



**Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc**

A0028764B

ABN 69 093 616 835

Melways Ref. 129 F8

RTO: 3952

Phone: (03) 5996 9056

141-147 Endeavour Drive, Cranbourne North 3977

Fax: (03) 5996 9434

P.O. Box 7144 Cranbourne North 3977

Email: [admin@merindapark.com.au](mailto:admin@merindapark.com.au)

Web: [www.merindapark.com.au](http://www.merindapark.com.au)

<b>Written/Amended by:</b> Jan Gilchrist CEO	<b>Policy No:</b> 01/01
<b>Authorised By:</b> COM	<b>Version:</b> 7
<b>Distributed to:</b> All staff Or COM, Managers, Co-Ordinators, Educators, Trainers , Volunteers, Other	<b>Date:</b> 17/7/2019
<b>Changes or dates to previous issue:</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> August, 2003, 8 <sup>th</sup> May, 2008 25 <sup>th</sup> May,2011, 4/6/2013, 4/6/17	<b>Review date:</b> July 2021

### **Access & Equity/ Diversity Policy.**

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre (MPLCC) has a strong commitment to be open to all members of the community irrespective of age, race, nationality, gender, religion, income, educational background, physical or intellectual ability, social status or sexual preferences.

MPLCC provides its services in such a way that it does not discriminate in the provision of services to anyone in the community and operates in accordance with Commonwealth and State Legislation.

#### **PURPOSE**

To provide the framework by which MPLCC actively manages and encourages diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with MPLCC's :

- (i) Staff handbook
- (ii) Student handbook
- (iii) Training and Development Policy
- (iv) Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- (v) MPLCC policies, including sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination; discrimination and harassment; grievances and complaints; ethical and legal conduct; disciplinary action.
- (vi) Work schedules provisions for flexible working hours; part time work; work from home
- (vii) Leave provisions for parental leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave and carers leave.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- o Ensure that all people are treated equitably and with a level of mutual respect,
- o Eliminate / Reduce bias and prejudice,

- Develop a range of practices and guidelines that actively counteract bias and prejudice,
- Promote inclusive practices,
- Encourage all centre users and staff to communicate respectfully and fairly; and
- Avoid stakeholders making comparisons between children, families, staff/carers, their backgrounds, abilities or additional needs.

MPLCC has principles and goals in respect of ensuring inclusive participation in the activities, services, planning and decision making of the Centre.

All services, programs and processes undertaken by MPLCC will be guided by the following key principles:

- Services and programs provided by the Centre will be accessible to all people
- Within the limits of MPLCC resources, information will be readily accessible, and in people's first language where possible, particularly when requested or necessary.
- Service provision will reflect sensitivity, relevance and awareness to different circumstances.
- To ensure that there is a fair allocation of resources, based on need.
- All participants will have the right to contribute to decision-making processes and to express views without suffering any prejudice.
- Affirmative action will be taken to support and include under-represented groups, within the limits of MPLCC resources.

MPLCC will conduct its business in a manner, which reflects a commitment to social justice principles, including, but not limited to:

- **Equity:** ensuring that everyone within the workplace is treated in a fair manner according to their individual needs and circumstances and adopting practices which provide everyone with equal opportunities to succeed at work.
- **Diversity** – the visible and invisible differences that exist between people including (but not limited to) disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, physical impairment and relationship and parental status. Diversity also encompasses the ways people differ in terms of their educational background, life and working experiences, carer responsibilities, socio-economic background and geographical location.
- **Respect** - treating individuals fairly, respectfully, and courteously and ensuring their freedom from harassment and bullying.
- **Inclusion** – ensure that employees, students and volunteers enjoy equal opportunity without barriers due to their differences.
- **Access:** ensuring fair and equal access for all people to those services that are important for their quality of life.
- **Participation:** maximising the opportunities for people to participate regardless of the circumstances that affect their lives.
- **Rights:** developing fairer, more comprehensive rights that are equally enforceable by all people regardless of their situation.

People will have access to any course or activity provided by MPLCC provided that:

- class number are not exceeded;
- arrangements have been made for payment of class fees;
- they have personally demonstrated a desire to participate in the course or activity;
- they meet any set pre-requisite requirements;
- their behaviour and presentation are acceptable to the trainer and other participants and the Code of Conduct is signed by the student
- the course they have chosen will not put them at physical or psychological risk; and/or
- the participant does not behave in a manner that is likely to be damaging to equipment or the environment.
- MPLCC can accommodate the special needs of the student or refer them to a more appropriate provider

On enrolment, the participant, or the person enrolling the participant, will make suitable arrangements for:

- the administration of any necessary medications (as per policy) or procedures which are not within the capabilities of the participant
- the participant's own transport arrangements
- suitable personal carer to be provide if required.

While the participant is at the Centre, it is desirable that a contact person is easily contactable at all times.

MPLCC will recognise and respond to specific access and equity issues including participation with community organisations, networks and outreach programs.

MPLCC will plan and undertake special measures to ensure the inclusion of disadvantaged groups within our community. Special measures may include:

- Promotion of programs in relevant languages and styles through relevant media;
- Ensuring that targeted groups have a say in the development of programs;
- Advocating on behalf of disadvantaged people with government; and/or
- Conducting outreach programs and activities where appropriate.

MPLCC Committee of Management (COM) represents a diversity of opinion and is accessible to all members through open and accountable practices.

MPLCC will:

- Provide appropriate and effective services where possible.
- Consider the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of members in the design and delivery of any information, including promotional material.
- Utilise appropriate data collection methods to enable MPLCC to target, plan, develop and evaluate all programs and services in a way that is relevant, equitable and accessible.

- Ensure the development of a marketing strategy that takes into account the needs of the community. This strategy would incorporate the needs of existing and potential MPLCC participants.
- Ensure that when developing new information the MPLCC talks with relevant community organisations to ensure that it is appropriate
- Encourage active participation by members of diverse cultural backgrounds in all aspects of decision making within the organisation.

To verify that the Centre's principles and goals are being met MPLCC will:

- Collect data on the people attending the centre including their ethnicity.
- Evaluate the data collected and develop strategies to address any problems identified.
- Collect and analyse data on who lives in our community. [Census data is available at Public Libraries or Local Councils]
- At all times adhere to the laws in relation to Privacy
- At all times adhere to any other laws in relation to Access and Equity within the community.

## Access and Equity Procedure



### When?

Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre has developed a number of strategies to ensure that the principles of access and equity are fully addressed.

These strategies align with *AQTF Standard 2.5: Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meets their individual needs* and are outlined below.

### Who?

CEO, Managers, Staff and Volunteers

Step		Notes
1.	Learner	Completes all questions located on enrolment forms and provides details of their background, both personal and professional development that may be relevant to their study.

Step		Notes
2.	Training and Compliance Manager or CEO	Completes Pre Training Review with Learner
3.	Training and Compliance Manager, Qualified LL&N Assessor	Learner is assessed for any LL&N or digital literacy concerns prior to induction, ensuring learner completes their own enrolment form and other appropriate documentation including the LL&N assessment and Pre Training review.  As an outcome of the Pre-Training review process, any necessary supports will be put in place to ensure a successful learning experience and documented in the individual's training plan (TTT).
4.	Administration, Trainer, Training and Compliance Manager	Allow for reasonable flexibility (where appropriate) for extensions of time to lodge forms, assessment tasks and other appropriate information, in particular for learners who have been identified as needing more time.
5.	Training and Compliance Manager	All access issues raised by the public or identified by staff are to be considered and reviewed immediately, and actions to avoid future issues identified documented in the MPLCC's Continuous Improvement Plan
6.	CEO, Training and Compliance Manager	Ensure all MPLCC learners, staff, contracted trainers and other members are aware of MPLCC's commitment to access and equity by the review and discussion of this policy document during all appropriate induction processes.
7.	Training and Compliance Manager, Trainer & Assessor	Learners are to be inducted, supported and mentored on access and equity principles aligned to the MPLCC. Trainers are to ensure Learners are aware of their responsibilities:  Learners have a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow others to learn;</li> <li>• Make MPLCC a safe place to learn by not threatening, bullying, or hurting others in any way;</li> <li>• Make the classroom safe by complying with instructions;</li> <li>• Make MPLCC or other training/learning premises safe by not bringing illegal substances or weapons onto the premises; and</li> <li>• Not stealing, damaging or destroying the belongings of others or those of MPLCC.</li> </ul>
8.	Training and Compliance Manager, CEO	It is expected that all MPLCC staff will when acting in the course of their employment or their contract with MPLCC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comply with all applicable Australian laws, including those relating to discrimination and equal opportunity.</li> <li>• Maintain appropriate confidentiality and respect privacy in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles.</li> <li>• Disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest in connection with their employment; and</li> <li>• Not use status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain a benefit or advantage for themselves or for any other person.</li> </ul>

**Related Forms**      Student Handbook

Staff Handbook  
Pre-Training Review  
Training Plan (TTT)

**Related Policies  
and Procedures**

Complaints and Appeals Policy  
Pre-Training Review Policy  
Enrolment Policy  
Foundation Skills Policy

**Procedure Changes**

Date	Reason for Change	Made By
6/9/17	Added a procedure to the policy	CEO