

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Context

Christian Brothers' College St Kilda (CBC St Kilda) is a Catholic school for girls and boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1878. CBC St Kilda is committed to providing a caring, supportive and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. As a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, our Christian values are those expressed in the Touchstones of our governing body, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA): Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community, Justice and Solidarity. The charism of Blessed Edmund Rice expressed through these touchstones, underpins our continued commitment to a safe and inclusive environment for all, providing a preferential option to those at the margins, to grow in empathy and to respond in faith and action.

Rationale

CBC St Kilda is a community that is welcoming and accepting, fostering just and meaningful relationships which enable all members to participate, prosper and thrive. We are committed to an inclusive education for students with disabilities and additional needs. An inclusive education enables all students to be welcomed, accepted and engaged so that they can participate, achieve and thrive in school life.

Policy Statement

CBC St Kilda is committed to providing a safe and educationally supportive environment that values and encourages participation by all students and workers, including those with disabilities.

It is our policy that:

- Students with disabilities can participate in education and training without discrimination;
- Students with disabilities have opportunities to access the College curriculum and achieve educational outcomes, in the same manner as students without disabilities;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary, to ensure students with disabilities are able to participate in all activities available to students without disabilities;
- Individualised programs will be developed for students with disabilities in consultation with parents/guardians and relevant experts;
- All processes are accessible and transparent; and
- Disability discrimination prevention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

Procedures

CBC St Kilda does not tolerate discrimination, harassment and victimisation of any type including disability discrimination.

This is achieved by:

- Informing all staff and students that disability discrimination is not acceptable;
- Providing information and training concerning non-discriminatory methods of teaching;
- Ensuring staff and students are aware of appropriate actions to be taken if harassment or victimisation occurs;
- Establishing strategies and programs to prevent harassment and victimisation of persons with a disability; and
- Ensuring strategies and programs extend to not only students but also to their parents/guardians, who may experience discrimination as a result of their support role to a person with a disability, or who may have a disability themselves.

'Same Basis' Opportunities

The fundamental concept in operation at CBC St Kilda to prevent disability discrimination is the 'same basis' concept. This means treatment of students with a disability must be on the 'same basis' as students without a disability, when presented with opportunities and choices offered to students without disabilities.

Reasonable Adjustments

CBC St Kilda will provide reasonable adjustments upon consultation with the prospective student with a disability and their parents/guardians to assist the student undertake the education offered.

Whether an adjustment is reasonable will depend on balancing the student's learning needs with the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with a disability, the College, staff and other students.

Depending on the needs of the student, adjustments may include modifications to College facilities, procedures and resources.

Modifications to enable student access to College facilities and participate in everyday College life include adjustments to toilets, ramps, safety railings, the gymnasium, computer rooms and laboratories to ensure students with disabilities can access these facilities safely.

CBC St Kilda is not required to provide adjustments where doing so would cause unjustifiable hardship to the College.

All processes for adjustments within the College, including review and grievance procedures, will be transparent. All decisions will be made in a timely way that optimises the student's participation in education and training.

Unjustifiable hardship is determined via an individual assessment of the prospective student's needs balanced with the costs associated with additional staffing, the provision of special resources or modifications and health and safety and duty of care requirements.

Disability Information

Information obtained in relation to the student's disability will remain confidential and will only be disclosed for the purposes of making adjustments or in accordance with a lawful requirement.

Complaints

Any complaints of unlawful discrimination should be made to the College. Complaints will be properly and effectively dealt with using the College's complaint procedures, including conciliation in the first instance.

Workers' Responsibility

All workers must follow the guidelines as set out in this policy.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training to equip staff with knowledge, skills and understanding to enable students with disabilities to participate in the full range of educational programmes or services, on the same basis and to the same extent as students without disabilities;
- Student and parent/carer education and information;
- Effective management of the enrolment and accommodation of students with disabilities;
- The development of an 'anti-discriminatory' culture within the College community;
- The development of a culture that maintains the disabled student's dignity and privacy;
- The establishment of processes for ongoing evaluation, monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the management of students with disabilities;
- Effective communication and incident notification procedures;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

References

- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- CEM Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools Policy
- CBC St Kilda Learning Diversity Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed December 2022.