



## **Diversity Policy: Supporting the LGBTIQ+ community**

**Vision:** *Realising the potential of every student*

### **Rationale**

Nerang State High School is committed to providing quality educational experiences to all of our students to ensure they have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our school community reflects the diverse nature of communities across Queensland. We are committed to providing the opportunity to learn and succeed in a safe, supportive, inclusive and disciplined learning environment.

All members of Nerang State High school community are required to honour, respect and support this commitment. The school community includes students, staff, parents and members of the public who have any involvement with the school. Inclusion of all students, all staff and all community members is an expectation. Discrimination is unacceptable and will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances.

Nerang State High School aims to:

- To create a working and learning environment that is inclusive of all students and staff and where all members are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect.
- To promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times.
- To implement strategies to ensure that all members of the school community know their rights and responsibilities.
- Provide all students with access to high-quality education that is free from discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation.
- To provide all staff with access to an inclusive and safe work environment free from discrimination.
- Provide support to parents of LGBTIQ+ students.

### **Legislation**

The [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#) prohibits state schools from discriminating on the attribute of gender identity or sexuality. The [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#) also prohibits discrimination on the basis of a person's sex, gender identity, intersex status or sexual orientation in the area of education.

Links to relevant legislation:

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(QLD\)](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Sex Discrimination Amendment \(Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status\) Act 2013](#)  
[Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)

[Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)

## **Confidentiality and Privacy**

LGBTIQ+ students are entitled to the same confidentiality and privacy as any other student. The decision to disclose gender diversity or sexuality is an individual matter and must be treated respectfully and in accordance with confidentiality and privacy requirements. As for all students, staff must adhere to their mandatory reporting obligations if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused or neglected.

## **Process of support for Gender Diverse Students at Nerang SHS**

Staff who become aware of students requesting to transition or affirm gender at the school, will notify a Guidance Officer at the school. The purpose of this is to ensure that adequate support is offered to the student and family with specific consideration of the student's individual needs. Guidance Officers have specific training in developing student plans and supporting students and families. In instances where one or both parents/guardians do not support or oppose the young person's decision to affirm their identity the school will assess the best interests of the child to ensure their physical and psychological safety and wellbeing.

Guidance Officers or Deputy Principal's will inform relevant staff of any support as required. This will be a student led process with regards to timing; which students and staff are informed; when the communication will occur and the language used.

Specific professional development will be offered through the school to staff.

Students will be offered a supportive staff member in the school to liaise with. Check ins will occur from time to time with a Guidance Officer and be inclusive of parents/guardians.

School staff will be aware of curriculum considerations when teaching specific content and Heads of Department will be responsible to ensure that this is occurring within subject areas.

At Nerang SHS we have a LGBTIQ+ Student Support Group/Room called the called the Rainbow Room, which will run on select lunch breaks. The intent of this space is be a place where all students are welcome, no matter how they identify. Its aim is to promote inclusion and diversity. It is a supportive and relaxing zone. This area will be supervised by staff supportive of this room. School-based LGBTIQ+ student groups provide an opportunity to support students and facilitate positive social interactions with peers.

## **Policy**

The following information is based on expert advice and the governing legislation. This information will be considered by the school on a case-by-case basis and following a consultation process with relevant stakeholders.

### *Curriculum*

All curriculum can be facilitated in a manner that promotes inclusivity. Teachers should avoid making generalisations or assumptions about sexuality, gender identity and/or intersex status, particularly when delivering curriculum related to relationships and sexuality education.

Students will be educated in line with the Department of Education Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework and ACARA guidelines. This is supported by Department of Educations Inclusion Policy and the Diversity in QLD Schools document.

### *Student support*

Students who are gender diverse, sexually diverse and/or intersex, may choose to work with the Guidance Officer to develop support options. Parents are invited to be part of the support options. Support options may include such things as: addressing name and pronoun changes, toilet and change room access, uniform access, One School

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changes and confidentiality. Protecting student confidentiality, privacy and safety is paramount and considered by the Guidance Officer when developing support options.

Students may also choose to contact external organisations for support, such as [Kids Helpline](#), [beyondblue](#) or [Headspace](#).

### *Student Name and Pronouns*

Students may refer to themselves by a name and/or pronoun of their choosing. As with all students, school staff should use a student's preferred name, gender and/or pronoun when requested, following consultation with school Guidance Officers. Academic reporting, school rolls and One School information changes are made in consultation with a school Guidance Officer and parents.

As per legal requirements, school staff must ensure that school records are made and kept accurately. School records must reflect the sex as stated on the student's birth certificate or passport. At parental request student academic reports may use the student's preferred name in OneSchool. At parental request student gender may be changed through the Principal contacting OneSchool. Independent students may request any name or gender changes directly to the Principal.

### *Toilet and Change Room*

Children and young people's safety and wellbeing are the primary consideration in determining appropriate use of toilet and change room facilities. When determining which toilets and change rooms a student will use, the school will discuss this with relevant stakeholders, and consider options based on facilities available at the school. A gender neutral toilet is available for students to use in the Administration and a uni-sex bathroom in E block.

### *School Dress Code*

A school uniform option is available that can be worn by students of any gender. Students who are transgender or intersex are permitted to wear the uniform of their choosing.

### *Camps*

When determining school camp arrangements, it is important to discuss with relevant stakeholders (student, parents and staff), any situations that may not usually be encountered during the school day, such as sleeping arrangements and areas for showering and changing clothes.

### *Sports*

Schools are best placed to make decisions about participation in sporting activities within the school. Schools must adhere to their obligations under the discrimination legislation. For children over 12 years of age, restrictions on participation in sport may be imposed on the basis of biological sex or gender identity if the restriction is reasonable, having regard to the strength, stamina or physique requirements of the sport.

### *Workplace Health & Safety*

As schools are places of work, schools must be vigilant and act in a way that is reasonably necessary to protect the health and safety of people at the school. Such workplace health and safety obligations and acts are exempt from the discrimination legislation.

### *Bullying, harassment and discrimination*

Students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment that values diversity and individual identity, and should be free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and violence. Trans, gender, sexually diverse and/or intersex students are often the targets of bullying including verbal and physical abuse.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence against an individual on the basis of their gender identity, intersex status, sex, sexuality or presumed sexuality will not be tolerated and is incorporated into the schools Behaviour Policy.

The Nerang SHS Student Code of Conduct identifies a variety of unacceptable behaviours that will result in consequences. These behaviours include:

- Something that violates the rights of others in a serious way
- Repeated incidents of inappropriate targeted behaviour
- Incite or encourage inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour toward others of a verbal, sexual, physical, aggressive, discriminatory, or indecent nature that's homophobic or transphobic
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices and/or media (including the use to harass, intimidate or bully others)
- Behaviour that poses an unacceptable risk to the safety or wellbeing of other students, staff, or other members of the school community (including but not limited to bullying, fighting, violence, threats, harassment, sexual harassment, intimidation, or facilitation thereof by others, encouraging persons to trespass onto school premises or to interfere with school activities, use of internet or electronic media/devices to abuse or denigrate)

If any of these behaviours occur, contact is to be made with your Dean of Students so it can be addressed.

### *Staff development*

Staff will be provided annually with appropriate education and training to support gender diverse, sexually diverse and/or intersex members of the school community.

School staff can direct enquiries about how best to support LGBTIQ+ students by contacting the Student Wellbeing team at [StudentWellbeing@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:StudentWellbeing@qed.qld.gov.au).

The department also partners with True Relationships and Reproductive Health (True) to provide the [Capability, Confidence and Diversity Initiative](#). Through this initiative, dedicated True staff deliver support, advice and professional development to Queensland state school staff around establishing and maintaining educational environments that are inclusive of all students, including LGBTIQ+ students.

## **Definitions**

For the purpose of this document the following terms are defined but it is acknowledged that they are general terms.

*Discrimination* – treating a person in a way that results in that person receiving less favourable treatment because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

*~phobia* (as in: homophobia, transphobia and biphobia) – the fear, intolerance, and/or discrimination of people who identify as: same-sex attracted (homophobia); transgender, gender diverse or gender nonconforming (transphobia); bisexual (biphobia).

*Transgender (or Trans)* – an umbrella term used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex.

*Sistagirls and Brothaboy* – terms used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe a person assigned male or female at birth and living partly or fully as the other gender. Use and spelling of the terms may vary across different groups and communities and other cultures will use different terms to describe gender diversity.

*Intersex* – a long-established medical condition where an infant is born with reproductive organs and/or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male or female.

*Gender expression* – is the outward signs they present to the world around them. This could include their choice of name and preferred pronoun, their style of dress and appearance and/or mannerisms.

*Gender diverse* – used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex. Includes people who identify as transgender, a-gender (having no gender), bi-gender (having two genders), and non-binary (not strictly woman or man).

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*Gender transition/affirmation* – is the process whereby a transgender person commences living as their true gender identity.

*Gender identity* – a word or series of words that a person of any sexuality may use to describe their gender – for example: girl, boy, woman, man, transgender, gender diverse etc. Same-sex attracted – any person who identifies as being same-sex attracted. This may include people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

*Sexual orientation* – the underlying direction of sexual attraction towards people of a particular gender or genders. Sexual orientation can include being heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Having a homosexual or heterosexual orientation does not always mean people will have a gay, lesbian or heterosexual identity.

*Sexual identity* – how you see yourself sexually and how you present yourself to others. It includes being gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual or asexual.

(Definitions have been resourced from: Australian Human Rights Commission, Safe Schools Coalition Australia, Victorian Department of Education and Training, Queensland Department of Education)

## Supporting Documents and Resources

The following supporting documents have been used to inform this document:

[QLD Department of Education Inclusion Policy](#)

[Diversity in Queensland Schools – Information for Principals](#)

[Diversity in Queensland Schools – fact sheet for students](#)

[Diversity in Queensland Schools – fact sheet for parents](#)

[Guidelines for supporting students who are gender diverse](#)

[Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)

[Student Protection](#)

[Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#)

[Trans@School: A guide for trans and gender diverse children and young people](#)

## Support Contacts

[Kids Helpline](#) Australia's only free, confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

[beyondblue](#) They have been providing support and services to people in Australia for 20 years. They are focused on supporting people affected by anxiety, depression and suicide.

[Headspace](#) Is an Australian non-profit organisation for youth mental health established by the Australian government in 2006. It provides information, support and services to young people aged 12-25 years, their families and friends across Australia.

[1800RESPECT](#) Telephone counselling is available 24/7, whether you're seeking help yourself, a friend or relative, a college or a client. Professionals are also encouraged to use the service for support with secondary referrals or vicarious trauma.

[Lifeline](#) is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

[Mensline](#) A telephone and online support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way.

[Relationships Australia](#) A provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities.

## **LGBTIQ+ specific help/support/contact/support lines**

[PFlag](#) Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays: is a peer support group that assists families and friends understand their lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans\* (LGBTIQ) loved ones.

[Transcend Australia](#) Transcend's purpose is to support, affirm and celebrate the lives of trans and gender diverse and non binary (TGDNB) children and their families and carers.

[Diverse Voices](#) provides telephone counselling and information. Peer telephone counselling services are the core focus. They became the Gay and Lesbian Welfare Association or GLWA in the early 90's, but have recently re-established as a more inclusive Diverse Voices.

[Gender Help for Parents](#) This website has been created by Australian parents who have struggled to find information about services and support for issues around their children's gender identity.

[The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex Legal Services Inc.](#) This is a non-profit and unfunded community-based legal service that provides legal advice and information to clients who have legal problems that arise from their identification as LGBTI.

[The National LGBTI Health Alliance](#) This is a national peak health organisation in Australia for organisations and individuals that provide health-related programs, services and research focused on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTI) and other sexuality, gender, and bodily diverse people and communities.

[IHRA \(Intersex Human Rights Australia\)](#) This is an independent support, education and policy development organisation, by and for people with intersex variations or traits. Their work focuses on human rights, bodily autonomy and self-determination, and an evidence-based, patient-directed healthcare.

[QLife](#) This is Australia's first nationally-oriented counselling and referral service for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or intersex (LGBTI). QLife provides nation-wide, early intervention, peer supported telephone and web-based services to people of all ages across a full breadth of people's bodies, genders, relationships, sexualities and lived experiences.

Contact QLife on phone 1800 184 527 (3pm to midnight, 7 days) or online chat (3pm to midnight, 7 days).

[True Relationships](#) True Relationships & Reproductive Health (True) was established in 1972 and is a profit-for-purpose organisation. Their goal is to achieve substantial, positive social impact by improving reproductive and sexual health and promoting safe and respectful relationships. True achieves this through the delivery of expert clinical services, education and counselling.

[ReachOut.com](#) ReachOut has been connecting and supporting young people, and their parent, carer and teacher networks to a range of free mental health services that are available when and where they need it.

[Access EAP](#) This is an Australian owned and not for profit organisation with over 30 years experience. Their mission is to partner with you to create mentally healthy and thriving workplaces and communities.

[Queer Space](#) This is a LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing support service established in 2009 by LGBTIQ+ communities for LGBTIQ+ communities. Queerspace has a focus on relationships, families, parenting and young people and offers co-located services across the north-west region of Victoria.

[Queer Space Youth](#) This is a space for queer young people to meet, make friends, work on projects and have fun. Based in Victoria.

[Rainbow Network](#) This is a search site that can help provide inclusive services for young LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

[Wear it Purple Day](#) (Last Friday in August annually) Gender & Sexuality Alliance Connect (GSA Connect) is a project to support new and established Gender and Sexualities Alliances (GSAs\_ and similar groups that are working to make schools safer and more inclusive for all students.