

# Gender Affirmation Policy

## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Melton Secondary College provides consistent and coordinated support to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, and Queer and questioning (LGBTIQ) students.

This policy is informed by the [LGBTQI Student Support Policy from the Victorian Department of Education and Training](#) and the [Safe School Coalition guide to support a student to affirm or transition gender identity at school](#)

## 2.0 Guiding Principles

Melton Secondary College:

- Recognises that it is unlawful under state and federal laws to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.
- Takes reasonable steps to eliminate discrimination based on sex, gender, and sexuality.
- Ensures that our policies, practices, and activities are inclusive and takes positive action to eliminate discrimination or harassment of students based on their sex, gender, or sexuality.
- Supports students affirming their gender identity to prepare and implement a student support plan.

This policy is a guide to supporting a student to affirm or transition gender identity at Melton Secondary College.

## 3.0 Implementation

### Gender affirmation student support plans

Melton Secondary College will work with students affirming their gender identity to prepare and implement a student support plan.

The plan should be developed in consultation with the student and their parents or carers, where possible, and should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it reflects the needs of the student at the different stages of their transition, and at the different stages of their education.

It is important that the student is at the centre of creating their own support plan and consulted in all decision making. In preparing the plan, the school should consider the following:

- Catering to the student's affirmed gender identity.
- That the support plan reflects this policy.
- Adopting a common-sense approach.
- Developing the support plan over staggered sessions to allow time for trialling and opportunities for adjustments to occur.
- The best timing to undertake a gender affirmation process, such as term break.
- Maintaining appropriate privacy and confidentiality – consider the privacy of the student, and only share information to those who have an appropriate reason to know. In consultation with the student and family, determine whether key staff members need to be advised in order to effectively support or teach the student.
- The referencing of and recording of students' affirmed name, gender identity, and pronouns (he, she, they etc)

- Use of toilets, showers and change rooms that meet the needs of the student. This should be based on the student's gender identity and whichever facilities they will feel most comfortable using. Students without a disability should not be required to use disabled toilets or facilities.
- The appropriate uniform that reflects the gender identity of the student and meets the school's dress or uniform code.
- Developing a communications plan that includes what information staff members and other students need to know to best support the student.
- Make plans to address potential community concerns, ensuring students' right to privacy is maintained.
- Providing support to staff through professional learning and briefings on the arrangements for the student where appropriate.
- Updating school policies to include support for transgender and gender diverse students and responses to transphobic bullying.
- Consider scheduling regular Student Support Groups to support, guide and monitor the student's progress.

Note: a letter from a gender identity specialist may be requested by the school to support them in developing the plan. This letter is not a conditional requirement for the school in providing support to the student, but it may help to ensure that schools can adequately discharge their duty of care to a student by planning appropriately. Gender identity specialists are available through the Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Medical Centre.

### **Parental Consent**

There may be circumstances in which students wish or need to undertake gender transition without the consent of their parent/s or carer/s, and/or without consulting medical practitioners.

If no agreement can be reached between the student and the parent/s regarding the student's gender identity, or if the parent/s will not consent to the contents of a student support plan, it will be necessary for the school to consider whether the student is a mature minor.

If a student is considered a mature minor, they can make decisions for themselves without parental consent and should be affirmed in their gender identity at school without a family representative/carer participating in formulating the school management plan.

Department policy addresses situations in which students, though under the age of 18 years, may be sufficiently mature to make their own decisions. [Mature Minors and Decision Making](#)

### **Student Led Process**

The person who understands most about their gender transition or affirmation is the student themselves. It is crucial to the success of this process that they are included in every decision made and every action taken.

Consideration should be given to the age and maturity of the student and whether it would be appropriate to involve the students' parents/s or carers/s in each decision. Assess the support given by a student's family members or carers, and think through the needs of any siblings, especially those attending the same school. If a student does not have family or carer support for the process, a decision to proceed should be made based on the school's duty of care for the student's wellbeing and their level of maturity to make decisions about their needs. It may be possible to consider a student a mature minor and able to make decisions without parental consent.

- A Student Support Group meeting should occur to establish a support plan for a student affirming or transitioning their gender.

The **Gender Affirmation Student Support Plan (Appendix A)** should be established with the support team and led by the student. This plan should be reviewed regularly.

#### 4.0 Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in four years.

#### 5.0 References

[Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

[Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)

[Mature Minors Policy](#)

[Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

[LGBTQI Student Support Policy from the Victorian Department of Education and Training](#)

[Safe School Coalition guide to support a student to affirm or transition gender identity at school](#)

[Mature Minors and Decision Making](#)

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	2022
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<b>Approval required</b>	No
<b>Consultation required</b>	Not required
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## Appendix A – Melton Secondary College – Gender Affirmation Student Support Plan

### 1. Ensure student privacy.

It is important to maintain appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality. There is no need for everyone in the school to know whether a student is transgender or gender diverse.

The student should make decisions about what information is shared, with whom and when. All decisions about sharing information should be made with their explicit consent (or parental consent for students unable to give explicit consent).

**What information should be shared? (Student should input)**

**Who needs to know?**

### 2. Establish a support team.

Work with the student to identify a core group of staff, family members or carers to be involved in planning discussions and to act as a support team throughout the process.

Family Member

Teacher

Wellbeing

Leadership

### 3. Establish timeframes.

Work with the student to settle on a suitable date for the various changes to occur.

When will the agreed changes occur? Eg beginning of a term or year?

### 4. Use correct identity, names and pronouns

Transitions may involve the use of a new name and pronouns (he, she, they, etc.) and it is crucial that the whole school make these changes in a consistent way. These changes should be recorded in the written management plan and the new name and gender updated on Compass prior to the transition date

Affirmed name:

Pronouns:

**Consider the following**

**5. Toilets and changing rooms**

Describe the toilet, changing room and swimming facilities preferred:

**6. School uniforms and dress codes**

Describe the appropriate uniform that matches the gender identity.

Are there any special uniform provisions required?

**7. School sports and physical education**

Describe the level of participation in school sports and physical education that is preferable and on what terms?

**8. School camps and events**

List any approaching school camps or events that may require alternative arrangements. What plans can we put in place?

**9. School documents and records**

Has Compass/Cases21 been updated to reflect gender affirmed name and pronouns?

Yes

No (date this will occur    /    /20

## Ongoing considerations for the Melton Secondary College community

### 10. Support school staff

Regular opportunities to educate staff through professional learning and provide briefings on the arrangements for students will occur as led by the relevant Sub-School Principal, Director of Curriculum, Enrichment and Wellbeing, Wellbeing staff or the Inclusion Leader.

### 11. Support other students

Preparation and education of other students through discussions with those who may have known the student prior to transition should occur in a coordinated way. This will be coordinated by the relevant Sub-School Principal, Director of Curriculum, Enrichment and Wellbeing, Wellbeing Staff or the Inclusion Leader. STARR connect teachers may be involved and asked to run sessions with their class to support gender affirming or transitioning students. These discussions should be based on the decisions of the student and can involve year level groups, house groups, form groups, student leadership teams, or groups of individuals selected by the student.

### 12. Prepare for community responses

The school leadership team is prepared to respond to questions or concerns from parents or members of the broader school community. The school leadership will affirm the facts of the situation and policy that applies while maintaining the confidentiality of the student and their family.

### 13. Updated school policies

School policies are regularly reviewed to include support for gender diverse and transgender students. The experiences of supporting individual students will inform future provisions made available to other transgender or gender diverse students.

#### Relevant school policies:

[Mature Minors Policy](#)

[Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

[Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)

[Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

### 14. Create a safety plan

Create a safety plan that identifies supports that are currently in place and clear processes to deal with any discriminatory or bullying behaviour that a student may experience.

### 15. Take a whole school approach to including gender diversity, intersex, and sexual diversity