

Policy number	G013	Last Approved by Executive	September 2021
Drafted by	Mary-Anne Revell	Scheduled review date	August 2024
Responsible person	Steven Nicholas		

**1. Rationale**

Olivet Christian College aims to provide a welcoming, supportive, and emotionally and physically secure learning and working environment for every member of the school community.

Olivet Christian College recognises and values the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities, and life experience of the whole school community.

**2. Our commitments**

Olivet Christian College aims to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential. This school is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of our whole school community.

That is why discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated at Olivet Christian College under any circumstances.

Olivet Christian College is committed to ensuring that the working environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation.

This school acknowledges that in society some people are treated unfairly or unfavourably because of irrelevant personal characteristics such as their gender or race.

This school supports the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*. The Act states that it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone, including school students and staff, because of their actual or assumed:

- age
- breastfeeding
- carer status
- disability/impairment
- gender identity
- industrial activity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- gender
- sexual orientation
- an expunged homosexual conviction
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

No member of the school community will be treated less favourably because they possess any of these personal characteristics nor will such characteristics affect access to benefits and services the school provides.

On behalf of the whole school community, the principal, the staff, and the Executive support this policy and the principles and practice of equal opportunity, inclusion, and respect for diversity that it articulates.

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<sup>1</sup> *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* s 6.

### 3. *Discrimination is unacceptable at Olivet Christian College*

Discrimination may be direct or indirect – both are unlawful.

3.1.1 **Direct discrimination** means treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of one of the personal characteristics listed above or because of their association with someone identified with one of those characteristics.

3.1.2 **Indirect discrimination** happens when a rule, policy or requirement unnecessarily or unreasonably disadvantages a group of people because of a protected personal characteristic they share.

**Example:** Imposing an unreasonable requirement that all students take notes from the whiteboard without assistance may unreasonably disadvantage a student with a vision impairment.

### 4. *Harassment is unacceptable at Olivet Christian College*

**Harassment** is behaviour (through words or actions) based on the personal characteristics listed above that is unwanted, unasked for, unreturned and likely to make school an unfriendly or uncomfortable place by:

- humiliating (putting someone down)
- seriously embarrassing
- offending (hurting someone's feelings) or
- intimidating (threatening someone so they behave in a certain way).

**Examples:** name calling, stereotyping jokes and offensive comments.

4.1.1 **Sexual harassment** is an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sex or any other sexual behaviour that a reasonable person would know or expect would offend, humiliate, seriously embarrass, or humiliate another.

**Examples:** unwanted touching, unwelcome sexual innuendo, or jokes, displaying sexually explicit material (posters, emails, internet sites).

### 5. *Racial and religious vilification is unacceptable at Olivet Christian College*

**Vilification** is behaviour (through words or actions) that incites hatred, contempt, or ridicule of another person because of their race or religious belief.

**Examples:** public threats of harm, insults, ridicule.

### 6. *Bullying is unacceptable at Olivet Christian College*

**Bullying** is unreasonable behaviour that is intimidating, threatening or humiliating and repeated over time or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect, and creates an unfriendly, threatening or offensive environment.

**Examples:** taking or damaging other people's property, excluding or isolating someone, subjecting someone to homophobic abuse, deliberately withholding information so as to affect their work performance, threatening not to renew an employment contract.

### 7. *Victimising someone who makes an EO complaint is unacceptable at Olivet Christian College school*

Victimisation means treating someone unfairly or otherwise disadvantaging them because they have made an EO complaint or might do so in the future.

7.1.1 Olivet Christian College will take action to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and to promote a safe and inclusive school.

7.1.2 Olivet Christian College will take immediate and appropriate action to address and resolve EO issues and complaints.

## 8. *Who and what this policy covers:*

- 8.1.1 This policy covers the whole school community, including staff, students, parents, school council members, contractors, and volunteers.
- 8.1.2 This policy applies to:
- education (e.g. teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
  - the provision of goods and services (e.g. extracurricular activities, camps, parent–teacher interviews, access to facilities)
  - school sport
  - employment at the school (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions, access to benefits such as training, promotion, and leave).

## 9. *Rights and Responsibilities*

- 9.1.1 Under this policy, every member of the [name] school has the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation. Along with this right comes the responsibility to respect the rights of others by behaving according to this policy.
- 9.1.2 The principal of [name] school is accountable for implementation of this policy.
- 9.1.3 The principal of [name] school may appoint an EO and Anti-Harassment Coordinator to support implementation of this policy.
- 9.1.4 This policy will be reviewed regularly by the principal and his delegate and ratified by the Executive.

## 10. *Complaint's procedures*

- 10.1 Olivet Christian College encourages all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school.
- 10.2 All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly, and consistently, and resolved as speedily as possible.
- 10.3 Any member of the school community who raises an issue of discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification in good faith will not be victimised or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged. All complaints of victimisation will be taken seriously, investigated, and acted upon as quickly as possible.
- 10.4 Every student and staff member at Olivet Christian College should feel welcome, supported and emotionally and physically secure at school. The wellbeing of all students and staff is a priority for Olivet Christian College. We understand that you cannot achieve your potential if someone is treating you unfairly, discriminating against you, vilifying, harassing, or victimising you.
- 10.5 Complaint's procedures exist to provide an avenue to address unacceptable behaviour. Complaint's procedures are designed to explain what to do if you believe you have been discriminated against, harassed, sexually harassed, bullied, vilified, or victimised as explained earlier in this policy and your complaint is about your education or employment at Olivet Christian College, or goods, services or sport provided by the school.

- 10.6 **If you are a member of staff**, please refer to the Complaints and Grievances Policy for managing complaints. These guidelines are available in the office with all policies or can be emailed by request.
- 10.7 **If you are a parent or guardian**, please refer to the College *Parent Complaints* guidelines at the office.
- 10.8 **If you are a student**, you have the right to be part of a safe and inclusive school that is free of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation. This includes making you feel bad because of your:
- gender
  - race
  - sexual orientation
  - physical features
  - religious belief or activity
  - carer status
  - disability/impairment
  - gender identity
  - lawful sexual activity
  - political belief or activity
  - pregnancy
  - personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics, or
  - any of the other characteristics listed in 2 above.
- 10.9 If you believe someone is discriminating, harassing, bullying, vilifying, or victimising you and it is safe for you to do so, tell the other person to stop their behaviour. Let them know that their behaviour offends you. They may not realise this.
- 10.10 If the behaviour does not stop or you are not sure what to do, report it to a trusted adult, such as a teacher or the principal. Remember, you are not alone. If you have a problem or complaint, talking to someone, especially your parents, can help. If you do not want to talk to anyone about it, you can find more information at the Kids Help Line, telephone 1800 55 1800.
- 10.11 Olivet Christian College will treat all reports of misconduct fairly, confidentially, and quickly. Only people directly involved in the issue or complaint will be told about it. Each complaint will be investigated to work out whether it is more likely the behaviour happened than not and, if so, how serious it is. Appropriate action to resolve the problem will be taken.
- 10.12 The principal (or someone else they appoint) has responsibility for investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation.
- 10.13 Consequences: If proven, the consequences of such behaviour may include counselling, the removal of privileges, a parental interview, suspension, or expulsion. Olivet Christian College will arrange counselling and support, where appropriate or where requested, for any student who has experienced bullying or harassment. Counselling may also be provided for a person who has bullied or harassed another.
- 10.14 The school may also need to discuss the incident with parents.
- 10.15 Olivet Christian College will monitor how the complaint was resolved and the wellbeing of those involved. Further action will be taken if the problem behaviour continues.

- 10.16 Olivet Christian College encourages all members of the school community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through the school if possible. It is also your right to seek help from outside the school. For example, you can contact the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission for information or advice, or to make a complaint.
- 10.17 Where to obtain help and advice
- The Principal, Steven Nicholas. Class Teacher.
  - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
  - If you have attempted to speak to staff at the College and have not gained a satisfactory response, then contact the Executive Chairman, Jim Box

### Objectives

To provide a secure and loving Christian environment within the College which promotes respect for authority and discipline. *"Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."* Hebrews 13:17.

To seek to integrate faith into all areas of its curriculum so it is expressed in a distinctly Christian lifestyle. *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."* Romans 12: 1-2

To promote self-discipline and to train students to be consistent, responsible, appreciative, and thorough in attitude, character, and actions; to be Christ-like. *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."* Philipians 4:8.

To provide quality Christian education, with an approach which caters for the uniqueness of every child, with opportunity for academic excellence by encouraging each student to aim for his/her best. *"And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."* Colossians 3:23

To work with and to support parents of Christian homes and their local church fellowship to develop Godly children in the fulfillment of their Biblically commissioned responsibilities. *"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* Proverbs 22:6

## 11. Policy review

- 11.1 The governing board will require the principal to report on the implementation of the Anti-Harassment Policy as part of the board's review of the policy.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the three-year review cycle