



## Inclusive Education Policy

### **Background:**

Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners and being proactive in identifying the barriers that many encounter in accessing educational opportunities and identifying the resources needed to overcome those barriers (UNESCO, 2009).

All Australian schools must provide all students with access to high-quality schooling that is free from discrimination based on gender, language, sexual orientation, pregnancy, culture, ethnicity, religion, health or disability, socioeconomic background or geographic location. (<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/inclusive/> )

Inclusive education ensures that schools are supportive and engaging places for all school community members. It builds communities that value, celebrate and respond to diversity. It is underpinned by respectful relationships between learners and school community members. It is supported by collaborative relationships with parents and communities through communication, learning partnerships, participation and consultative decision-making. (<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/inclusive/> )

Inclusive education means that every day in every classroom, every state school student is learning and achieving in a safe, supportive, inclusive and disciplined learning environment.

The Victorian state government states that all Victorian schools act in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Victoria) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Commonwealth) to provide students with disabilities with reasonable adjustments, so that they can participate in their education on the same basis as students without a disability.

Jacana School for Autism's (JSA) mission is to foster resilience and lifelong learning enabling students to be active participants in family and community life. Students are supported by a committed professional multi-disciplinary team, working towards developing their personal and educational potential. All students have the right to feel and be safe in the framework of programs offered by the school and in those offered by external providers including excursion providers. In addition, the school embraces the Child Safe Standards by developing a proactive safe environment for all students which includes the school's choice of external providers to deliver additional programs for the students.

JSA strives to continually develop highly customised teaching and learning programs in line with Victoria Department of Education and Training (DET) Disability Education standards to ensure all students are supported to learn within an inclusive educational environment.

### **Rationale:**

The inclusive education policy acts as a guide on education practices to ensure that:

- JSA identify and support all reasonable changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies required for our students to ensure they are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as any other student
- JSA is an inclusive school by offering possibilities and opportunities for a range of working methods and individual treatment to ensure that no student is excluded from companionship and participation in the school
- JSA provides an inclusive curriculum addressing the student's cognitive, emotional, social and creative development.

### **Purpose:**

To ensure all staff act in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Standards for Education by making appropriate adjustments to their programs and to ensure all students are able to engage with and participate in education on the same basis as other students.

To provide guidance and description of the necessary actions required of an educational setting within DET to ensure inclusive education practices are met. These include:

- A person with a disability, is able to access education, participates in education and is treated in the same basis as any other student
- An Indigenous Australian and a person from a culturally and linguistically diverse background is treated in the same basis as any other student
- Reasonable adjustments are made to the education program to ensure all students are able to achieve their learning outcomes and are able to participate in courses or programs to develop independence
- Students, or an associate of the student, are consulted regarding the reasonable adjustments made to their learning program
  - That reasonable adjustment would be less disruptive and intrusive and no less beneficial for the student
  - Changed over the period of a student's education or training.
  - Adjustments are made in a reasonable time
- Orienting teacher education through continuous in-service development in order to developing flexible teaching-learning methodologies
- Welcoming diversity and involvement of parents and the community

### **Implementation**

A person with a disability is able to access education, participates in education and is treated in the same basis as any other student

- All students at JSA meet the criteria of support through the Program for Students with Disabilities providing the school with resources to assist with adhering to the obligations of the Disability Discrimination Act.

- All students are provided with a Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) that caters for their level of cognitive development including strategies and activities that are suitable for their chronological age.
- Develop school based resources and assessment tools for Victorian Curriculum areas particularly Levels A- to 2 (Recommendation 1 (State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), 2016, p. 9)
- Dual enrolment at JSA and a local neighbourhood mainstream school can occur when
  - integration has been successful for a student but who still needs time in a smaller tailored environment.
  - This may lead to full integration of students into mainstream education;
- To provide access to the Victorian Curriculum and appropriate assessment tools such as the Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) Assessment Tools
- Specialist education programs in the Arts, Food Technology and Physical Education;

Reasonable adjustments are made to the education program ensure the all students are able to ability to achieve learning outcomes, are able to participate in courses or programs and develop independence

- Provide increased access and participation of students in the curriculum through recommendations by therapists in their field of expertise.
- Access to community providers such as TAFE providing opportunities for senior secondary students to attend VCAL subjects off site.
- Access to work experience both school based and community based.
- Individual therapeutic resources to access education provided
  - Speech pathology consultancy to address communication, language, social development and mealtime safety
  - Occupational therapy consultancy to address sensory, physical and mobility needs and independence in activities of daily living
  - Psychology consultancy to address cognitive, social and emotional development can be accessed via referral to SSSO network when needed
- Integration – parents/carers and teachers negotiate part-time placement of appropriate students into their local neighbourhood or chosen school to gain experience in mainstream education;
- To recruit staff with Special Education qualifications and encourage all staff to undertake Special Education qualifications to deepen their conceptual understanding of student abilities, conditions and learning styles. Recommendation 4 (State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), 2016, p. 9)
- Provide comprehensive transition programs for new students and transitional pathways for exiting students
- Provide transitional support within the school as students change between classrooms throughout the year and at the end of year

Students, or an associate of the student, are consulted regarding the reasonable adjustments made to their learning program

- Student Representative Council
- SSGs
- Excursions within the community

## Orienting teacher education through continuous in-service development in order to developing flexible teaching-learning methodologies

- Support & utilise DET initiatives, directions, mandates and directions
  - o FISO
  - o Powerful learning
  - o Provide opportunity for all staff to undertake Disability Standards for Education eLearning
- To provide regular professional learning opportunities focussed on supporting all students to access the curriculum through strategies to enable communication, use of Positive Behaviour, self and co- regulation, social and emotional development and broaden the range of Autism specific evidence based strategies embedded within the student educational program. Recommendation 4 (State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), 2016, p. 9)
- Continue to research and trial evidence based strategies which may be effective for our students.
- Provide a mentoring program through Sub School Leaders, Positive Behaviour Support Coach and an Autism Spectrum Coach to support staff to implement appropriate and effective programs.
- Continue to develop and extend existing school based professional learning opportunities relevant to the school and the needs of students enrolling at the school.

## Welcoming diversity and involvement of parents and the community

1. Continue to provide professional support to neighbourhood schools and school where JSA students are integrated or have dual enrolment to support their placement and transitions.
2. Through the Centres of Excellence Program, provide outreach support to regional schools. This may include support to:
  - a. assess-the needs of students with Autism,
  - b. develop and provide recommendation for appropriate strategies to increase participation in the school,
  - c. develop and provide recommendation for specific programs that cater for their needs and /or
  - d. create an autism friendly environment which would support and be inclusive of all students.
3. Offer family and broader community engagement and development opportunities through the Community Learning Hub sessions.
4. Provide opportunity for termly student support group meetings (SSGs)
5. Organise and provide interpreting services for families and community members of a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

### **Resources:**

- Consultancy Model for Speech Pathology
- Consultancy Model for Occupational Therapy
- Integration Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Autism Spectrum Strategies (JSA)
- Positive Behaviour Support document (JSA)

## References

- Jacana School for Autism (2016). Vision and Values Retrieved 14th August 2016, from [http://www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au/?page\\_id=812](http://www.jacanaschoolforautism.vic.edu.au/?page_id=812)
- State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) (1998). *Program for Students with Disabilities - operational guidelines for schools 2017*. Retrieved 14th August 2016. from [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/handbook.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/handbook.aspx)
- State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) (2016). *Inclusive education for all students with disabilities and additional needs*. from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/departement/PSD-Review-Response.pdf>.
- State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) (2016). *Legal Obligations*. Retrieved on 5 September 2016 from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/legalobligations.aspx>
- United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2009. Retrieved on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf>
- State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) (2016). *Disability Standards: resources*. Retrieved on 5 September 2016 from <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/legislation.aspx>
- Queensland Government (2016). *Inclusive Education Policy*. Retrieved 5 September 2016 from <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/inclusive/>

**Evaluation:** this policy will be evaluated to ensure it supports the goals of the School Strategic Plan

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year policy review cycle.

<b>Ratified at School Council</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
<b>Review Date</b>	Term 4, 2021