Inclusive Education Policy

Caritas College School Board
Rationale for Inclusive Education

“The vision which underlies this policy identifies the Catholic school as a place where access and participation are provided for all students … families are the first and continuing educators of their children. Catholic schools therefore seek to work in partnership with families in the education of their children. Within Catholic Education, each child is welcomed as a unique expression of God’s love into the inclusive environment and life of the Catholic school community.” (SACCS Students with Disabilities Policy, 2010)

The vision and mission for learning at Caritas College is to enable students to reach their full potential. We build dynamic partnerships with families, students, staff and the community so all are included and feel welcome. We recognise our pastoral responsibility to cater for all students, and are committed to identifying the range of needs of students in our school1, and providing them with the appropriate educational access necessary to enable them to be successfully engaged in their context.

This policy is developed out of an understanding of and commitment to creating a learning environment and curriculum that meets the needs of all students.

This policy supports the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005). The disability Standards for Education clarify the obligations of educational providers to respect the rights of the student and to provide access and participation in all areas of the curriculum.

Responsibility for the wellbeing and successful outcomes for all students is shared by all members of the school community. Families, carers, the school, agencies and professionals work in partnership to build on strengths and create opportunities for students to achieve.

At Caritas College all aspects of teaching and learning – curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment – is done in a manner that is inclusive of all learners in each unique class group.

1Refer to the definition of ‘range of students in our school’ in this policy.
The role of the School Board is to:
- Develop, monitor and be accountable for capital development to ensure anti discrimination legislation and policy are observed
- Ensure OHS&W considerations are observed in the development of master plans
- Monitor that educational and professional teaching standards are upheld.

Role of the Principal is to:
- Provide strong educational leadership in curriculum and develop a culture of inclusion in the school community
- Initiate planning and enrolment procedures to ensure the inclusive access of all students from the commencement of the enrolment journey
- Work collaboratively and be clear and accountable to families regarding adjustments and access to the curriculum
- Ensure ongoing professional learning in child protection and child safe environments to increase staff recognition, awareness and understanding of how these areas relate to all students
- Enable staff to access relevant and timely professional learning relating to inclusive education and incorporate into classroom practice
- In collaboration with families work with agencies and professionals to enable the best outcomes for the child
- Provide professional learning in all school policies to implement measures to fulfil all OHS&W obligations

Role of the Families is to:
- Share all relevant information, experience and skills relating to their child with school staff
- Collaborate in the consultation and review process regarding the child’s progress and agreed adjustments
- Be familiar with and support the Inclusive Education Policy

Role of the Teachers is to:
- Be clear and accountable to all stakeholders in line with school policies regarding access to the curriculum and student achievement
- Use professional judgement to differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities
- Engage in contemporary and timely professional learning to respond to a range of learning styles and needs
- Incorporate reasonable adjustments in regards to curriculum, instruction and environment in collaboration with agencies and professionals
- Plan and implement rich, contextual, authentic teaching, learning and assessment
- Work with the student, family and professionals to explore transition options and post-school pathways which support life-long learning and wellbeing
- Use a collaborative approach to make reasonable adjustments in regards to curriculum, instruction and environment

Role of the students is to:
- Be involved, where possible and appropriate, in discussing and reviewing learning goals, strengths and challenges
- Cooperate with teachers by engaging in learning to reach their full potential
- Be responsive to strategies that support the safety and wellbeing of self and others
Definitions

Range of students in our school
This may include students with disabilities, learning difficulties, areas of giftedness or talent, and/or students with "at risk" factors impacting on learning:

Disabilities – language impairment, physical disabilities, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, vision impairment, emotional/behavioural. The school receives resourcing support through CESA to assist the school to support these students’ learning.

Learning difficulties – ADD/ADHD, specific learning difficulties, borderline cognitive functioning, CAP-D, low average ability, fluctuating hearing loss, coordination disorder

“at risk” factors – socio-economic, socio-cultural, absenteeism, substance abuse, gambling, domestic violence, family bereavement, serious family sickness, disabilities, learning difficulties, etc.

Gifted and talented- areas of strength identified by a psychologist

Inclusive teaching practices
Inclusive teaching practice requires teachers to use pedagogies that enable the range of learners to engage meaningfully with their learning. It requires teachers to adapt, create and strategize to maximise learning for all students in their classes. This includes providing scaffolded learning tasks, open-ended tasks, and a range of opportunities to demonstrate learning, and requires teachers to know their students’ learning capabilities well.4

Differentiate
Differentiation refers to adjustments that are made to teaching practice which accommodates the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities. It refers to measures or actions taken to assist students to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

Reasonable adjustments
An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with individual needs, the school, staff and other students.5

References
CESA Vision Statement
Caritas College Vision and Mission
Caritas College Enrolment Policy
Caritas College Behaviour Education Policy
SACCS Students with Disabilities Policy
Principles of social justice and equity
Curriculum Frameworks – SACSA, SACE Board, ACARA Australian Curriculum
Anti-discrimination legislation
CESA New Enrolment and Support Procedure

4From ‘Quite simply, the practice of teaching’, Caritas College, page12
5From ACARA, Using the Australian Curriculum to meet the learning needs of students with disability – draft advice for teachers, 2012