

## Rationale

Student wellbeing at Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC) is situated within the College's long-established commitment to the pastoral care of students. Authentic and effective pastoral care is intentionally directed to nurturing students' physical, emotional, intellectual, interpersonal and spiritual growth so that students 'may have life, and have it to the full' (John 10:10).

**Principles**  
it to the full'. Therefore ,the school has **Generic**

In responding to the unique learning and support needs of who are experiencing gender variance

meets the school's dress or uniform code.

- b. Request relevant medical reports and supporting documentation from gender medical experts and other treating specialist/s.
- c. Maintain privacy and confidentiality in accordance with relevant legislation. The sharing of information should only be communicated with those who have an appropriate reason to know in order to support the wellbeing and learning outcomes of the student.
- d. Commit to working with all in the school community so that the student is not subject to bullying, harassment and/or discrimination either directly or indirectly.
- e. Include the provision of relevant professional learning and information for staff, students and families within the school community to raise understanding of gender variance within the context of Catholic teachings about human sexuality.
- f. Consider the pastoral and academic needs of all members of the school community with the individual needs of the child and their family.
- g. Update school policies, where appropriate, to reflect arrangements for students who are experiencing gender variance.

#### **The student may be a 'mature minor'**

OLMC recognises that parents and carers are significant and essential partners with schools in actively supporting and nurturing the educational and wellbeing outcomes of children and young people from early years through to adolescence. For this reason, schools continue to engage parents in schooling matters even after the student has turned 18 and are legally recognised as adults. Notwithstanding this, for a variety of reasons students under the age of 18 sometimes ask to make decisions on their own behalf as a 'mature minor', without involvement of their parents. In such scenarios the principal should, in the first instance, seek advice from MACS Legal and Professional Standards Unit prior to determining whether a student is a 'mature minor'.

**Gender dysphoria**

A concept defined in the DSM-5 as clinically significant distress or impairment related to a strong desire to be of another gender, which may include desire to change primary and/or secondary sex characteristics. Not all gender diverse people experience dysphoria. (APA 2013)

**Gender incongruence**

## **Student**

Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends a OLMC.

## **Transgender**

A person whose gender identity is different to their biological sex.

## **Supports**

**Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools: Student Wellbeing Unit –**  
03 9267 0228

**Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools: Legal Unit –**  
03 9267 0228

**Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne Gender Service–**  
provides children and adolescents up to 17 years with a multidisciplinary approach to the assessment, care and treatment of who are experiencing gender variance.

**Monash Who are experiencing gender variance Clinic –**  
adolescents over the age of 17.

**Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission –**  
Educates people about the rights and responsibilities contained in the Charter and reports annually to the government about the operation of the Charter.

**Kids Helpline** 1800 55 1800

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**Lifeline** 13 11 14

## **Resources**

**Excel**

## Legislation and standards

Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (Vic)

Ministerial Order 1359 (Vic) – Implementing the child safe standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

## **Related Policies**

OLMC Student Wellbeing Policy  
OLMC Privacy Policy  
OLMC Child Safety Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy  
OLMC Child Protection Reporting Obligations  
OLMC Respectful Relationships Anti-Bullying Policy  
OLMC Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct  
OLMC Student Behaviour Management Policy  
OLMC Uniform Policy

**Policy approved by College Leadership Team – June 2023**

**Policy endorsed by College Advisory Council – June 2023**

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