



Heatley Secondary College

ASPIRATIONAL | INCLUSIVE | RESPONSIBLE | RESPECTFUL | RESILIENT

Supporting Gender Diverse Students Policy

1.0 Vision and Commitment

Heatley Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment that empowers students to excel as leaders of tomorrow. We develop a community of compassionate, resilient and proud learners that embrace diversity and are responsible and active global citizens. All members of our school community have the right to feel safe, be respected and free from discrimination based on gender, language, sexual orientation, intersex status, culture, ethnicity, religion, health, disability or socio-economic background. Inclusion of *all* students, *all* staff and *all* community members is an expectation. Discrimination is not acceptable and will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances.

At Heatley Secondary College we acknowledge our diversity and respect all students and their choice to live authentically in their gender identity. As a school community we will:

- Promote positive educational outcomes for gender diverse students;
- Promote an inclusive school community which encourages all students to be authentic and acknowledge their gender identity;
- Create a community where students and families experience a sense of belonging helping to promote positive mental health and wellbeing;
- Promote compliance with relevant legislation concerning discrimination and privacy;
- Work collaboratively with local community members to support gender diverse students and their families; connect students with support services, as required, external to the school;
- Negotiate and respond to the individual needs of gender diverse students; creating an Individual support plan that allows issues and needs to be addressed and reviewed;
- Support staff in the ongoing development of inclusive curriculum that incorporates gender diverse perspectives.

2.0 Legislation

Legislation seeks to promote equality of opportunity for all by prohibiting both direct and indirect discrimination. Relevant legislation includes:

- Anti-Discrimination Act (QLD) 1991
- Information Privacy Act (QLD) 2009
- Education (General Provisions) Act (QLD) 2006
- Sexual Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) 1984
- Sexual Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identify and Intersex Status) Act (Commonwealth) 2013





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3.0 Policy

3.1 Student Transitions

At Heatley Secondary College we acknowledge each student's gender identity. Each student experiences a unique transition process, which requires varying levels of collaboration and support. At Heatley Secondary College we work collaboratively with students and external agencies to negotiate a transition plan which is specific to their needs. This plan is an ongoing collaborative process that is adapted regularly to suit the needs of the student.

In alignment with the Information Privacy Act (QLD) 2009, a person's gender identity, legal name or gender assigned at birth is private. Disclosing this personal information without justification or consent is a breach of privacy and confidentiality.

3.2 Student Name/s

Acknowledging a person's request to change their name or pronoun is an important part of validating their identity. To prevent harm, any possible risks should be assessed within the Support Plan. At Heatley Secondary College staff are required to use the name, personal pronouns and gender identity a student requests. Pronouns may include, but are not limited to she/her, he/him, they/their, zie/zehn.

3.3 School records

Acknowledging a person's name and pronoun through school records is an important part of validating their identity and respecting their privacy. It is a legal requirement that school records are made and kept accurately. School enrolment records must reflect the sex as stated on the student's birth certificate or passport. A statement from a Registered Medical Practitioner or a Registered Psychologist which specifies gender will also be considered; the most recent document will be used to record the student's sex. Academic reports can reflect the student's preferred name and gender.

3.4 Curriculum

At Heatley Secondary College we pride ourselves on incorporating and promoting an inclusive curriculum. When developing curriculum staff consider current research and promote equitable access for all students. Teachers are encouraged to avoid making generalisations or assumptions about sexuality or gender identity, particularly when delivering curriculum related to relationships and sexuality education. Professional development assists our staff in delivering curriculum which avoids generalisations and considers the perspectives of sexuality and gender identity.

3.5 Bathroom Facilities

At Heatley Secondary College we work collaboratively to promote safety and comfort for all students. Young people's safety and wellbeing are the primary consideration in determining appropriate use of toilet and change room facilities. Considerations about appropriate bathroom access will be negotiated with each individual student. Subject to any specific risk factors that are identified, students will be permitted to use their affirmed gender toilets. Unisex bathroom facilities are an option for all students.





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3.6 School Uniform

At Heatley Secondary College students are permitted to wear the formal uniform of their choice. The school polo shirts and house shirts are gender neutral. The senior check shirts differs in hemlines, but the senior polo shirt is again, gender neutral.

Uniform and Dress code guidelines apply to all students.

3.7 Extra Curricular activities (Dance, Physical Education and Sport)

All students have the right to participate in Dance, Physical Education and Sport. When an event or activity is separated by gender, the school will negotiate where possible for students to participate in their appropriate gender identity or one in which they are most comfortable, especially if they identify as non-binary. It is essential to note that some physical activities (particularly representative sport) must consider the stamina, strength and physical requirements of the activity, not the student. Therefore, this may restrict the participation of some students in their chosen activity.

3.8 School camps

At Heatley Secondary College reasonable adjustments are made to enable participation in school camps for gender diverse students. Collaboration with the student, parent/carers will precede camp participation. Subject to any specific risk factors that are may be identified, students will be permitted to sleep in the sleeping quarters and the use the toilet/change facility of their preferred gender. Further consideration and choice will be given to those who identify as non-binary. Privacy considerations are always considered a priority.

In preparation for school camps negotiations will also take place with the host venue to accommodate the access, sleeping arrangements and bathroom facilities for gender diverse students.

4.0 Community support

4.1 Parental and Carer collaboration

At Heatley Secondary College we encourage parental and carer collaboration when supporting gender diverse students. A strong support network plays an essential role in the transition and ongoing support of gender diverse students.

4.2 Wellbeing services

Understanding or changing one's gender identity can be a challenging process. At Heatley Secondary College we encourage students and staff to meet with a Guidance Officer as the first point of contact. 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. During this time, a Student Support Plan will be commenced if needed or if requested. The Guidance Officer will inform relevant staff of any support as required. Paramount is student privacy, their right to confidentiality and their consent to share information with other staff members. This will be a student led process with regards to timing; which students and staff are informed, when communication will occur and the language used. Students will be offered a Case Manager or supportive adult within the school to liaise with on an ongoing basis. Referrals to external services to further support students and their parent/care givers will occur if needed.





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In instances where one or both parents/carers do not support or oppose the young person's decision to affirm their identity, the school will assess the best interest of the child to ensure their physical and psychological safety and wellbeing.

5.0 Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying

Heatley Secondary College is committed to building a Heatley Proud culture that promotes a positive sense of belonging, cultivates student and staff wellbeing and is underpinned by a restorative ethos. As an educational community, we work to build a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for all students, staff, parents and visitors. The Heatley Secondary College Student Code of Conduct outlines the responsibilities and processes we use to promote a productive, whole school approach to discipline; to facilitate positive behaviours, prevent problem behaviour and respond to unacceptable behaviours.

Any incidents of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying will be actioned as per the Heatley Secondary College Code of Conduct. All staff are expected to adhere to the Department of Education's Code of Conduct for Queensland Public Servants and the Standards of Practice which supports this Code. A parent/carer is also not exempt from direct or indirect discrimination based on gender identity. (1991, Anti-discrimination Act).

6.0 Definitions/Glossary

- **Affirmed gender** - When an individual affirms their own gender.
- **Agender** - Describes a person who identifies as having no gender.
- **Assigned sex at birth** – The sex (male or female) assigned to a child at birth, most often based on the child's external anatomy. Also referred to as birth sex, natal sex, biological sex, or sex.
- **BrotherBoy**: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may use these terms in a number of different contexts, however they can be used to refer to transgender and gender diverse people. BrotherBoy typically refers to masculine spirited people who were assigned female at birth.
- **Cisgender** – A person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth correspond (i.e., a person who is not transgender).
- **Coming out** – The process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify one's own sexual orientation or gender identity (to come out to oneself). Also the process by which one shares one's sexual orientation or gender identity with others (to come out to friends, etc.).
- **Gender affirming surgery (GAS)** – Surgeries used to modify one's body to be more congruent with one's gender identity. Also referred to as sex reassignment surgery (SRS) or gender confirming surgery (GCS).
- **Gender dysphoria** – Distress experienced by some individuals whose gender identity does not correspond with their assigned sex at birth. Manifests itself as clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) includes gender dysphoria as a diagnosis.





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- **Gender expression** – The way a person acts, dresses, speaks, and behaves (i.e., feminine, masculine, androgynous). Gender expression does not necessarily correspond to assigned sex at birth or gender identity.
- **Gender fluid** – Describes a person whose gender identity is not fixed. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more one gender some days, and another gender other days.
- **Gender identity** – A person’s internal sense of being a man/male, woman/female, both, neither, or another gender.
- **Gender non-conforming** – Describes a gender expression that differs from a given society’s norms for males and females.
- **Gender role** – A set of societal norms dictating what types of behaviours are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived sex.
- **Heteronormativity** – The assumption that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities.
- **Heterosexual** (straight) – A sexual orientation that describes women who are emotionally and sexually attracted to men, and men who are emotionally and sexually attracted to women.
- **Intersex** – people who have innate sex characteristics that don’t fit medical and social norms for female or male bodies.
- **Outing** – Involuntary or unwanted disclosure of another person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Non-binary** - A term to describe someone who doesn’t identify exclusively as male or female.
- **Same-sex attraction (SSA)** – A term that is used to describe the experience of a person who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender. Individuals using this term may not feel comfortable using the language of sexual orientation (i.e., gay, lesbian, bisexual) for personal reasons. Use of this term is not indicative of a person’s sexual behaviour.
- **Sister Girl:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may use these terms in a number of different contexts, however they can be used to refer to transgender and gender diverse people. SisterGirl typically refers to feminine spirited people who were assigned male at birth.
- **Trans man/transgender man/female-to-male (FTM)** – A transgender person whose gender identity is male may use these terms to describe themselves. Some will just use the term man.
- **Trans woman/transgender woman/male-to-female (MTF)** – A transgender person whose gender identity is female may use these terms to describe themselves. Some will just use the term woman.
- **Transgender** – Describes a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth do not correspond. Also used as an umbrella term to include gender identities outside of male and female. Sometimes abbreviated as trans.
- **Transition** – For transgender people, this refers to the process of coming to recognise, accept, and express one’s gender identity. Most often, this refers to the period when a person makes social, legal, and/or medical changes, such as changing their clothing, name, sex designation, and using medical interventions. Sometimes referred to as gender affirmation process.





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References:

- Department of Education. (2017) *Diversity in Queensland Schools: Information for Principals*.
- Department of Education *Internal Guidance Materials to Assist Queensland State Schools in Supporting Gender Diverse Students 2017*
- National LGBT Health Education Centre: A program of the Fenway Institute. (2016) *Glossary of LGBT Terms for Health Care Teams*. Boston, America.
- Telfer, M.M., Tollit, M.A., Pace, C.C., & Pang, K.C. (2017) *The Royal Children's Hospital: Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents*. Melbourne.

7.0 Additional Information and resources

- Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland: www.adcq.qld.gov.au
- Australian Human Rights Commission: www.hreoc.gov.au
- Australian Transgender Support Association of Queensland (ATSAQ): www.atsaq.com
- The Rainbow Owl: www.the-rainbow-owl.com
- Guide for schools, educators, and families of trans and gender diverse children and young people. Queensland Human Rights Commission: Trans@school
- True Relationships: www.true.org.au
- gar'ban'djee'lum ('us mob') is an independent social network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people, sistergirls and brotherboys (GLBTSB) in and around Brisbane.
- Parents of Gender Diverse Children: www.pgdc.org.au
- LGBTI Legal Service: www.lgbtilegalservice.org.au

Endorsed

11 August 2021

Mr Murray James
Principal

Mr Ashley Nuttall
P&C President

Mrs Trish Duffy
Guidance Officer

