



# *St Joseph's Catholic School*

*Queenstown*

## **INCLUSION POLICY**

**Adapted from the Inclusion Policy for Catholic Schools in Tasmania, developed by the Catholic Education Office, Tasmania.**

### **VISION**

Embracing the principles of Inclusivity, St Joseph's Catholic School strives towards educational excellence for all children.

### **MISSION**

The provision of an inclusive education is an integral part of the Church's response to justice in the world. Our mission is to enable all children to reach their potential regardless of their individual differences.

Underpinning this policy is the belief that every human life, created in the image of God, has dignity and value. It is of paramount importance that we believe children with special learning need, children of different cultural, racial, religious, ethnic and social backgrounds are first and foremost unique individuals, recognising that a 'different life does not mean a less important life. It does not mean a life with less potential for holiness or contributing to the well-being of the world'. (Pope John Paul II Brisbane, 1986)

The mission of St Joseph's Catholic School is to provide equitable and just policy, practices and procedures to promote and enable inclusive education for all children. This is consistent with the legal rights of students and the obligations of schools under a range of state and federal legislation. (eg Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Act (1986), Disability Discrimination Act (1992), Sex discrimination Act (1994).)

### **PRINCIPLES**

St Joseph's Catholic School acknowledges the rights of all Catholic children to schooling in a Catholic context regardless of their social, physical, intellectual and psychological status. We support the pursuit of equity for all enrolled and enrolling children.

## **RATIONALE**

Children with special learning needs and children from different cultural, racial, ethnic and social and religious backgrounds, upon enrolment, have the right to participate fully in the educational process and activities of the school. All children are learners with the potential to achieve. This will occur best in an environment that is inclusive, welcoming and friendly and where there is shared responsibility by all members of the school community. Inclusion requires a whole school approach that reflects acceptance, collaboration and full participation.

St Joseph's Catholic School is committed to the provision of equitable education opportunities that allow all enrolled children access to, participation in and the opportunity to gain positive educational outcomes. The concept of inclusion is based on the notion that our school should provide for the needs of all children in our community. St Joseph's Catholic School celebrates diversity in ability as well as cultural, racial, ethnic and social background. Our school is committed to the challenge to adapt and change to provide appropriate support structures to successfully educate all children. As an inclusive school we accept the right of children to have access to and participate in an education that enables them to maximise their potential.

### **Equity, education and social justice are achieved at St Joseph's Catholic School by promoting:**

- Relevant curriculum practices that respond to identified learning needs and which are achieved through the development and delivery of inclusive curriculum within key learning areas.
- Access where available to specialised support services to enhance participation and support for successful educational outcomes.
- Recognition of the rights of parents/carers to be fully informed and to participate in decisions relating to their child's education.
- Processes for collaborative decision-making – parents, carers, teachers, professionals, support personnel and children. This process recognises that there may be differing views and expectations of the purpose of

education. These need to be acknowledged and valued in order to develop effective partnerships.

- Regular review and evaluation of educational programs, implementation and outcomes for children.
- The development where possible of appropriate resources in the form of additional personnel, specific training and development and technical assistance to support staff.

### **Children with special learning needs have the right to:**

- An education in an environment that is free from discrimination caused by harassment or victimisation.
- An equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all school activities and learning programs.
- Reasonable considerations, provisions and alterations that accommodate their special learning need.
- Inclusive assessment practices that include both formal and informal evaluations. Evaluations to be based on a child's ability not their disability.
- Seek review of the school's decisions concerning considerations, provisions and adjustments.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibility for supporting the inclusion of children with special learning needs is a community partnership involving the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, St Joseph's Catholic School, parents/carers, children.

#### **Catholic Education Office**

The role of the Catholic Education Office is to provide an organisational structure, within the broad educational and social justice framework, to assist schools with ongoing support to meet their responsibilities to children with special learning needs by:

- Being familiar with and promoting this policy.
- Promoting and supporting development of school policies and effective program development and delivery services.
- Equitable allocation of resources, facilities and services to schools to support children with special learning needs.

- Providing relevant consultation, professional learning and support to staff who are delivering services.
- Monitoring and evaluating program development and practices, which reflect social justice principles.
- Advocating for children with special learning needs.
- Supporting schools, families and children in resolving any disagreement or conflict, which cannot be resolved at the local school level.
- Liaising with government and non-government agencies on issues concerning children with special learning needs.

### **Principal**

The role of the Principal is to provide an organisational structure, within an educational social justice framework, that supports children with special learning needs and considers the needs of all children by:

- Establishing and maintaining a welcoming and friendly environment for all children.
- Promoting the policy in the context of the school.
- Appointing a leadership team member to coordinate and provide overviews of inclusion of children with special learning needs.
- Develop and support effective practices and procedures that ensure the implementation of this policy.
- Monitoring and evaluating program development and practices, which reflect social justice principles.
- Encouraging participation and involvement of the school community, parents/carers, staff and children.
- Identifying and planning for provision and allocation of resources and modification of facilities, within a safe and supportive school environment.
- Developing mechanisms to enable students who are entitled, to access special provisions and accommodations.
- Provision of professional learning for all staff.
- Actively supporting policy development and procedures that eliminate harassment and discrimination. eg Anti-Harassment Policy.

## **Teacher (Class, Support)**

The role of the teacher at St Joseph's Catholic School is to work collaboratively and consultatively to provide for all children within an educational and social justice framework by:

- Being informed of and promoting the principles and requirements of the school's Inclusion Policy.
- Recognising that all children are learners in the mainstream curriculum, and that their learning outcomes should be based on National Statements and Profiles.
- Identifying and establishing the abilities, skills and knowledge necessary for successful learning outcomes and clearly communicating these to the children and significant others.
- Negotiating alternative assessment strategies and special examination provisions that consider the individual child's needs, maintaining the integrity of academic standards.
- Participating in Learning Support team meetings, case conferences, Individual Educational Plan development, program writing and implementation that focuses on measurable, observable learning and social outcomes.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards and understanding of children of different cultural, racial, ethnic and social backgrounds.
- Modifying curriculum to maximise individual children's potential and success in a supportive inclusion environment, for example:
  - Modification to subject content, assignments and tasks
  - A variety of appropriate classroom and playground management strategies
  - Access to specialised technology, equipment and materials
  - Personal care and/or mobility assistance
  - Arranging assistance from specialist staff
  - In-class support
  - Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of educational programs
  - Providing advocacy and support for children with special learning needs
  - Undertaking relevant professional learning
  - Enabling parents/carers, children to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

### **Parents/carers of children with special learning needs.**

Parents/carers are supported and encouraged to work collaboratively and consultatively within the school community, to achieve the principles of social justice by:

- Being informed of and promoting the principles and requirement of the school's Inclusion Policy.
- Being considered and reasonable advocates for their child.
- Providing information and relevant documentation for their child's support needs in an educational setting, especially where this requires special provisions, assistance, modifications and delivery of programs.
- Being a contributor to the Learning Support team, participating in planning and decision making in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Individual Educational Plan.
- Maintaining close interaction with key personnel, relevant to the level of need.
- Assisting their child to meet and maintain the school's expectations as with any child.

### **Children**

Children are encouraged to work collaboratively with all members of the school community to achieve the principles of education and social justice by:

- Developing skills and confidence in advocacy.
- Participating in decision-making processes, where applicable.
- Being actively involved in their own learning programs.
- Working with the school community and personnel to achieve appropriate learning outcomes.
- Meeting school community requirements, with in reason and where appropriate.

**It is acknowledged that all children with severe to profound special learning needs may not be able to access all mainstream curriculum, even with modification.**

*This policy will be reviewed as part of the St Joseph's Catholic School policy review cycle.*

**Implemented April 2006; February 2009**