

IDENTIFYING STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE NEEDS POLICY

1.0 Purpose

Hillbrook School has a clear and concise process for identifying, assessing and supporting students with diverse needs. The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) outline how we identify students with diverse needs in a manner that takes into account the learning, medical, functional, educational, intellectual, health and social/emotional needs, or learning difficulties or learning support requirements, of the student while balancing the interests of all parties affected and that complies with the relevant legislation; and
- b) clearly set out the process for deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable and whether the School is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the learning, medical, functional, educational, intellectual, health and social/emotional needs, or learning difficulties or learning support requirements, of the student.

Relevant legislation includes the following:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*

2.0 Definition of Disability

Disability, in relation to a person, means:

- a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- d) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- e) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- f) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- a) presently exists; or
- b) previously existed but no longer exists; or
- c) may exist in the future; or
- d) is imputed to a person.

(Section 1.4, Disability Standards for Education 2005)

3.0 Identifying Students with an additional need

Students with diverse needs may be identified at the time of enrolment through consultation with parents, feeder schools or other outside agencies or during the student's period of enrolment at the School. The Enrichment Team, will facilitate this process in consultation with the School Leadership Team. The purpose of identification is to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate a student with additional needs within the learning environment whilst balancing the interests of all parties affected. This process seeks to assist a student with a disability in participating within the education process on the same basis as their peers as much as possible and seeks to identify the most effective methods to meet the needs of the student and incorporate their individual strengths and abilities.

The School will have regard to the student's particular educational, medical, functional, health, emotional and intellectual requirements, and learning difficulties or learning support requirements, and any other medical, dietary or psychological condition (Needs) at the time of applying for enrolment and to determine what, if any, reasonable adjustments can be made in order to accommodate the enrolment of the student at the School.

4.0 Making Reasonable Adjustments

An adjustment is reasonable if it assists a student with Needs, who requires additional support, or who is impacted by or suffers from a condition, access education on the same basis as students without Needs and/or a condition and/or who do not require additional support. The School will take into account the interests of all stakeholders when considering if an adjustment is reasonable.

In order to determine whether adjustments are reasonable and should be enacted to accommodate a student, the School can request from the parents, and have regard to, information from specialist personnel, including, but not limited to, the student's previous education providers, disability agencies, medical and allied health professionals and verification personnel.

The School is not required to:

- (a) make an adjustment unless it is necessary;
- (b) make adjustments which the School considers to be unreasonable; and
- (c) make an adjustment that would place unjustifiable hardship on the School.

The School is afforded absolute discretion to determine whether:

- (a) an adjustment is necessary and reasonable; and

(b) a reasonable adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship on the School.

To determine whether an adjustment is necessary and reasonable, the School will have regard to the following matters:

- (a) the student's Needs, requirements for additional support or any other condition/s that they are impacted or affected by;
- (b) the information that has been provided to the School in respect of the student's Needs, requirements for additional support and/or other condition/s;
- (c) information and documentation provided by specialist personnel;
- (d) the level of resources and funding required to accommodate the student;
- (e) the effect the adjustment would have on all affected parties, including, but not limited to the School, other students of the School and staff members of the School;
- (f) the student's ability to adequately participate in all aspects of School life if the adjustment were to be made, including:
 - (i) the School's rigorous academic curriculum;
 - (ii) co-curricular activities;
 - (iii) the School's outdoor education program; and
 - (iv) adhering to the School's policies and procedures.
- (g) the level of independence that will feasibly be able to be achieved by the student if an adjustment is made;
- (h) the extent to which the adjustment will impact upon the resources available at the School;
- (i) whether, when making the adjustment, the School is able to uphold the duty of care it owes the subject student, other students of the School and employees of the School.

Before deciding to enact an adjustment which has been considered reasonable, the School will consult with the parents of the student regarding those matters.

Where an enrolled Student develops Needs, additional support requirements and another condition/s, or their Needs, support requirements or other condition/s change, the School will reassess whether further reasonable adjustments can be made in order to continue to accommodate the enrolment of the Student at the School.

The School will not use or disclose any confidential information of the student except when considering the School's ability to accommodate the student and the making of any reasonable adjustments. Any use or disclosure of a student's confidential information will at all times be in compliance with the School's *Privacy Policy*.

5.0 Identification of Students during the Enrolment Process

- 5.1 Enrolments Officer makes a note of applications from families where the child has an identified additional need.
- 5.2 Enrichment Team interview the families individually to ascertain areas/levels of need.
- 5.3 Families must provide all specialist document during the interview process.
- 5.4 Enrichment Team complete Enrolment Interview form during this process.
- 5.5 Offers are made accordingly. In some cases, further discussion and meetings will need to be held between the family and a member of the SLT.
- 5.6 Once the offer has been accepted, a Teacher Feedback form will be sent when the child is in Year 6 to obtain updated information.
- 5.7 All information received from parents, feeder schools and specialists will be passed onto Year 7 teachers and the Enrichment Team.

6.0 Identification of Students with Diverse Needs while students of Hillbrook

- 6.1 If a parent or teacher has concerns about a student, they should firstly approach the Home or Class Teacher, then the Year Coordinator
- 6.2 The Home or Class Teacher or Year Coordinator will then approach a staff member from the Enrichment Team either via email, telephone or in person
- 6.3 The Enrichment Team will then take time to observe the student in different settings to determine what sort of support is required. The Enrichment Team will arrange a meeting with parents, if it is required
- 6.4 If it is determined that an educational assessment is required, the Enrichment Team will provide parents with relevant contacts
- 6.5 If it is determined that a medical assessment is required, the Enrichment Team will provide parents with relevant contacts
- 6.6 If the external assessment reveals a diagnosis, the Enrichment Team will prepare an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for distribution to staff and meet with staff to discuss relevant strategies to be used to support the student