



Inclusion Policy

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Purpose

At Mercedes College, our diverse and multicultural community is highly valued. Our students, families and staff bring a wealth of experience and broad range of backgrounds to our learning environment. We welcome each student as a unique expression of God's love into the inclusive environment and life of the College community.

Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016) to enable students to maximise their potential.

This Policy is one of 5 policies mandated by the International Baccalaureate Organisation and is an important outcome from the Mercedes College Policy on Learning.

This Policy:

- Communicates the college's vision for a diverse and positive culture.
- Recognises and supports the unique strengths and needs of Indigenous, International, English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) and neurodiverse students.
- Supports consistent and transparent policies and practices programs and experiences that acknowledge learner diversity and enable meaningful access, participation and success for all students.
- Reflects inclusive practices fundamental to the ethos of the college to support the development of the spiritual, physical, intellectual and social dimensions of all students as specified in the Learning Policy (2019).
- Ensures compliance with disability legislations outlined in the Department for Education (SA) On the Same Basis (2014) legislation
- Embeds accountability requirements of The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD);
- Is underpinned by principles of inclusion outlined by the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), Department for Education (DfE), the International

- Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) Standards and Practices (2018) and Council of International Schools (CIS) Domains (2020).
- Shapes college processes and resourcing to support inclusion.

Guiding Principles

Mercedes College Mission

As a Catholic school in the Mercy tradition and inspired by the Gospels, we work in partnership with families enabling students to flourish in all aspects of their humanity and thus contribute to a better and more peaceful world.

Mercedes College Vision

To be a sustainable, internationally minded world-class school, providing a holistic educational experience for our students within a unique culture and community where we honour traditions and live the Mercy Keys.

Mercedes College Values

We live by the Mercy Keys: Compassion, Loyalty, Justice, Integrity, Responsibility and Mutual Respect across our daily interactions and strategic decisions.

IB Mission

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Definitions

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers (IBO, 2016).

Inclusion and inclusive education refers to a broad understanding that embraces the diversity of all learners and all minority groups (IBO, 2016).

Learner diversity refers to an understanding that students have differing and individual learning needs.

Policy Principles

All students have a right to engage in, be challenged by, and experience success in their education.

- Learning experiences are broad, accessible and developmentally appropriate.

- Learning experiences are flexible and responsive to student need.
- Teachers differentiate and adjust student learning accordingly to address barriers and ensure all students have the opportunity to experience success.
- Assessment is consistent, equitable, inclusive and transparent.
- Students are given a voice to shape the learning experience.
- The college will create affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and growth for every student.

Diversity is understood to include all members of a community.

- Principles of inclusion are applied to all activities offered by the college.
- Diversity is celebrated as a rich resource to build inclusive communities.
- Multiculturalism and multilingualism are promoted as a value, a right and a resource.

The college has processes to identify and support student diversity.

- The college provides staff formation opportunities that enable staff to develop and update knowledge to provide best outcomes for all students.
- Enrolment processes include the collection of data that enables the college to identify the learning and well-being needs of students.
- The college will collect and analyse student wellbeing and learning data to identify and provision appropriate targeted support.
- Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs) are created and regularly reviewed to shape appropriate adjustments to foster student success.
- Decisions regarding eligibility for special provisions in curriculum and assessment (including exemptions) are evidence based and considered on a case by case basis.
- All processes of inclusion involve consultation with students and families and include the identification of any implications for program completion and learning pathways.
- The college ensures programs of inclusion are clearly defined and appropriately staffed.

Responsibilities

Principal and Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure inclusion practices are a core consideration in strategic and operational directions.
- Ensure that college communication is inclusive.
- Appoint appropriate number of qualified support and teaching staff.
- Provide opportunities for staff formation in inclusive practices.

- Identify, develop and maintain resources and processes to ensure data regarding student diversity is accessible to teachers.
- Encourage development of broad and accessible learning experiences.
- Encourage all staff to engage in professional learning opportunities around diversity, differentiation, inclusion, disability and giftedness.

Learning Enrichment Team

- Recognise, celebrate and advocate for diverse learning needs.
- Model, promote and foster a culture of inclusion, welcoming students and families with diverse backgrounds and learning profiles.
- Develop and refine processes to identify and support needs of students.
- Collaborate with staff, students and families to monitor, review and plan for individual progress.
- Foster student success through intentional, responsive and targeted support approaches.
- Coordinate the development, updating and distribution of Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs).
- Collaborate with admissions staff and key stakeholders to support successful transitions for students with additional needs to commence enrolment at Mercedes College.
- Support and facilitate wider college initiatives to refine and develop inclusive practices

Wellbeing Team

- Recognise and advocate for diverse student needs, including varying states of wellbeing.
- Model, promote and foster a culture of inclusion, welcoming students and families with diverse backgrounds and learning profiles.
- Develop and refine processes to promote well-being in the college community.
- Assess, respond to and monitor the wellbeing needs of students, families and staff.
- Collaborate with staff, students and families to monitor, review and plan for individual progress.
- Lead, evaluate and drive implementation of inclusive and culturally appropriate wellbeing resources, including intervention programs, counselling and student safety plans.

Program Coordinators

- Ensure learning programs are accessible to the widest possible range of students.
- Ensure the College's practices conform to external regulations.
- Clarify learning pathways that support student diversity.

Heads of School

- Monitor and oversee learning differentiation, adjustments and special provisions

Learning Area Leaders and Year Level Leaders

- Work collaboratively with teachers to identify and develop appropriate adjustments to support student diversity.
- Ensure learning activities are inclusive of, and accessible to, all students.

Teaching Staff

- Know the students in their classes and their individual learning needs by accessing and interpreting appropriate data to inform teaching and learning.
- Assist in developing Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs).
- Access, interpret and implement Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs) to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals through appropriate levels of adjustments.
- Encourage student agency in learning.
- Work collaboratively with Area of Study Coordinators, Year Level Coordinators, Program Coordinators and Heads of School to ensure individual students are appropriately catered for.
- Convey diversity through the use and display of languages, images and books.
- Encourage and support students to explore multiple perspectives.
- Challenge assumptions through inquiries that honour diversity (for example, writers from diverse cultures, male and female pioneers, inventors from a broad range of backgrounds, public figures/representatives from local and global communities).
- Reinforce desired values, dispositions and behaviours in class and in the playground.
- Provide ongoing opportunities to discuss and reflect on cultural, linguistic, ethnic and social diversity.

Families

- Recognise, value and support the diverse student cohort in which their children are included.
- Inform the college of any updates that may impact upon learning and wellbeing of their children.
- Partner with the college in the development of Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs) and other approaches that will support their children's development.
- Follow through on agreements with the college.
- Be prepared to respond to, and discuss, difficult topics such as national identity or local and global conflicts.
- Share and celebrate their own strengths and differences, which add to the rich diversity at Mercedes College.

Students

- Engage with different students in the learning environments.
- Be tolerant and respectful.
- Show empathy by understanding and sharing the feelings of others.
- Learn to be aware that body language can also send messages of inclusion or exclusion.
- Let go of their own assumptions or prejudices.
- Listen to other perspectives without making judgments.
- Treat everyone with mutual respect, including those who speak a different language, come from a different country or have a different learning need or belief.
- Resolve conflict through dialogue.
- Help new students feel at home in the learning community.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Model appropriate behaviours when insensitive behaviours are observed.

Connections to other Policies and Requirements

Inclusion and Admissions

Knowing the individual strengths, needs and background of students are crucial components in placing students in classes, fostering successful transitions and supporting teachers in designing engaging and relevant learning experiences.

The admissions process will include gathering evidence of diverse student strengths, needs and experiences, including relevant past achievement records such as school reports, NAPLAN results, EALD Language levels and any other relevant diagnostic reports.

An inclusive admissions process works in collaboration with members of the Learning Enrichment Team, College Psychologists, Head of School and relevant external professionals.

Where a specific or complex student need is identified, admissions process may include special provisions such as observations, additional transition visits, individualised resources or collaboration with allied health providers.

Inclusion and Language

At Mercedes College, we recognise diverse home languages and functional communication skills as important factors to promote meaningful inclusion.

Student language level and ability is acknowledged and incorporated into the planning of assessments, learning experiences and the admissions process. Language levels for EALD learners are assessed at enrolment and used to differentiate assessment as required. This therefore supports the Assessment Policy and Admissions Policy.

Inclusion and Academic Integrity

We strive to foster the skills our students require to demonstrate integrity throughout their learning journey.



Students are explicitly taught to be principled and honest about their work while appreciating and formally acknowledging the work of others.

We encourage teachers to design learning tasks that lead students to produce original and authentic work, in line with their developmental capabilities. This may include scaffolded tasks with details of requirements and structures for in-text citations, referencing work of others and paraphrasing.

This Policy enacts specific components of the Learning Policy and supports the Academic Integrity and Assessment Policies.

Inclusion and Assessment

Students with identified learning difficulties are supported through inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (e.g. additional time, use of assistive technology, breaks, etc.) for all assessments in one or more subjects throughout the year, as appropriate to their needs.

In the Diploma Program and South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) the procedure for identifying students' needs and granting access arrangements requiring authorisation is in compliance with the IB Access and Inclusion Policy and SACE Special Provision Guidelines.

Inclusive access arrangements are documented in students Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs).

References and Policy Links

Australian Government Acts

- Australian Education Act Regulations (2013)
- Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)
- Education and Children's Services Act, 2019 - previously Education Act 1972 (SA)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act (1986)

Department for Education, South Australia

- Principles of Inclusion for Children and Students with Disability in Education and Care (2020).
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education-and-child-development-decd/ministerial-advisory-committee-children-and-students-disability/principles-inclusion-children-students-disability>
- One the Same Basis: Section 1 – Disability Legislation
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/same-basis-section-1-disability-legislation>
- One the Same Basis: Section 2 – The Disability Standards for Education
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/same-basis-section-2-disability-standards-education>

Council Of International Schools

Evaluation Framework – Shaping the future of international education (2020)

International Baccalaureate Organisation

- Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes. (2016)
- Programme Standards and Practices (2020).
- Access and Inclusion Policy (2021).
- The IB Guide to Inclusive Education: a resource for whole school development (2019).
- Using UDL in the IB classroom (2016).

Mercedes College

- Guidelines for Exempting Students from the Study of Language Acquisition (2020).
- Language Policy (2017, 2022).
- Policy for Gifted and Talented Students (2015).
- Students with Disability Policy (2015).

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) <https://www.nccd.edu.au/>

South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board

- Modified Subjects Policy (2018).
- Special Provisions in Curriculum and Assessment Policy (2017).

South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools

- Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy (2022).
- A Blueprint for Step Change (2020).
- Students with Disability Policy (2015).
- Gifted and Talented Student Policy (2014).
- Enrolment Policy (2012).
- Support processes for Students with Disabilities (2010).

United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>



Appendix A: Policy Elaborations

Learning Enrichment Team

The Learning Enrichment Team (LET) provides services to students with academic, behavioural and social-emotional needs and supports teachers in the selection and use of appropriate strategies/interventions within the classroom.

The LET offers support to students in whole class, small group and individualised sessions.

The LET works in collaboration with NDIS providers to extend services to support student needs. These services include speech and language therapists, dyslexia therapists, occupational therapists, learning coaches, psychologists, behaviour therapists, medical doctors, physical therapists, tutors and consultants.

While this support may be provided on school premises, families are responsible for the associated fees.

The LET comprises a leadership team and learning enrichment staff.

The Learning Enrichment Leadership Team include Directors of Learning Enrichment, College Psychologists, and the College Health Administrator. They liaise with school personnel, state agencies and private entities to coordinate the delivery of services for students on the learning enrichment register. They provide guidance on interventions and strategies teachers need to address the challenges of students based on the concerns presented in the collaborative cycle meetings or by families. Additionally, they supervise the learning enrichment staff, ensure the necessary systems are in place to identify and refer students with difficulties and develop initiatives and programs to promote academic advancement and student wellbeing.

Learning Enrichment staff include education support officers and teaching staff. In collaboration with subject and homeroom teachers, they develop and implement individualised intervention plans addressing academic and behavioural/social/emotional concerns. They also monitor progress toward goals and coach teachers in the use of differentiated strategies.



Appendix B: IB Standards and Practices for Inclusion

Our Inclusion Policy is in alignment with the requirements for policy development as described in the New Programme Standards and Practices (2020).

In particular, we base our policy implementation on Standard 0301 in order to nurture a school culture that acknowledges and celebrates diversity.

Culture 2: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews an inclusion policy that creates cultures that support all students to reach their full potential. (0301-02)

Culture 2.1: The school implements and reviews an inclusion policy that meets IB guidelines. (0301-02-0100)

Culture 2.2: The school identifies in its inclusion policy all of its legal requirements and outlines the school's IB structures and processes for compliance. (0301-02-0200)

Culture 2.3: The school describes in its inclusion policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states the school's vision for implementing inclusive programmes. (0301-02-0300)

Culture 6: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews its IB mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy. (0301-06)

Culture 6.1: The school implements processes with consideration of the relationship between its IB mandated policies. (0301-06-0100)

Culture 6.2: The school documents its IB-mandated policies and communicates them to the school community. (0301-06-0200)

Culture 6.3: The school considers physical and virtual spaces in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0300)

Culture 6.4: The school articulates a planned integration of human, natural, built, or virtual resources in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0400)

Culture 6.5: The school considers the learner profile in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0500)

Culture 6.6: The school considers international-mindedness in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0600)

Culture 6.7: The pedagogical leadership team uses the school's IB-mandated policies in decision-making and curriculum development. (0301-06-0700)