

Wellington Christian School Policy



LEARNING SUPPORT

RANGS Reference	3.6.2
Date of Last Review	February 2016
Board approval required	
Owner	Principal

RATIONALE

Wellington Christian School seeks to provide an inclusive environment where all students are encouraged to reach their full potential and celebrate the success and diversity of others. It is recognised that there are students who experience barriers to social and learning participation due to a Disability that may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration. At Wellington Christian School (WCS), a student with a Disability will have opportunities and choices which are comparable with those offered to students without a Disability. WCS will continue to encourage a positive, inclusive ethos at WCS among staff, students and parents to combat harassment and victimisation of students with a Disability and promote acceptance.

BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK

Each student has been uniquely created in the image of God and is special to Him and has intrinsic value. Therefore individuality and diversity within the classroom are valued, recognising that the school has a responsibility as a caring Christian community to work in partnership with families to develop the God-given gifts of each student.

"The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it" 1 Corinthians 12:22-27

To live in a redemptive way, we are exhorted in the Bible to consider others and to act justly, with mercy and in humility towards all.

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me" Matthew 25:40

The Christian School, motivated by the love of Christ, seeks to do whatever it can to ensure students with special educational needs are included in the school program, not marginalised nor excluded, in order to communicate that God has a specific purpose in store for each.

"From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" Ephesians 4:16

Children are nurtured to know, love and serve the Lord and develop their God given talents to the best of their ability for service in extending His kingdom and glorifying the Lord. All students have different measures

of talents and a responsibility to develop and use these. Each student is valued and should be encouraged and supported in a manner consistent with the principles expressed in 1 Corinthians 12.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students with a Disability enrolled at WCS.

AIMS

The policy seeks to ensure that a student with a Disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. This applies to:

- admission or enrolment at the school
- participation in courses or programs
- use of facilities and services.

Wellington Christian School aims to:

- Be a welcoming and inclusive school community
- Provide differentiated educational programs designed to cater for the diversity existing in every classroom, thus maintaining an acceptable level of learning for every student
- Remove wherever possible any environmental barriers to social and learning participation and increase the engagement of all students in the life of the school
- Respect and value the role of parents/carers and student themselves, where appropriate in partnering in decision making and planning processes

Students with a Disability will be provided with the same opportunities as other students to take advantage of the range of social and educational opportunities provided by the school and to use the facilities and services provided by WCS.

DEFINITIONS

1. *Inclusion* – the process of increasing the successful participation of all students within the mainstream classroom, regardless of need or differences. It provides all students with a Disability with challenging and motivating educational programs that are tailored to their capabilities and needs, as well as any support and assistance they and/or their teachers may need in order to reduce barriers to social and learning inclusion.
2. *Disability* – has the same meaning as the definition of “disability” in s 5 of the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)(DDA)*.
3. *Reasonable Adjustments* and *Unjustifiable Hardship* have the same meanings as the definitions of those terms in the *Disability Standards for Education (2005) made under the DDA*.
4. *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* – is a document developed by the school, students and parents/carers to connect goals to a student’s strengths, interests, learning preferences and current levels of performance, and establishes a strategic yet responsive long term plan based on identified priorities, considering specialist recommendations. It provides clear direction for participation in the curriculum and identifies the services and experiences required for student achievement in the identified area of need from enrolment through to transition from school.
5. *Differentiation* – refers to the adjustments that teachers make to address the learning needs of students.
6. *Associate* – has the same meaning as the definition of “Associate” in s 5 of the DDA.

POLICY STATEMENT

Enrolment at WCS

1. WCS will:
 - 1.1 consult a prospective student, or an associate of a prospective student, about whether the Disability affects the prospective student's ability to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment at WCS;
 - 1.2 in light of the consultation, decide whether it is necessary to make an adjustment to ensure that the prospective student is able to seek enrolment with WCS on the same basis as a prospective student without a Disability;
 - 1.3 if an adjustment is necessary to meet the aim referred to in 1.2 and a reasonable adjustment can be identified in relation to that aim, WCS will make that adjustment.
2. Enrolment of students with needs that would impose Unjustifiable Hardship upon the school to achieve full integration will be negotiated but may not be possible. WCS may not be able to cater for some students' needs and may not be able to provide a specialised program for students who are not able to be fully integrated due to significant behavioural, emotional, intellectual, physical or educational needs where that would impose Unjustifiable Hardship on WCS.
3. Where WCS is able to accept admission or enrolment of a student with a Disability, WCS will:
 - 3.1 consult in order to understand the impact of a student's Disability and to determine whether any adjustments or changes are needed to assist the student;
 - 3.2 make reasonable adjustments except where that would impose Unjustifiable Hardship on the school taking into account the likely benefit or detriment of the adjustment on all persons affected, the nature of the Disability of the student and the financial circumstances of the school; and
 - 3.3 take reasonable steps to prevent harassment and victimisation of students with a Disability.

Participation in courses or programs and use of facilities

4. Wellington Christian School is committed to providing appropriate curriculum for all students, including those with a Disability, that is relevant, functional and both developmentally and chronologically age appropriate.

Consultation

5. WCS will consult in order to understand the impact of a student's Disability and to determine whether any adjustments or changes are needed to assist the student. The consultation process will include one or more of the following matters:
 - 5.1 WCS talking with the student and their family members or carers to understand the type of assistance that is needed;
 - 5.2 discussing ways to overcome the barriers and the adjustments that could be made by WCS and whether these adjustments are reasonable
 - 5.3 provision by the student or their family members or carers of relevant medical and therapist reports that help to explain the Disability and the needs and supports that can help;
 - 5.4 WCS confirming the issues discussed during the consultations and the decisions made; including if applicable, specifying a date for notifying the student about what adjustments will or will not be made and the date of implementation;
 - 5.5 meeting regularly to ensure that intended learning and other outcomes are achieved;
 - 5.6 WCS keeping a record of those meetings, following up in writing what has been agreed and what each person will do and when.

Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery

6. Educational objectives for a student with a Disability will be systematically tailored through Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) to accommodate individual student abilities and needs and will also include a focus on student strengths and interests. Parents/carers (and students themselves where appropriate) as well as outside agencies if required, will be involved in these planning processes.

Individualised Education Plans (IEP)

7. An IEP will be developed and implemented for a student with a Disability as follows:
 - 7.1 for a new student with a Disability commencing their first year of school with WCS, within the first 10 weeks of enrolment;
 - 7.2 for an existing student with a Disability, by no later than the last school day of Term 1 of each school year;
8. The IEP will address and reflect:
 - 8.1 curriculum requirements and content with anticipated appropriate outcomes; and
 - 8.2 adjustments to curriculum and learning environment (if required); and
 - 8.3 levels of learning aide support and times as well as any specialised equipment (if or as required); and
 - 8.4 any adjustments required to give access to support services necessary for participation in the activities in which the student is enrolled;
 - 8.5 appropriate measureable and quantifiable assessment and reporting requirements;
 - 8.6 inclusive practices by identifying where and how learning goals can be achieved within typical class activities designed to meet curriculum outcomes.
9. IEP reviews will be programmed and scheduled to occur each semester of each school year (and more frequently if the agreed IEP requires it) with a parent / carer (or any of them) and one or more of the classroom teacher, support aide and Principal at the election of the parent / carer (or any of them).
10. Primary responsibility for meeting the specific social and learning needs of students with a Disability will lie with the classroom teacher and the Principal. The teacher will in consultation with the Principal:
 - 10.1 adapt the principles of teaching and learning to meet specific social and learning needs of a student with a Disability in accordance with the IEP;
 - 10.2 use curriculum content descriptors, their own formal assessment information and their personal knowledge of students to determine each student's level of achievement;
 - 10.3 ensure that the intended learning for a student with a Disability is relevant, meaningful and rigorous;
 - 10.4 take into account the social and learning strengths and needs of each student with a Disability and plan adjustments to the learning activities, assessment strategies and/or social and learning environments;
 - 10.5 prepare supported and adjusted teaching programs for all students with a Disability.
11. The IEPs for each student with a Disability, including health plans and risk assessments, will be stored, managed and/or made available to WCS staff as appropriate in a way that respects and protects all parties' rights to privacy and confidentiality and in accordance with the WCS Privacy Policy.

Assessment including examination modifications

12. WCS will facilitate students pursuing individually appropriate program content that is either below or above typical grade level through a differentiated curriculum.
13. WCS may require the assessment of existing student knowledge and strengths to design programs that meet the nature and extent of learning support required to meet the unique needs of individual students with a Disability.
14. Such assessments as WCS may require to determine the nature and extent of learning support required will be undertaken in consultation with a parent / carer, the Principal and any external expert suitably qualified in the area of special needs.
15. WCS will seek targeted funding for students with a Disability, including Literacy and Numeracy funding, Integration funding and Capital Works and Equipment funding.
16. WCS will put in place targeted support for all students with a Disability who fall below National Minimum Standards in Literacy and/or Numeracy with the goal of assisting these students to be able to meet the standards.
17. WCS will facilitate access to special provisions for students a Disability under NESA guidelines, and ensure such provisions are provided in the school context for relevant assessments.

Use of facilities / services

18. WCS will make reasonable adjustments to facilities/services to accommodate a student with a Disability such as wheelchair access, an interpreter, a reader/writer or technologies such as microphones/earpieces, except where to do so would cause unjustifiable hardship.

Preventing harassment and victimisation of students with a Disability

19. WCS will actively teach the importance of accepting students with a Disability and the obligation not to harass or victimise a student with a Disability, or a student who has an Associate with a Disability, in order to create an environment of belonging for all.

Disability awareness education for staff and students

20. WCS will take the following steps to raise disability awareness among staff and students at the school:
 - 20.1 Host the DCS Learning Support Coordinator, who has attended professional development regarding IEPs and disability awareness training, to impart relevant knowledge to WCS staff and also students. This should take place during Term 1 each year.

Prevention of harassment and victimisation

21. Facilitation of inclusion will be a shared responsibility, with all parties involved (including teachers, learning support staff, parents/carers/families and outside agencies) working within a collaborative partnership.
22. WCS will ensure that its staff and students are informed about:
 - 22.1 the obligation not to harass or victimise a student with a Disability, or a student who has an Associate with a Disability; and
 - 22.2 the action WCS will take if harassment or victimisation occurs;
 - 22.3 complaint mechanisms available to a student who is harassed or victimised in relation to the Disability of the student or of an Associate of the student.

23. WCS has implemented an Anti-Discrimination Policy which is expressed to apply to staff and students of WCS and addresses the obligations in paragraph 1922.1 19(b) of this Policy by:
- 23.1 explicitly prohibiting harassment and victimisation of students with a Disability and students who have an Associate with a Disability, including with respect to:
 - 23.1.1 the need for individual strategies and adjustments for a student with a Disability; and
 - 23.1.2 the need to use supports such as a wheelchair, hearing aid, breathing support, an interpreter, a reader, an assistant or carer or a guide or hearing dog, or other animal; and
 - 23.2 setting out the action that WCS will take in respect of any member of the staff or student body who engages in harassment or victimisation of a student with a Disability or a student who has an Associate with a Disability.
 - 23.3 This Learning Support Policy should be read in conjunction with the WCS Anti-Discrimination Policy.
 - 23.4 WCS has implemented a Grievance Policy which is expressed to apply to staff and students of WCS and addresses the obligations in paragraph 19(c) of this Policy by setting out the procedures for handling any cases or complaints of harassment and victimisation and requiring cases or complaints to be handled promptly and with due regard to the severity of the matter. The Grievance Policy should be read in conjunction with this Policy.

Related Policies & Procedures	Person Responsible
Anti-Discrimination Policy	Principal
Anti-Harassment Policy	Principal
Grievance Policy	Principal
Learning Support Procedures	Principal