



# POLICY: MANAGING THE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

APRIL 2020

## 1. PURPOSE

This policy aims to clearly articulate the school's policy in regard to meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, specifically in regard to ensuring that the school's premises, buildings and facilities meet the requirements of the Act. Key aspects of the Standards require schools and other education providers to:

- Treat students with disability on the same basis as students without disability
- Make reasonable adjustments to student's learning program and/or learning environment.
- Consult with the student or their parents/carers on the reasonable adjustments that will be provided.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

All students enrolled at St Patrick's Primary School have the right to access a broad and balanced education that will prepare them for participation in society. They have the right to an education that meets their individual, cultural, social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs as lifelong learners.

These rights are supported by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 which states that: "It is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a student on the ground of the student's disability by denying the student access, or limiting the student's access, to any benefit provided by the educational authority."

These rights are also supported in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008)*. The two goals that are relevant to this policy are:

- 3.2.1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence.
- 3.2.2: All young Australians become:
  - Successful learners
  - Confident and creative individuals
  - Active and informed citizens

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students St Patrick's with disability.

## 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Diocesan schools are open to the enrolment of children from all Catholic families that commit themselves to the school and the parish.
- The time of enrolment is an opportunity for open dialogue, reflection and mutual discernment about the individual circumstances and spiritual journey of the student in the context of family and the religious purposes of the school in the life of the parish.
- The appropriate education of students with disability is based upon curriculum needs rather than the description of disability. Disability alone does not necessarily determine enrolment, placement or special educational provisions.
- The degree to which a disability affects the student's learning depends on the learning environment and the student's ability to interact with that environment.
- Parents/carers and their advocates are recognised as significant participants in negotiating and planning their child's education.

- Procedural fairness requires transparency of process, equal access to information and clear, open communication.

## 5. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The principal** is responsible for:

- i. Deciding whether an application will become a confirmed enrolment.
- ii. Following the Guidelines for the Enrolment and Transition of Students with Disabilities and/or Additional Needs (Catholic Schools Office, February 2019).

**Classroom teachers** are responsible for:

- i. Delivering quality educational programs that respond to the needs and abilities of all students, including students with disability.
- ii. Developing, implementing, evaluating and reviewing, twice per year, a Personalised Plan (PP) for the student with disability. This may involve working collaboratively with the learning support teacher.

**The learning support teacher** is responsible for:

- i. Gathering documentation regarding the student's needs from relevant agencies, previous schools, and any medical and allied health professionals involved.
- ii. Collating this information in order to ascertain the student's need for adjustments in relation to physical access, equipment, building modifications, personal care, safety, health care management, communication, specific teaching strategies, behaviour and social/emotional support.
- iii. Liaising with the parents/carers and external agencies.
- iv. Facilitating and documenting PP meetings with parents and school personnel.
- v. Supporting classroom teachers to deliver quality educational programs that respond to the needs and abilities of all students, including students with disability.
- vi. Supporting classroom teachers to develop, implement, evaluate and review the PP for the student with disability.

**Parents** are responsible for:

- i. Disclosing accurate information about the student's disability,
- ii. Providing the school with copies of reports from external health professionals in regards to the student's particular learning needs.
- iii. Communicating to the principal their concerns in regard to their child's learning.
- iv. Negotiating with the school staff what reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that their child may participate in their education on the same basis as other students.

## 6. **BUDGET**

The school will make provision each year in its annual budget for making reasonable adjustments that allow students with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

## 7. **NEXT REVIEW DATE**

This policy will be reviewed in 2023 in consultation with relevant staff.

## 8. **DEFINITIONS**

- i. **Disability**: Any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities, and which is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments
- ii. **Personalised Plan (PP)**: A plan that is designed to address the specific needs of students where some form of adjustment to the educational program is necessary or where a special focus is required to modify the school environment.

**9. LEGISLATIVE / PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES**

- i. Disability Discrimination Act (1992).
- ii. Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008).