

## INCLUSION POLICY

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- A: Excerpt from *Disability Discrimination Act and Amendments 1992*  
B: Mandate for *Open Doors Reference group*, the Inclusive Education Focus group 2/11/07
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### 1. RATIONALE

Mumbulla School for Rudolf Steiner Education is a school where the social, emotional, educational and physical needs of all students are considered paramount. It is a school that encourages respect for diversity in ability as well as cultural, racial, ethnic and social backgrounds and is based on the notion that we are committed to working towards providing for the needs of all students in our community.

Mumbulla School aims to provide inclusive practices for all students with disabilities and additional needs.

Mumbulla School aims to foster an inclusive school community.

**Approved by: Board of Directors**

**Date approved: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Date to be reviewed: November 2014**

**Reviewed by: Kids Matter team**

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

- a. Mumbulla School aims to be an inclusive school.
- b. Our school values the inclusion of students with disabilities and/or additional needs.
- c. We believe that each person brings value to this school and has a role to play in the life of the school.
- d. We have a commitment and responsibility to all learners at our school.
- e. All students can learn, and everyone learns co-operatively.
- f. Mumbulla School aims to utilise different learning styles to meet children's different learning styles.
- g. Mumbulla School recognises that relationships and friendships are integral to a child's school experience.

## **3. DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1. Disability, according to the World Health Organization, is defined as "...an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives."
- 3.2. Additional Needs refers to any specific needs a student may have that requires the school to make adjustments to the school environment or programs to enable the student to receive maximum benefit from their school experience. This term may be used to refer both to students who have needs arising from a disability or condition that has been formally diagnosed and also to those students whose needs have not been formally diagnosed but have become apparent in the school setting.
- 3.3. Access means that the school will create the necessary conditions to enable students, staff, parents, carers and visitors desiring to access all areas of the school easily.
- 3.4. Inclusion means that the school will create the necessary conditions and welcoming environments to enable students, staff, parents, carers and visitors to have their aspirations met, feel valued and secure, have a sense of belonging and will be encouraged to actively participate in the life of the school.
- 3.5. An inclusive school uses its best efforts to cater for all children in its community. It respects diversity in ability as well as gender, sex, cultural, racial, ethnic and social background.

- 3.6. Different groups in the school may include:
- Girls and boys
  - Children with disabilities
  - Children with additional needs
  - Minority ethnic and faith groups
  - Children who need support to learn English as an additional language
  - Gifted and talented children
  - Children who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion

#### **4. RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **4.1. Rights**

- 4.1.1. All children at Mumbulla School have the right to:
- be listened to and treated with respect
  - feel pride in their learning
  - experience success
  - feel safe and secure in a respectful social environment and a safe physical environment
  - participate in learning programs both designed as a whole class and as individual plans
  - be supported towards achieving a common set of learning goals and competencies
  - be given clear boundaries
  - contribute their ideas to the curriculum and culture of the school
  - be educated with their peer group
  - receive advocacy for their needs
  - be treated as a unique individual
- 4.1.2 All teachers and staff at Mumbulla School have the right to:
- to feel secure and be treated with respect
  - be supported towards achieving a common set of teaching goals and competencies
  - have their ideas listened to
  - contribute their ideas to the curriculum and the culture of the school
  - be supported with their peer group
  - receive advocacy and mentoring for their needs
  - experience success in their teaching
  - be treated as a unique individual
- 4.1.3 All parents and carers at Mumbulla School have the right to:
- be listened to and treated with respect
  - feel pride in their children's learning
  - experience success for themselves and their children
  - know that their children are in a safe, secure and respectful social environment and a safe physical environment
  - know that their children are being given clear boundaries
  - feel confident that their children are participating in learning programs designed for them as individuals and as part of a whole class
  - contribute their ideas to culture of the school
  - receive advocacy for their needs
  - be treated as a unique individual

## **4.2. Responsibilities**

- 4.2.1. All children at Mumbulla School have the responsibility to:
- care for the wellbeing and learning opportunities of each other
  - respect difference
- 4.2.2. All teachers at Mumbulla School will strive to ensure that all children:
- feel secure and know that their contributions are valued;
  - appreciate and value the differences they see in others;
  - take responsibility for their own actions;
  - are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success;
  - use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
  - have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles;
  - have challenging targets that enable them to succeed;
  - participate to their full potential, regardless of disabilities or additional needs.
  - support respectful and safe behaviours through the school
- 4.2.3. All teachers at Mumbulla School will ensure that the work undertaken by children with disability or additional needs:
- takes into account their pace of learning and the equipment they use;
  - takes account of the effort and concentration needed by the child in oral work, or when using specialised equipment, eg. visual aids;
  - is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials;
  - allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies, including excursions and camps
  - uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities.
- 4.2.4. All parents at Mumbulla School have the responsibility to:
- promote inclusion throughout the school and its community;
  - appreciate and value the differences they see in others;
  - take responsibility for their own actions
  - support the school in its efforts at inclusion
  - encourage their children to appreciate and value difference throughout the school community, primarily through modelling behaviours
  - bring to the attention of the school any issues around inclusion within their family or the school community
  - follow the Inclusion policy and other school policies which support respectful and safe behaviours through the school
- 4.2.5. The school has the responsibility to:
- promote inclusion throughout the school;
  - provide an environment that allows disabled children full access to all areas of learning, including wheelchair accessibility at designated

points of entry for the school and a toilet suitable for wheelchair users at ground level;

- ensure that buildings, grounds and equipment are regularly maintained and that additional facilities are sought to ensure access if necessary;
- provide appropriate professional development for teachers and aides and, where possible and appropriate, to the school community;
- liaise with parents and outside agencies to gather information and assess the individual needs of the child before enrolment. Where external resources are available, the school will ensure that every effort is made to access these to support a child who has disabilities or additional needs;
- follow the guidelines of the *Enrolment Policy* re enrolment of children with disabilities and additional needs.

### 4.3 Specific Responsibilities

4.3.1 The responsibility for inclusion of students with disabilities and/or additional needs is shared throughout the whole school. However specific responsibilities rest with particular groups and individuals:

- **Teachers** inform parents prior to enrolment about support that is available
- **Parents** are responsible for providing information about their children's additional needs before, or on, enrolment and in a timely manner thereafter to allow the school to understand and meet their child's needs. This may include developmental history, documentation relating to previous or external assessments and any relevant changes affecting their child. Parents may also be asked to provide additional information to assist with funding applications.
- **The Class teacher** is responsible for the provision of an inclusive learning environment and the fostering of an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere. The class teacher is responsible for the adaptation and provision of learning programs to meet the student's needs and to provide guidance for a classroom assistant or aide where relevant.
- **Class Assistants and Aides** are responsible for following the teaching plan for children with disabilities and additional learning needs. Classroom assistants and aides contribute to the inclusive learning environment.
- **The College of Teachers** is responsible for mentoring and support of the class teacher in provision of programs, and for organising relevant professional development. It is also the responsibility of the College of Teachers to ensure that all school staff are sufficiently informed about the student's needs in order to provide proper care and support in the playground, in specialist classes and generally throughout the school day. See also *Excursions and Camps policy* for further inclusion responsibilities.

- **The Learning Support teacher** is responsible for assisting in the development, resourcing and monitoring of Individual programs, coordination of learning support team meetings, funding applications, and, where necessary arrange, in conjunction with parents, consultation with external professionals.
- **The Board of Directors** is responsible for budgeting of capital works, the employment of support staff and assistance with inclusion in special events and for ensuring that the school abides by its legal obligations.
- **Front office staff** are responsible for maintaining a welcoming and open reception area for all members of the school and broader communities. Front office staff must reflect the inclusive nature of the school and be actively involved in providing a safe, secure and respectful environment for children, teachers, staff, parents, carers and other visitors.
- **The Open Doors reference group** is responsible for supporting the school to pursue best practice for the successful inclusion of students and for ensuring that school policies reflect the inclusive nature of the school. It may provide information and make recommendations to other groups in the school to support inclusiveness and may provide assistance in the resolution of any issues related to inclusion. It may advocate with governments for adequate funding for students with disabilities at independent schools.

**4.3.2 The responsibility for creating an inclusive school culture is shared throughout the whole school.**

**5. STRATEGIES**

In order to maximise inclusion, the school will:

- 5.1 provide learning environments which aim to include all students: in the classroom, in the playground and in extracurricular programs and activities, educating children together in supported, age appropriate activities.
- 5.2 abide by the legal obligations set out in the *Disability Discrimination Act and Amendments 1992* (Attachment A)
- 5.3 prepare and implement Individual Programs or otherwise adapt curriculum and extracurricular activities to meet the needs of students with a disability or additional learning needs. This will be done by the Class teacher with the assistance of the Learning Support team including the Learning Support teacher, classroom assistant, parent/carer and external consultants where needed.
- 5.4 arrange for teachers and other school staff to undertake appropriate professional development in order to meet the needs of students with a disability and/or additional needs.

- 5.5 place a high priority on taking a team approach in the development of educational programs and in the provision of opportunities for parents of students with a disability and/or additional needs to communicate with teachers and other staff about their child's needs. With the consent of parents the school may seek assessment from or otherwise consult external professionals in relation to the needs of students.
- 5.6 provide regular, outcome-based assessment for the student, which will form the basis for any modification to the individual learning programs
- 5.7 identify possible sources of funding for Integration programs and other learning support programs and prepare submissions for these
- 5.8 mandate a group particularly concerned with the area of inclusion. (See Attachment B: Mandate for the Open Doors group)
- 5.9 regularly review school policies to ensure that appropriate mention is made of aspects of inclusion and that the content and language of policies generally reflect an attitude of inclusiveness. (Specific reference to inclusion is made in the *Learning Support* policy, the *Enrolment* policy and the *Excursions and Camps* policy.)

## **6. INFORMATION ABOUT GOVERNMENT FUNDING AVAILABLE TO THE SCHOOL FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OR ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

- 6.1. The school through the Association of Independent Schools NSW may apply annually for Commonwealth funding to assist with disabilities or additional needs. Application may be made for the following grants:
  - a. Children with Severe Disabilities
  - b. Integration
  - c. Literacy
  - d. Numeracy
  - e. English as a Second Language
- 6.2. In order for parents to be enabled to make a fully informed decision about their choice of school at the time of enrolment, they will be provided with information about levels of funding support available to independent schools relative to the government sector.
- 6.3. In conjunction with the Association of Independent Schools NSW and other bodies, the school continues to advocate for an increase in the level of funding provided by governments for students with disabilities at independent schools in New South Wales.

**ATTACHMENT A  
DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992**

**Section 22  
Education**

- (1) It is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability or a disability of any of the other person's associates:
  - (a) by refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student; or
  - (b) in the terms or conditions on which it is prepared to admit the person as a student.
  
- (2) It is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a student on the ground of the student's disability or a disability of any of the student's associates:
  - (a) by denying the student access, or limiting the student's access, to any benefit provided by the educational authority; or
  - (b) by expelling the student; or
  - (c) by subjecting the student to any other detriment.
  
- (2A) It is unlawful for an education provider to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability or a disability of any of the person's associates:
  - (a) by developing curricula or training courses having a content that will either exclude the person from participation, or subject the person to any other detriment; or
  - (b) by accrediting curricula or training courses having such a content.
  
- (3) This section does not render it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability in respect of admission to an educational institution established wholly or primarily for students who have a particular disability where the person does not have that particular disability.
  
- (4) This section does not make it unlawful for an education provider to discriminate against a person or student as described in subsection (1), (2) or (2A) on the ground of the disability of the person or student or a disability of any associate of the person or student if avoidance of that discrimination would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the education provider concerned.



**ATTACHMENT B  
MANDATE FOR “OPEN DOORS”  
THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION REFERENCE GROUP  
2/11/07**

The Inclusive Education Focus Group is mandated to:

1. Investigate best practices in both independent and government schools, for the successful inclusion of students with additional needs
2. Research funding sources and fundraising opportunities to support the inclusion of children with additional needs in the school
3. In conjunction with the Policy group, assist in the review and development of policy and procedures relating to the enrolment and inclusion of children with additional needs
4. Help the school access a range of resources and services provided for teachers of children with additional needs
5. To lobby government departments re adequate funding for children with disabilities at non-government schools.
6. To report and make recommendations to the board on our findings

The Inclusive Education Focus Group will include:

- A director
- A teacher
- Members of the school community with expertise or an interest in this area