



ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

Catholic Education Council

Policy Statement

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

We are committed to quality inclusive education, empowering learners of all ages especially those who, because of a disability, require adjustments to access the curriculum. We trust our shared community of learning will shape and enrich our changing world, by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

We are committed to creating *prayerful, sacramental, just, peaceful, inclusive and reconciling communities*.¹

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; that that is what we are (1 Jn 3:1).

Students with disability may require adjustments in order to successfully achieve successful outcomes from their educational experiences. Brisbane Catholic Education provides services within a community of care to facilitate the inclusion of students with disability.

The services are based on a deep understanding of the vision and mission of Jesus and operate within a framework of international agreements, and national and state legislation. Effective and expected approaches to learning for each learner, and agreed procedures that assist with the processes of identification, planning, resourcing and implementation of appropriate educational adjustments are critical to achieving successful outcomes for students.

RATIONALE

The overarching Queensland Catholic Education Commission position statement *Inclusive Practices in Catholic Schools in Queensland*² has been developed on the principles of valuing diversity. It informs us of the responsibility to recognise human rights and to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to further enable the provision of access, participation and achievement for all students.

Brisbane Catholic Education's *Learning and Teaching Framework*³ commits us to the concept and values of lifelong learning and development. This policy, which addresses the particular support needs of students with disability, is linked closely to the values and goals of the *Learning and Teaching Framework* and to the position statement, *Inclusive Practices in Catholic Schools in Queensland* (2009).

The *Disability Standards for Education* (2005), formulated under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, clarifies the obligations of educational providers and the rights of students with disability. In partnership with families, schools must provide reasonable adjustments that balance the interests of all parties.

Brisbane Catholic Education works with community professionals and parents towards identifying reasonable adjustments for students and uses sound processes and procedures. This leads to the provision of learning plans and services that support those students with disability to participate fully in quality inclusive Catholic schooling.

CONSEQUENCES

In implementing this policy, Brisbane Catholic Education, in partnership with families and others within the broader educational community will consider:

Enrolment of students with disability

- the student enrolls according to the Catholic Education Council's *Enrolment of Students Policy* and the accompanying guidelines
- the parent/caregiver notifies the school of the student's disability and related needs
- the school arranges for the Enrolment Application and Support Procedure (EASP) to be conducted
- the parent/caregiver is invited to participate in the EASP
- processes are conducted in a timely way with dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality.

Participation of students with disability

- schools welcome students with disability and their families
- schools respond to the needs of each student in their community of learners
- schools support each student to participate in the full life of the school e.g. academic, spiritual, social and cultural.

Curriculum planning, accreditation and delivery

- partnerships are developed with stakeholders including teachers, family, students and relevant professionals
- relevant evidence is gathered about the learner and used to inform educational decisions
- personalised planning is developed and implemented
- special considerations are incorporated where relevant
- government requirements in relation to the identification, resourcing and reporting for students with disability are undertaken
- optimal learning environments facilitate accessible learning experiences where:
 - outcomes are planned and monitored
 - meaningful reporting is undertaken
 - appropriate certification is awarded
 - provision of reasonable adjustments for students to engage in the curriculum.

Services

- consultative school-based teams draw input from various services including Brisbane Catholic Education personnel, other professionals, agencies and associations.

Partnerships

- educational partnerships are established in schools and with schools.⁴

Transition (managing change)

- students move into new learning environments with support
- student transition is monitored
- accurate records are kept
- timely planning occurs
- relevant networking is undertaken.

Student safety and wellbeing

- all members of a school community seek to create and promote safe, supportive, inclusive learning environments (*National Safe Schools Framework*)⁵
- social/emotional support is provided where required
- victimisation and harassment is addressed appropriately
- grievances of students, teachers, parents and caregivers are managed with empathy, confidentiality and in a timely manner.

Professional development

- staff of Brisbane Catholic Education are engaged in appropriate professional development to fully understand and implement this policy.

GLOSSARY

Adjustment/s: a measure or action or a group of measures or actions taken by an education provider that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability.

Personalised planning: a process that relies on partnerships with parents/caregivers and relevant others to monitor adjustments and review outcomes.

Enrolment Application and Support Procedure (EASP): a consultative process developed by Brisbane Catholic Education to determine the educational needs of the student applying for enrolment and to plan for the adjustments to support the student's access and participation at school.

Optimal learning environment: an environment that uses effective design, techniques and approaches to engage successful learning and independence.

Reasonable adjustment: an adjustment is reasonable in relation to a student with a disability if it balances the interests of all parties affected.

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 4. Catholic Education Council, 2019, *Family School Partnerships Policy*, Brisbane.
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