



## Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### 1. Purpose

SIS is committed to providing a friendly and inclusive environment for students in which their diversity and uniqueness is welcomed, respected, and valued.

In partnership with Member School's, SIS will ensure that opportunities are provided for all students to play sports competitively and with dignity. SIS will take positive action to eliminate discrimination or harassment of students for any reason.

SIS will support all concerned to build confidence and capacity for participation in sports, in line with the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) and the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth).

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Member School staff, volunteers, contractors, families, and students.

This Policy is made available via our public website.

### 3. Racism

Racism, as defined by the Australia Human Rights Commission, is *"the process in which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race"* and can be a form of child abuse.

SIS has a zero-tolerance policy for racism.

Complaints about racism are taken seriously and we ensure that any instances of racism in the SIS environment are addressed with appropriate consequences, which may include suspension from participation in an SIS event or events.

### 4. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Students

SIS acknowledge that the risk of child abuse and other harm is heightened for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students when they do not feel culturally safe.

It is SIS policy that the diverse and unique identities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are respected and valued and that we provide a culturally safe environment for them to thrive.

SIS recognises and engages in key actions, activities, and events that acknowledge the history, and celebrate the culture of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders including, but not limited to:

- Acknowledgement of Country and key SIS Events.
- Acknowledgement of Country included on the SIS Website.
- Aboriginal Flag displayed at Member Schools.
- Aboriginal Flag displayed on the SIS Website.
- Participation in National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week and Reconciliation Week (when it falls within the sporting calendar).
- Child Safety is a standing agenda item for the SIS Committee to continuously review and improve its processes, including the engagement of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Students.

### 5. Students with a Disability

SIS is committed to embedding inclusivity in all SIS events. Member Schools are required, under both State and Commonwealth Laws, to make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate

students with a disability enrolled at their school. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students to participate in education and training on the same basis as their peers without a disability.

SIS supports each Member School to ensure that they fulfil their obligations under State and Commonwealth Laws and are committed to making SIS Events as inclusive as possible, however, we acknowledge that reasonable adjustments relate solely to the school in which the student is enrolled.

SIS will work with Member Schools to ensure SIS events are as accessible to all students as Member Schools are able to facilitate. Where required an SIS event may be scheduled at a Member School solely based on their ability to provide an inclusive environment.

## **6. Gender Identity**

SIS Member Schools must support and respect a student's choice to identify as their desired gender when this does not align with their assigned sex at birth. SIS, in consultation with Member Schools, will work to provide students with the opportunity to safely participate in a team of their desired gender. SIS will work with Member Schools & Students on a case-by-case basis to ensure that decisions regarding a student's participation is reflective of their individual identity.

Discrimination based on intersex status or gender identity will not be tolerated. SIS expects that all Member School staff, volunteers and contractors will act on any such incidents of discrimination.

### **3.1. Definitions**

**"Gender Identity"** is broadly defined as meaning 'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's assigned sex at birth'.

Source: *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

**"Intersex Status"** is defined as *'the status of having physical, hormonal or genetic features that are:*

1. *neither wholly female nor wholly male; or*
2. *a combination of female and male; or*
3. *neither female or male.'*

Source: *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth).

### **3.2. Facilities Use**

Toilets, showers and change rooms are specific to each Member School and Member School's should consult with each other or with the SIS Committee where specific concerns and considerations regarding facilities use must be addressed.

The arrangement for use of these facilities should be made in consultation with the student and documented in their Member School Management Plan (or equivalent).

## **7. LGBTQIA+ Students**

LGBTQIA+ is an evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and allies.

SIS supports the inclusion of all students. Discrimination based on sexual orientation will not be tolerated. SIS expects that all Member School staff, volunteers and contractors will act on any such incidents of discrimination.

## **8. Participation in Opposite Gender Team**

If SIS does not offer a sport in a student's identified gender, or if a Member School is unable to field a team that would offer a student the opportunity to play a sport of their choice in their gender, a student may request to play in the opposite gender, subject to the following guidelines:

- A supporting document must be provided which clearly states the background & reasons for the request.
- The Member School must ensure the student has adequate skill, development, strength, stamina, and physique to compete safely, comparably & fairly in the competition.
- The Member School must receive written parent or carer consent of the identified student. This consent must be provided to the SIS Committee.
- The Member School must consider the safety of all competitors.

All applications will be reviewed by the SIS Committee and the Member School will be advised of the decision. The SIS Committee will provide a decision within 14 days of an application being received.

## **9. Confidentiality**

SIS acknowledges that the attributes referred to in this policy are matters in which confidentiality is crucial and as such information will only be provided on an as-needed basis.

Where confidentiality is breached SIS will determine with the relevant Member School necessary consequences.

## **10. Consultation**

SIS consults with all Member Schools in the development of Policies and Procedures and welcomes feedback from students, parents or carers, or the wider SIS community.

## **11. Review**

This policy is to be reviewed, approved, and endorsed every two years, as a minimum, by the SIS Committee.

Last Review: July 2023.

Next Review: July 2025.