Redfern Jarjum College

POLICY FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

PREAMBLE

At Redfern Jarjum College there is a particular value which underscores our belief in caring for the individual. This attitude informs the way in which the College responds to students with special needs.

The term, “Special Needs” used in this policy refers to:
- students with Learning disabilities;
- gifted students; and
- twice exceptional students ie, students who are gifted but who also have either a learning disability or a learning difficulty such as Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)

RATIONALE

In order to provide an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are fully participating members of the College community of learners, additional support will be required by means of additional staff, specialised learning materials, physical accommodations or equipment and assessments to enable them to meet their educational and social needs.

Students with special needs may require additional support and accommodations to enable them to access and participate in educational programmes.

For the purposes of this policy, students with a disability may include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Relevant Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cognition (Intellectual)</td>
<td>Full scale score of 75 or less on a standardised, restricted psychometric (IQ) assessment and displaying associated academic and adaptive behavioural delays.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Sensory (Hearing)</td>
<td>Permanent (sensori-neural/conductive) hearing loss of 30+ decibels with resultant communication difficulties.</td>
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<td>3. Sensory (Visual)</td>
<td>Permanent vision loss of 6/24 or less in the better eye corrected, or less than 20 degrees field of vision.</td>
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<td>4. Physical</td>
<td>Ongoing physical condition (eg Muscular Dystrophy) that significantly limits functioning and independence re. mobility, personal care and undertaking essential learning tasks.</td>
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5. Mental Health (Social/Emotional) | Mental health problems at a level of frequency, duration and intensity that seriously affects educational functioning - behaviours must be evident in home, school and community environments. A diagnosis of ADD (with or without hyperactivity) is not included.

6. PDD | Diagnosis indicating a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (eg Autism) affecting verbal and non-verbal communication. This disorder impacts upon social interaction and may significantly affect the student’s ability to learn. The diagnosis must also include a clinically significant adaptive behavioural delay.

7. Language Disorder | Expressive and/or receptive language disorder with a scaled score of 70 or less on a restricted, standardised speech pathology assessment e.g. the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF).

8. Chronic Medical | Chronic medical condition that affects functioning and/or independence, where a student is highly dependent on another to access learning.

Gifted students are students who fit the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Giftedness</th>
<th>IQ Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mildly Gifted:</td>
<td>IQ 115 – 129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderately Gifted:</td>
<td>IQ 130 – 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Gifted:</td>
<td>IQ 145 – 159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptionally Gifted:</td>
<td>IQ 160 – 179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profoundly Gifted:</td>
<td>IQ 180+</td>
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**IDENTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT**

Early identification is an essential element of successful program planning for students with special needs. Students are often identified before they enter the College. In such cases, existing assessment and programming information may be requested.

In cases where students with special needs have been identified prior to enrolment or when students have obvious and severe special needs which have not been previously identified, the College will respond promptly to a teacher's request for a determination of the need for assessment, planning and intervention.

Teachers can refer a student directly to the Principal. Once a referral is received, an investigation is conducted and recommendations are made to the teaching staff for follow-up support.

**THE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM**

The Learning Support Team consists of the Principal, Teachers and their Assistants who meet regularly to discuss individual students and co-ordinate support resources for students with special needs within the College.

The team meet regularly to prioritise student support. This support may take the form of:

- Personal Learning Plans (PLPs)
- In-class support / team – teaching
- Referral to outside agencies such as Autism Spectrum Australia or specialists such as Educational Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists etc.
REFERRAL TO THE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

The Learning Support Team provides:
- Extended consultation on possible classroom strategies
- Planning for and co-ordination of services for the student
- Access to additional school, community or other relevant service
- Planning for and co-ordination of services at the College

Upon the request of the referring teacher or parent, it provides support through extended consultation on possible classroom strategies and may become a central focus for case management, referrals and resource decisions.

The Principal prioritises need, liaises with appropriate support personnel such as Class Teacher, Assistant Teachers who identifies the need for additional services and/or initiates referrals to access other College or external services.

REFERRAL FOR EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

When external assessments (e.g., psychometric, speech and language, orientation and mobility) are requested, the goal is to better understand the student's strengths and needs in order to plan more effectively for that student.

The College will ensure that:
- Relevant information contained in the external assessment is shared with all relevant College personnel. The Principal will design a Learning Support Report that contains a précis of the original report as well as including some teaching & learning strategies to assist the student in the classroom.
- Information gathered may also be used for the purpose of future planning and as a result, be easily integrated into the student's Personal Learning Plan (if appropriate).

Personal Learning Plan

A student with special needs will require a Personal Learning Plan (PLP)

The planning process is divided into five phases:
- Identification/assessment
- Planning
- Program support/implementation
- Evaluation
- Reporting

Together, they constitute a process which is continuous and flexible, rather than a series of five separate and discontinuous phases.

Wherever possible the process is incorporated into the regular routines of planning, evaluation and reporting that occur for all students.

There is a progressive flow from one phase to another, so that, according to need, support can be obtained in a timely way from within the College and the community. The process works best when:
- There is collaboration and ongoing consultation among teachers, administrative and support personnel, parents/carer and students.
- Parents/carers and students have the opportunity to be active participants in the process, to initiate discussions regarding learning needs or request school-based
access to support. They are encouraged to contribute throughout the process and are important partners in the development of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP). As a rule, students are included in all phases of the process unless they are unable or unwilling to participate.

- Staff members are invited to attend information sessions to discuss and further refine the PLP.

Jarjum College is committed to ensuring that procedures are in place to support all students with special needs by:

- Ensuring that all relevant information is promptly shared.
- Planning for and facilitating effective transition from home to school. Ensuring consistency in reporting and documenting plans.
- Promoting communication and collaborative decision-making between the College and home.
- Communicating planning decisions to parents, students and appropriate staff.
- Resolving differences effectively.

Reviewed September 2012