School Incidents policy says that schools must deal with racism.

Schools might need to help students who feel and see racism happening outside of school.

Schools should:

- Tell the student or parent that the school believes them.
- Think about how the student feels.

- Find family or community members that the student trusts. This is very important for First Nations students.
- Use teaching and healing methods to help fix the problems between the students, families, staff and communities.
- Make sure that the students and their families or carers know how the school will deal with the situation.
- Follow privacy rules.

Go to **Responding to and reporting racism guidance tab** for more information. It has guides and templates.

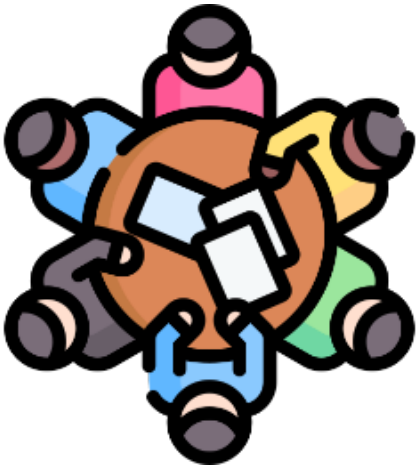
Report racism

Report racism in eduSafe Plus or to the Incident Support and Operations Centre

The Managing and Reporting School Incidents policy says that schools must report racism and religious attacks in eduSafe Plus.

- The school should call the Incident Support and Operations Centre on 1800 126 126.

- Schools must tell everyone what was done about it.



- Privacy rules must be followed.

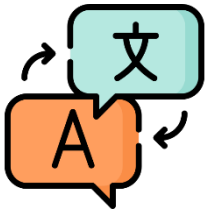
Telling you about this policy

Schools must:

- Tell you about the policy.
- Tell you what to do if have felt or seen racism at school.
- Have information about how to report racism to the school or the Report Racism Hotline.

Go to Communicating and addressing racism in school policy for what your website should say.

Schools should think about what their community needs so everyone can understand it.



Some people need this policy in their own language. Other people may need to talk about it more in a group.

You can find translations of this policy and a simple English version in the Resources tab.

Schools must confirm that they follow Child Safe Standards in their Annual Report to the School Community.

They can use this report to show what they are doing to make their school safer for all cultures and to stop racism.

Other policies

- Behaviour – Students
- Bullying Prevention and Response
- Child Safe Standards
- Duty of Care
- EAL Support and Funding
- Equal Opportunity – Employees
- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights – Students
- Holocaust Education – Delivery Requirements
- Interpreting and Translation Services
- Koorie Education – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education
- Managing and Reporting School Incidents (Including Emergencies)
- Mental Health in Schools
- Mental Health Fund and Menu
- Respectful Behaviours within the School Community
- Respectful Workplaces
- School Community Safety Orders
- Student Engagement
- Teaching and Learning Resources – Selecting Appropriate Materials
- Complaints Resolution
- Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance in the Teaching Service

Laws about racism and discrimination

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

Contacts

To report racism you contact the school or:

- Report Racism Hotline
- Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
- Australian Human Rights Commission

For support with racism:

- First Nations students, staff or families can contact Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI)
- Jewish students, staff or families can contact the Jewish Community Council of Victoria
- Muslim students, staff or families can contact the Islamic Council of Victoria.

For support with this policy, you can email the Multicultural and Refugee Supports Unit at multicultural.education@education.vic.gov.au).