

Gender Equity Policy

Preamble:

Schools and school systems have always responded to gender in their approach to the education of girls and boys. In recent years the NSW public school system has striven to ensure that the education of girls and boys reflects a dynamic understanding of gender based on equity principles. By dealing with gender differences in relation to principles of equity, this strategy will assist Katoomba High School to achieve improved outcomes for girls and boys.

Definitions:

Gender

Gender can be defined as the social arrangements made to deal with sex differences. A complex range of historical and social factors influence the ways in which girls and women, boys and men experience and express their femininity and masculinity. Current beliefs about feminine and masculine behaviours shape differences in educational and social outcomes for girls and boys. These differences contribute to continuing unequal power relationships between women and men in our society. Societal beliefs about gender, interacting with factors such as ethnicity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, socio-economic status, sexuality and disability, can be linked to patterns of girls' and boys' participation in education and to their post-school outcomes.

Equity

Equity "requires that schools be organised in ways that treat all students fairly and, as far as possible, avoid policies and practices whereby some students are disadvantaged compared to others by circumstances outside their own control or influence". Action on behalf of girls continues in recognition of the persistent differences noted among girls and boys in relation to curriculum participation, scholastic performance and post-school destinations. Meantime attention has also been drawn to the need for action on behalf of boys.

At Katoomba High School the gender equity policy and strategic framework will focus on:

- teaching and learning
- the school culture and organisation
- the school and its community
- monitoring, evaluation, review and development.

The aims of the Gender Equity policy are to:

- address gender as an educational issue across the continuum of high school
- give particular attention to girls and boys who most require support if they are to benefit from schooling
- affect the decisions girls and boys make about their present and post-school lives.