

Sylvania Public School Anti Racism Policy

What is racism?

The Human Rights Commission defines racism as follows:

Racism can take many forms, such as jokes or comments that cause offence or hurt, sometimes unintentionally; name-calling or verbal abuse; harassment or intimidation, or commentary in the media or online that inflames hostility towards certain groups.

At its most serious, racism can result in acts of physical abuse and violence.

Racism can directly or indirectly exclude people from accessing services or participating in employment, education, sport and social activities.

It can also occur at a systemic or institutional level through policies, conditions or practices that disadvantage certain groups.

It often manifests through unconscious bias or prejudice.

On a structural level, racism serves to perpetuate inequalities in access to power, resources and opportunities across racial and ethnic groups.

The belief that a particular race or ethnicity is inferior or superior to others is sometimes used to justify such inequalities.

— Australian Human Rights Commission, National Anti-Racism Strategy, July 2012, Page 4

Racist attitudes and beliefs are misconceptions about people based on perceived racial lines and are often founded on the fear of difference, including differences in customs, values, religion, physical appearance and ways of living and viewing the world. This includes negative attitudes towards the use of different languages, 'foreign' accents or the use of non-standard variations of a dominant community language.

These attitudes and beliefs find expression in racist behaviours, both in the actions of individuals and in the policies and entrenched practices of institutions. Where these behaviours involve unequal power relationships between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds, racist actions on the part of members of the dominant culture have the effect of marginalising those from minority groups.

Anti Racism Objectives

Sylvania Public School rejects all forms of Racism and is committed to the elimination of Racial Discrimination, including direct and indirect racism, racial vilification, and harassment-in all aspects of the learning and working environment. No student, employee, parent or care giver should experience racism in the learning or working environment. Sylvania Public School staff contribute to the eradication of racism by promoting acceptance of Australia's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity and challenging prejudiced attitudes

Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO)

Sylvania Public School has a trained Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO). This officer assists parents, staff and students who have complaints regarding racism. They facilitates the complaints handling process, providing timely and professional responses to complaint regarding racism.

The role of the ARCO

The ARCO's role has four major aspects.

- The ARCO is a mediator and on receiving a complaint can talk to complaints and seek an informal resolution.
- **If** an informal resolution is not appropriate or satisfactory then the complainant has the option of writing a complaint. The complaint will follow the Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines.
- The ARCO assists the Principal to promote anti-racism in the school and ensure that staff are aware of relevant policies including the Anti-Racism Policy; the Multicultural Education Policy; the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy; the Complaints Handling Policy
- The ARCO assists the principal to maintain records of complaints and allegations concerning racism decide what data regarding complaints about racism should be collected identify significant statistical trends in relation to complaints about racism implement actions arising from complaints of racism.