

# KAIKORAI VALLEY COLLEGE

## Gender Identity Procedure

### RATIONALE

Schools are institutions where diversity is the norm among the staff, the students and the community served by the school. At Kaikorai Valley College it is one of our five school values. As such the Board and staff must ensure that the school not only recognises this diversity, but affirms it, so that everyone involved with the school feels welcome and valued. Diversity at Kaikorai Valley College includes:

- Diversity of cultures
- Diversity of ethnicity
- Diversity of beliefs and values
- Diversity of learning needs
- Diversity of sex and gender identity
- Diversity of sexualities

The first four of these forms of diversity are generally well-recognised and acted upon within schools. However, diversity in the area of gender identity has been less well addressed.

Within any school community, among the staff, the students, and the families/whānau of the students, there is likely to be a diverse range of gender identity (eg: man, woman, transgender, gender diverse).

As a school KVC has already put a number of practices in place. These include: a general neutral uniform, the use of appropriate pronouns or sometimes using no gender references, the availability and secure access to gender neutral toilets and changing spaces.

As School Boards are Crown Entities, they are subject to NZ's human rights obligations. Therefore, they shall respect and ensure that any student has the right to freedom of expression, and freedom from discrimination, which include the right to identify with a particular gender, no gender, or being gender fluid.

This Procedure is informed by:

- The Privacy Act 2020 which states that personal information such as sex, sexual orientation or gender cannot be disclosed by the school.
- Section 14 of the Bill of Rights Act 1990: The right to freedom of expression. People have the right to express themselves in a manner that aligns with their gender and sexuality
- Section 127(1) of the Education and Training Act 2020: A student's right to a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- Inside Out Kōaro. (2021). *Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures: A Resource for school boards, leaders, teachers, guidance counsellors, and school communities*. Produced with support from the Ministry of Education.

### PURPOSE

- Provide an inclusive curriculum, which is defined as “non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory” and ensure that “students’ identities ... are recognised and affirmed (NZC p.9)

- Students will learn to “respect themselves, others, and human rights” (NZC p.10).
- Students shall ‘relate to others’ (NZC p.12).
- Teachers will create “a supportive learning environment ....fostering positive relationships within environments that are caring, inclusive, non-discriminatory and cohesive” (NZC p.34).
- To model respect for others in interactions with adults and students by maintaining a safe, learning-focused environment.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. A student who identifies as gender diverse may approach a staff member of their choice who, with the student's permission, will then advise a member of the SMT.
2. A member of the SMT shall have a conversation with the student to determine if they are seeking a social or systems transition and if their parents/whānau are aware of this. The SMT member will explain the difference between the two transitions to the student. In the case of a systems transition, the student needs to be aware that their parent/caregiver has access to Edge and will see changes to personal information. The student has the option to be included on the school's Gender Diversity register that is shared with staff. Being included on the Register means that staff will know the student's preferred name, how they identify, choice of pronouns and if their parents/caregivers are aware of their decision.

The SMT member will also discuss the following with the student:

- Do they feel supported at school? Do they have any concerns about personal safety? Would they like the school counsellor to check in with them?
  - Do they need any practical assistance (eg- access to the gender neutral toilets and changing room)?
  - Have they spoken to whānau about this change and do they need support in this? Do whānau support this decision?
  - Check if they are aware of external support agencies and offer assistance with this if needed.
3. Staff shall be notified after all of the above has taken place and advised of the decisions made. Staff will support the student's social or systems transition as appropriate (eg - using appropriate pronouns and maintaining confidentiality as specified on the Gender Diversity Register). Where/if required, they shall seek clarification from the SMT.

## **Notes:**

### ***Names, Pronouns and Gender:***

*“Regardless of which kind of change a student would like to make, it's essential that the school checks with the student whether they have told their parents/whānau about the change of name, pronoun, or gender marker. This is an issue of safety because the student may not have support at home for such changes to be made. The school's primary responsibility is student safety, which includes affirming their gender and supporting them to make informed decisions”. (Inside Out Kōaro. (2021). Creating rainbow-inclusive school policies and procedures: A Resource for school boards, leaders, teachers, guidance counsellors, and school communities. Wellington, New Zealand). Pp 23*

**Social Transition:** a student uses a new name, and/or pronouns and changes their gender they use in day to day school life without updating the school records.

Staff will support students by using the student's new name and/or pronouns when addressing the student in the school environment. All documents will include names and pronouns as recorded on Edge.

Students are advised that their parents/whānau may well become aware of the changes made to their name, pronouns and gender through school activities and interactions.

**Systems Transition:** a student uses a new name, and/or pronouns at school and changes their gender at school, **and** updates this on the school records (Edge).

Students are advised that their parents/whānau will be made aware of the changes made to their name, pronouns and gender in including documentation and the schools SMS - Edge.

Date of Confirmation by the Board of Trustees	30 March 2016
Reviewed	30 August 2017
Reviewed by the School Board	24 November 2021
Reviewed by the Board and Approved	04 April 2023