



PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING RACISM IN SCHOOLS POLICY

Policy 2025-2027



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Roxburgh College on 9930 8100

Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to support our school to strengthen our culture and practice to prevent and address racism, religious intolerance and racial and religious vilification.

This policy supports compliance with Victoria's [Child Safe Standards](#).

Summary:

In line with [Child Safe Standard 1](#) and [Child Safe Standard 5](#), Roxburgh College will actively prevent and respond to racism, and report incidents to the department. This policy covers 3 key actions:

- [Preventing racism](#): we will maintain a culturally safe and inclusive environments
- [Responding to racism](#): we have clear, timely, safe and inclusive processes to respond to incidents of racism
- [Reporting racism](#): we will report incidents of racism in eduSafe Plus, as per the [Managing and Reporting School Incidents \(Including Emergencies\) policy](#).

This policy is available on our website, alongside advice on how to report incidents of racism to the school and through the Report Racism hotline.

Scope:

Racism is not tolerated in Victorian government schools. Racism has significant detrimental impacts on mental health, learning and engagement, and contributes to disadvantage and isolation of young people.

The scope of this policy is primarily focused on the obligations of our school to provide culturally safe learning environments for our students and to inform our School Community of our expectations and responsibilities with respect to this matter.

Staff who have experienced racism, can refer to the [Equal Opportunity – Employees policy](#).

First Nations students

Racism experienced by First Nations students, families, carers and communities comes in a range of forms, including (but not limited to), denial of self-determination, unconscious bias, stereotyping, and derogatory language, leading to lower expectations and reduced opportunities for First Nations students. Racism is often exacerbated by cultural bias and lack of understanding about the ongoing impacts of colonisation and injustices

such as the forced removal of First Nations children from their families (known as the Stolen Generations), and this can perpetuate exclusion and culturally unsafe practices in schools.

Students who experience higher levels of racism or religious intolerance

Data shows that First Nations students, students from African and Pasifika backgrounds and students from refugee backgrounds experience racism at higher rates than their peers. Students of faith, including Jewish and Muslim students, can experience religious intolerance such as antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Preventing racism

Creating a culturally safe and inclusive environment

In line with [Child Safe Standard 1](#), Roxburgh College will:

- provide a culturally safe, nurturing and inclusive environment for First Nations children and young people, where the 3 elements of cultural safety are implemented:
 - understanding identity
 - respecting culture
 - eliminating racism and abuse
- adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- develop and implement supportive and culturally safe processes for addressing racism.

In line with [Child Safe Standard 5](#) Roxburgh College will:

- create environments where all children and young people feel welcome, their diversity is valued, and their needs are identified and are being met
- provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment for students from culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse backgrounds.

Roxburgh College understands the need for students to see and feel that their identity is reflected, understood and respected by the school.

Building staff capability to prevent and respond to racism and ensure cultural safety

[Child Safe Standard 5](#) requires schools to make sure that staff and volunteers understand the diverse circumstances of students and how to provide support to vulnerable students.

Roxburgh College will support this standard by providing opportunities for staff to undertake training on cultural competency, cultural safety, unconscious bias, or inclusive education practices.

Promoting cultural diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 will assist in strengthening understanding of cultural diversity and inclusion. The Curriculum at Roxburgh College will be aligned with [Intercultural Capability](#) and other cross-curriculum priorities, including [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures](#) and [Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia](#), and [Holocaust Education](#).

Our Curriculum will also avoid using culturally insensitive imagery, including unconscious bias in images or language and try to ensure that teaching and learning materials and resources reflect the diversity of our school community.

Responding to racism

Roxburgh College will respond to all reported incidents of racism that occur in school. We are committed to providing support and implement safety measures for students affected by racism incidents occurring outside of school, if those incidents are impacting students at school.

To implement timely, proportionate, safe, and inclusive responses, Roxburgh College will:

- reassure the student (or parent) that the school believes their report and that it will be taken seriously
- consider the impact on the student, which may be different than the intent of the student who engaged in racism
- identify family or community members that the student trusts and who may be able to support the response process. This is particularly important for First Nations students to promote self-determination
- use educative and restorative approaches with the aim of restoring the relationships between the students, families, carers, staff and communities involved
- ensure affected students and their families or carers are informed of the school response, in line with privacy requirements.

Reporting racism

Roxburgh College will Report racist incidents in eduSafe Plus or, if required to the Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC) on 1800 126 126

Roxburgh College will ensure that everyone involved in the incident is informed of the school's response to the incident, while maintaining privacy requirements.

Preventing racism

Preventing and responding to racism or religious intolerance in schools is everyone's responsibility.

In line with our legal and regulatory obligations, Roxburgh College will undertake the following actions:

- Build staff knowledge and capacity, eg staff completing the [Anti-Racism e-learning module](#)
- Use data to identify, prevent and address racism, eg AtoSS data, Parent Survey
- Use student demographic information to implement targeted programs, eg Panorama dashboard
- Understand and address engagement barriers
- Use student voice, agency and leadership when reviewing school procedures and practices
- Value and promote workforce diversity
- Communicate zero tolerance of racism
- Celebrate diversity

Responding to and reporting racism

Roxburgh College encourages students, families and carers to report racism

To enhance a safe, inclusive and welcoming school environment, the school will implement clear and supportive processes for responding to, and reporting incidents of racism and religious intolerance, this includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- Encourage staff, students, families, carers and communities to report incidents of racism or religious intolerance, and regularly promote reporting pathways
- Clearly communicate the responding and reporting process to students, families, carers and communities
- Assure staff, students, families, carers and communities of the school's support, that reports will be taken seriously, and updates on the school's response will be provided.
- Communicate to staff, students and families and carers that if they are uncomfortable reporting incidents of racism or religious intolerance to the school, or are dissatisfied with the school's response, they can report the incident through the [Report Racism hotline](#):
 - staff, students, families and carers can report their own experience
 - families and carers can report on behalf of the student.
- Staff, students, families and carers can also make a complaint to the [Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#), the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#), the [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. \(VAEAI\)](#) or [Islamic Council of Victoria \(ICV\)](#)

Safely and inclusively respond to and report incidents of racism

In line with the Department's policy, Roxburgh College will manage and respond to all reported incidents of racism that occur in school. If required, the school will offer support and implement safety measures for students affected by racism incidents occurring outside of school, if those incidents are impacting students at school.

Roxburgh College will respond with the following actions:

1. Identify the incident and immediate response

Assess and ensure safety

- Be student focused. Reassure the student (or parent/carer) that the school believes their report and that it will be taken seriously. Focus on the impact on the student, which may be different than the intent of the person who displayed the racism.
- Respond promptly. Remove the student from immediate risk or harm, such as separating them from the person who displayed the racism or removing any offensive images or messages (take a photo for records before removing).
- Be mindful that incidents of racism can also be traumatic for witnesses and those who are listening and who have lived experience of racism.
- Ensure any questions or conversations have a calm and supportive tone to minimise students feeling interrogated.
- Engage wellbeing support if required

Engage trusted parties and safely record evidence

- Involve people trusted by the student to foster safety and promote culturally appropriate responses. This might include a trusted staff member, family and/or community member.

- Offer interpreting services if required for communication.
- Keep a safe and accurate record of the incident and responses, ensuring privacy is maintained.

2. Report the incident

- Report incidents of racism in either eduSafe Plus or by calling the Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC – [1800 126 126](tel:1800126126)).
- Use the [Managing Incidents in My School guide \(staff login required\)](#) to determine the severity of the incident.

3. Ongoing support and recovery

- Work with the wellbeing and year level coordinators, teachers and relevant staff (such as Multicultural Education Aides and Koorie Engagement Support Officers) to monitor short to long term mental health needs of all involved, including victims, witnesses and those who displayed the racism.
- Engage regional or external support services if required. For example, [Koorie Engagement Support Officer](#), [Health, Wellbeing Key Contact](#) or [Student Support Services Key Contact](#).
- Use educative approaches to help all involved understand the impact of their actions.
- Use [Trauma-informed approaches](#) and/or [Restorative practice](#) to work towards repairing relationships, support de-escalation, and promote trust.
- If appropriate, consider disciplinary action for the person who displayed the racism, such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or other measures consistent with the department's [Behaviour – Students policy](#) and our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy. Suspension will be considered when it is consistent with the department's [Suspensions policy](#).
- If the incident occurs in the classroom, address the issue with the classroom group. Reinforce expectations of mutual respect and explain why certain behaviours are racist. Refer to [Key terminology and examples of forms of racism](#) to support identifying, preventing and addressing racism.
- Meet with students, families and carers to set clear expectations for future interactions.
- Update staff on the incident and actions to be taken and set out expectations for the management of any future incidents.
- In cases where racism affects the broader school community, which may be related to tensions between cultural groups, remind families, carers and communities of the school's values of cultural inclusion and anti-racism. Encourage families, carers and communities to reinforce the school's values at home, reinforce reporting processes (for example, promote the availability of the [Report Racism hotline](#)) and highlight any relevant available support services.
- Communicate and remind families and carers about this policy

4. Inform affected parties of the response and outcome

- Keep affected parties informed throughout the response and reporting process, while recognising that some information will need to be kept confidential.
- Communicating with affected parties will reassure them that the school responded and will give confidence in the importance of reporting racism.

5. Incident review and closure

- Take time after an incident response to debrief and reflect on it in leadership or staff meetings, identify learnings, and discuss improvements that should be made to school policies, processes and practices to prevent similar incidents.

6. Analyse and learn

- Regularly review racism incident reports to identify learnings and help monitor:
 - number and type of racism incidents
 - cohorts impacted
 - trends and challenges to inform system-level preventative measures and supports
 - impact and effectiveness of existing anti-racism efforts
 - school needs to access regional assistance and external supports.
- Identify relevant professional learning for staff or education programs for students to prevent racism.
- Consider how anti-racism could be embedded in the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

Terminology

Different forms of racism include:

- **interpersonal racism** – racism between individuals (students, staff, families, carers and members of the school community). This can occur in person or online
- **systemic racism** – structures, systems, policies, processes and practices that are inherently biased
- **unconscious bias** – a common type of racism where learned assumptions, beliefs or attitudes about people or groups of people are held without awareness
- **racial or religious vilification** – a behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule for a person or group of people, because of their race or religion
- **racist bullying** – repeated, deliberate and ongoing behaviour that belittles, mocks, intimidates, vilifies or shames someone because of their physical appearance, ethnic background, religious or cultural practices, and/or the way they talk or dress
- **cultural tokenism** – occurs when aspects of cultures are acknowledged superficially or because we have to. Even when well-intentioned, cultural tokenism oversimplifies cultural differences and at its worst can exacerbate existing stereotypes and prejudices about certain cultural groups
- **colourism** – the dislike, unfair treatment or assumptions made about a person or group of people because of the tone of their skin. Colourism can include prejudice against people with darker or lighter skin tones. For example, this is particularly important for First Nations students who may be told they are not Aboriginal because they have fair skin

Communication:

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- This policy will be available on the school's website.
- Notification of this policy is also included in our school newsletter
- A translated version will be made available as soon as possible

Relevant legislation:

- [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, students, families and carers can contact their school or:

- [Report Racism hotline](#)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association \(VAEAI\)](#)
- [Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

For additional support following an incident of racism:

- First Nations students, staff or families can contact [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association \(VAEAI\)](#)
- 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 the Preventing and Addressing Racism in Schools policy, schools, areas and regions may direct queries to the Multicultural and Refugee Supports Unit
(email: multicultural.education@education.vic.gov.au).

Policy Review and Approval:

Policy last reviewed	August 2025
Approved by	Principal and School Council
Next scheduled review date	August 2027