



## TOWNSVILLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES POLICY

PURPOSE	<p>Townsville Grammar School values the diversity of all students and recognises the right of all students to an inclusive education. The purpose of this policy is to protect students with a disability from unlawful discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation on the basis of that disability, and to ensure that the School complies with current and relevant legislation.</p> <p>Unlawful discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation on the basis of disability involving students, is addressed under the Bullying Prevention and Management Policy.</p>		
SCOPE	Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Townsville Grammar School.		
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Regulations 1996</li> <li>• Disability Standards for Education 2005</li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)</li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Qld)</li> <li>• Anti-Discrimination, Harassment &amp; Bullying Policy</li> <li>• Bullying Prevention and Management Policy</li> </ul>		
REVIEWED	Annually	NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2027
POLICY OWNER	Deputy Principal		

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## Policy

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### 1 POLICY STATEMENT

The School is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities to ensure that students with disability and/or learning difficulty have access to, participate in and achieve learning outcomes, on the same basis as their peers in all aspects of their education, including enrolment, participation in courses or programs, and access to, and use of facilities and services.

The School will assist the full participation of students with disability and/or learning difficulty in accordance with the prescribed legislation by:

- valuing all students as individuals and identifying and responding to their needs;
- consulting with the students and parents/carers to make well-informed decisions about the education program to be developed for each student identified with a disability and/or learning difficulty;
- identifying and addressing barriers that limit students' opportunities, participation and benefits from schooling;
- providing an appropriate level of resources within available funds in order to reasonably accommodate the needs of students with disability and/or learning difficulty;
- identifying and making reasonable adjustments in modifying, substituting or supplementing curricula, course work requirements, timetables, teaching methods and materials, and assessment procedures to meet the needs of students with disabilities, unless the adjustment would impose unreasonable hardship on the School;
- facilitating options and pathways for students with a disability and/or learning difficulty;
- providing physical environments that are accessible, stimulating, safe and welcoming;

- devising fair and transparent enrolment procedures for all students, including those with a disability and/or learning difficulty;
- respecting the rights of students with a disability or learning difficulty to privacy and confidentiality;
- fostering and encouraging among staff and students, positive, informed, and unprejudiced attitudes towards people with disabilities; and
- supporting and assisting students to make alternative satisfactory educational arrangements if the School is unable to meet their needs.

## 2 LEGISLATION

### 2.1 Acts and Policies

Within the Student with Disability and/or Learning Difficulty Policy, the School adheres to the Legislation listed in the References (front page).

### 2.2 Disability Discrimination Act

The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) [DDA] aims to protect and promote the rights of people with disability. The purpose of the DDA is to:

- Eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against people on the grounds of disability.
- Ensure that people with disability have the same rights before the law as the rest of the community.
- Promote the principle that people with disability have the same rights as the rest of the community.

### 2.3 Disability Standards for Education

The Disability Standards for Education (2005) [DSE] sets out the obligations of education and training providers. The aim of the DSE is to give students with disability the right to access and participate in educational courses and programs on the same basis as students without disability. This means a student with disability should have access to the same opportunities and choices in their education that are available to all students.

The DSE places three main obligations on education providers:

1. obligation to consult;
2. obligation to make reasonable adjustments; and
3. obligation to eliminate harassment and victimisation.

Under the DSE, all schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disability are able to participate in education on the same basis as students without disability. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while considering the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the School, employees, other students and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

## 3 RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 The School

The School will not unlawfully discriminate, harass or victimise a student on the ground of the student's disability or a disability of any associate of a student. The School acknowledges that its responsibilities are as follows:

- *Enrolment* – the School will take reasonable steps to ensure that a student with a disability is able to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment in the School without discrimination and on the same basis as any prospective student.
- *Participation* – the School will take reasonable steps to ensure that a student with a disability is able to participate in the courses or programs provided by the school, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as their peers, without discrimination.

- *Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery* – the School will take reasonable steps to ensure that courses and programs are designed in such a way that a student with a disability is able to participate in the learning experiences (including the assessment and certification requirements) of the course and program, on the same basis as their peers, without discrimination.
- *Pastoral Care and support services* – the School will take reasonable steps to ensure that a student with a disability is able to use support services used by other students of the school on the same basis as their peers, without discrimination.
- *Harassment and victimisation* – the School will update and implement policies and strategies to prevent harassment or victimisation of students with disabilities, or a student who has an associate with a disability, in relation to the disability.

### **3.2 Students and employees**

All students and employees at the School have a responsibility not to engage in unlawful discriminatory conduct, including harassment and victimisation, and to uphold the School's Bullying Prevention and Management Policy and the Anti-Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy.

### **3.3 Compliance**

The School maintains documentation which adequately reflects the level and types of adjustment recorded for students with disabilities, including:

- curriculum planning documents, such as unit plans, that identify specific adjustments;
- timetables for students and staff;
- current confirmation of verification letter for students diagnosed with a disability;
- current personalised support plans (i.e. IEP, SP, ICP, RSP) or equivalent, in place for any student with a disability or learning difficulty;
- student data/reporting, including Confirmation of Enrolment and Census requirements mandated by the ISQ, and the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data - Students with Disability; and
- facilitation of collaboration in supporting a student with a disability through the completion of Parent/Carer Consent forms including information from any medical practitioner, service provider, outside organisation, or professional body involved in supporting a student.

### **3.4 Breaches**

The School is committed to responding appropriately should discrimination, harassment or victimisation occur and may act against any individual when a breach of this policy is identified. Where inappropriate behaviours by an employee, such as discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation on the basis of disability, are found to be substantiated, the consequences for the person against whom the complaint is made will be determined under the School's Bullying Prevention and Management Policy and the Anti-Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy.

### **3.5 Complaints**

If students, parents or employees believe that a student is being unlawfully discriminated against, harassed or victimised on the ground of the student's disability, they are able to make a complaint under the School's Bullying Prevention and Management Policy or the Anti-Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy.

## **4 STAFF REQUIREMENTS**

The School provides a variety of support and services to all students, including those with a disability, so they can participate in school life, access the curriculum and achieve learning outcomes. This support may include access to Specialist Learning Support teachers, counselling, Teacher Aides, a range of assistive technology, and adjustments and/or modifications to classroom materials and assessment tasks. The Heads Faculty - Educational Support liaise with all teachers of students with disabilities, whether identified with an EAP or not,

regarding differentiated teaching strategies. Class teachers are supported through professional development, access to specialist teachers and regional support.

#### **4.1 Teachers and Academic employees**

Where existing students are identified with disabilities and additional learning needs, this information is available to the students' teachers by accessing the Inclusive Education Lists and the personalised learning profiles, such as an IEP or, ICP, in Moodle under Educational Support (North Ward Campus). Information about identified students in the Junior School is accessed by teachers via the H Drive under Learning Support.

It is the responsibility of the students' teachers to check regularly the Inclusive Education Lists and personalised profiles for updates and changes. It is the responsibility of the students' teachers to:

- consult with the student and their families regarding adjustments;
- implement the goals, strategies and adjustments identified in the profile;
- keep a written record of any and all adjustments; and
- participate in review meetings, and other associated processes, as required.

Where a student's teacher identifies potential learning difficulties or additional support requirements, the student may be referred to the Head of Faculty - Educational Support for further investigation. The referral process requires the student's teacher to complete the Referral Form (located in Moodle under Educational Support) and submit it with appropriate work samples.

#### **4.2 Teacher Aides**

The primary role of an Education Support Teacher Aide is to provide support to identified students ensuring them equal access to the curriculum and learning experiences. In the classroom, a Teacher Aide's duties, include:

- working with individual students as well as small groups in the classroom environment, as directed by teachers;
- assisting students with reading comprehension, spelling, organisation, research, scaffolding and the construction of class tasks and assessments;
- assisting in the supervision of educational activities under the direction of the classroom teacher; and
- assisting with the individual social, emotional or health care needs of students with disabilities.

At the North Ward campus, the Head of Faculty - Educational Support is responsible at all times for the allocation of Teacher Aide time in the classroom for identified students. At the Annandale and North Shore Junior Campuses, the Head of Learning Support is responsible for the allocation of Teacher Aide time.

### **5 PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1 Providing Reasonable Adjustments & Modifications**

In order to support a student with a disability on the same basis as their peers, the School is committed to making all decisions about the student's admission, enrolment, participation in a course or program, and use of facilities and services on the basis that reasonable steps will be taken dependent upon the specific circumstances at the time. This process includes:

- consultation with the student and their family;
- consideration of whether an adjustment or modification is necessary;
- identification of a reasonable adjustment or modification;
- whether the adjustment or modification would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the School;
- making the reasonable adjustment or modification; and
- reviewing the ongoing need for the reasonable adjustment or modification.

When considering an adjustment or modification for a student with a disability, any confidential information provided to the School will not be disclosed without written authorisation by the parent/guardian, except for the purposes of the adjustment or modification in accordance with a lawful requirement, in compliance with the School's Privacy Policy.

## **5.2 Supporting students**

The School provides educational programs which cater for the individual learning needs of students with a disability and/or learning difficulty.

The School will consider the individual support needs of the student and the capacity of the School to provide the appropriate educational program for a student. In particular, the School will assess the level of specialist services, facilities, adjustments, modifications and the learning support required under the Commonwealth Government's Disability Standards for Education 2005 and the Queensland Government's cross-sectoral Education Adjustment Program.

There are two main processes within the School to identify the level of support for students with a disability and/or learning difficulty:

1. School-based Approach; and
2. The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) an annual collection of information about Australian school students who are receiving adjustments due to disability.

## **5.3 School-based Approach**

The School-based Approach focuses on determining the educational adjustments and programs needed to support students with a disability and/or learning difficulty, and who does not have a medical verified disability or an imputed disability based on the evidence of the level of adjustments provided to students.

The process is managed by the relevant Head of Faculty - Educational Support at the respective campus, in consultation with the school team.

### **5.3.1 Information gathering**

The School team gathers information from a range of sources through its regular processes in order to assist with curriculum and program planning to meet the needs and utilise the strengths of the student. The school team gathers information on an ongoing basis, including information regarding:

- observations of classroom functioning;
- current student achievement;
- school assessment information;
- background information from the parent or care giver;
- data related to identified needs across the curriculum;
- diagnosis and assessment information from School Psychologist, doctors, medical specialists, allied health professionals, and other outside agencies; and
- interventions provided, and responses to these interventions.

### **5.3.2 Assessment and diagnosis**

Following a review of the information gathered, further assessment may be necessary. This may include school-based assessment; referral to the School Psychologist; or recommendation for external specialist assessment (e.g. psychologist, psycho-educational, hearing, occupational therapy, speech language).

### 5.3.3 Enrolment

Upon the student's admission to enrolment, the School:

- undertakes Independent Schools Queensland's processes for verifying disability and determining individual support requirements according to the Education Adjustment Program;
- makes application for funding support;
- seeks support from regional support services, such as Advisory Teachers;
- undertakes to involve the parents/carers in developing appropriate support mechanisms;
- devises and implements an Individual Education Profile or Student Support Profile (Junior School) as appropriate; and
- reviews annually or biannually, in collaboration with teachers and parents/carers, the student's achievement in the Individual Education Profile, Student Support Profile or other programs and the degree to which support services continue to be appropriate.

Should a teacher identify that a student has developed signs of a disability subsequent to enrolment, the matter is referred to the School's Head of Faculty - Educational Support who then works with teachers, parents and relevant specialists to determine the student's needs, level of inclusion in the Education Adjustment Program and additional support that may be required.

### 5.4 Development and Review of an Individual Education Profile [IEP]

The School team will document a student's learning needs, impacts of disability in the classroom, educational adjustments and programs in an Individual Education Profile [IEP]. The personalised education profile will be reviewed on a yearly basis, or when deemed necessary. This will include reviewing the student's learning progress, adjustments required, the level of support and whether a review of a diagnosis is required. The personalised education profile will be managed by the relevant Head of Faculty - Educational Support.

### 5.5 The School Team

At Townsville Grammar School, the School team may include:

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • Head of Faculty - Educational Support  | • Director of Curriculum              |
| • Classroom Teachers   | • Head of Junior School               |
| • Learning Support teacher   | • Head of Senior School               |
| • Parent or care giver   | • Director of Sports & Activities     |
| • School Psychologist  | • Director of Performing Arts         |
| • Teacher Aides  | • Head of Boarding                    |
| • Advisory Teachers  | • Heads of Faculty/Curriculum Leaders |
| • Private psychologist, paediatrician, occupational therapist, medical specialist, allied health professionals | • Year Level Co-ordinator of Year 7   |
| • Principal  | • Heads of House                      |
| • Deputy Principal   | • Boarding staff                      |
|  | • Health Centre staff                 |
|  | • Careers Advisor                     |

### 5.6 Student Support Level

Following analysis of the information gathered, and ongoing monitoring of student progress, the school team will identify the appropriate level of support for each student. This level will be documented and kept up to date in TASS for easy data retrieval. Consistent with the functional descriptions of levels of



adjustment under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data: School Students with Disability [NCCD], these levels are:

### **1) Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP)**

Students with disability are supported through active monitoring and adjustments that are not greater than those used to meet the needs of diverse learners. These adjustments are provided through usual school processes, without drawing on additional resources, and by meeting proficient-level Teaching Standards (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership).

Adjustments are made infrequently as occasional action, or frequently as low-level action, such as monitoring. These adjustments may include:

- explicit, minor adjustments, including targeted or differentiated teaching, assessments or activities;
- specific and relevant teaching strategies to support targeted areas of communication;
- active monitoring and supervision, meeting health, personal care and safety requirements through usual school processes; and
- enabling access to learning through usual school processes (e.g. through a differentiated approach to teaching and learning) and existing facilities (e.g. existing modifications to buildings and learning environments).

Students with a medical condition whose learning and support needs are met through usual processes (e.g. whole-school professional learning) and active monitoring by school staff, are included in this category. These students may have a profile to support monitoring of their condition. Their identified needs would be subject to close monitoring and review.

### **2) Supplementary adjustment**

Students with disability are provided with adjustments that are supplementary to the strategies and resources already available for all students within the school.

Adjustments occur for particular activities, at specific times throughout the week and may include:

- adapted and additional instruction in some or many learning areas or specific activities;
- personalised and explicit instruction to support one or more areas of communication;
- planned health, personal care and/or safety support, in addition to active monitoring and supervision; and
- adjustments to enable access to learning and may include:
  - specialised technology,
  - support or close supervision to enable participation in activities or the playground, and
  - modifications or support to ensure full access to buildings and facilities.

### **3) Substantial adjustment**

Students with disability who have more substantial support needs are provided with essential adjustments and considerable assistance. Adjustments to the usual educational program occur at most times, on most days, and may include:

- additional support or individualised instruction in a highly structured manner, including adjustments to most courses, curriculum areas, activities and assessments;
- personalised and explicit instruction to support one or more areas of communication;
- planned health, personal care and/or safety support or intervention, in addition to active monitoring and supervision; and
- adjustments to enable access to learning and may include:
  - specialised equipment,
  - specific planning for access to activities or facilities,



- closely monitored playground supervision,
- modification to school environments, such as buildings and facilities,
- environmental adjustments to support participation in learning,
- provision of specialist advice on a regular basis, and
- support from specialist staff.

#### **4) Extensive adjustment**

Students with disability and very high support needs are provided with extensive targeted measures and sustained levels of intensive support. These adjustments are highly individualised, comprehensive and ongoing. Adjustments and modifications to the regular educational program occur at all times, and may include:

- intensive, individualised instruction or support in a highly structured or specialised manner for all courses and curricula, activities and assessments;
- intensive, individualised instruction to support multiple areas of communication;
- planned, highly specialised and/or intensive health, personal care and/or safety support or intervention; and
- enabling access to learning through:
  - specialised equipment,
  - highly modified classroom work and assessment, and/or school environments, and
  - extensive support from specialist staff.

Source: [NCCD \(Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability\)](#)

### **5.7 Circumstances which may impact upon the level of support**

There are a number of circumstances which may impact on the level of educational support for students with a disability and/or learning difficulty. These may include, but are not limited to:

- the physical layout of the School campuses;
- Specialist Teacher and/or Teacher Aide availability within the total School budget;
- material resources and facilities available within the total School budget;
- the level of funding available from external sources such as the Federal Government/ISQ; and
- co-operation and support of parents.

Parents may wish to have their daughters/sons at this School to foster their emotional and social development without the expectation of academic success. In such cases, parent/s will be required to record their expectation in writing on acceptance of enrolment.

## **6 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT**

### **6.1 Junior and Middle School – Exam and Assignment Adjustments**

Students from Years 1 to 10 who have had their educational needs assessed by either Head of Faculty - Educational Support will be eligible to access reasonable adjustments for their assessment items. Adjustments will vary according to individual student needs and identified in their respective IEP.

Adjustments may include (but are not exhaustive):

1. additional time for tasks given under exam conditions and/or for assignments as negotiated with the teacher;
2. provision of a reader or audio software in cases where a student is unable to read the test paper or part thereof;
3. the use of specialised equipment which enables a student to overcome a particular barrier e.g. computer;
4. the use of a dictionary for students with specific language difficulties;

5. allowance of spoken assessment to be undertaken for students with difficulties in reading and writing in subjects where it is appropriate within the work program;
6. supervision in an alternative venue, with or without additional support; and
7. individual assessment tasks sheets prepared, identifying the specific adjustments being accessed e.g. altered paper format.

Regular review of student exam and assignment requirements will be undertaken, ensuring student choice is taken into account regarding the accommodation being offered. Provisions for individual requirements will be provided where staff feasibility is deemed justifiable. An Assessment Adjustment Record form is to be completed by teachers to identify exactly what adjustments have been provided to students and then uploaded to the Notes section within an individual's TASS file.

## 6.2 NAPLAN

Students with a disability and/or learning difficulty in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will have access to adjustments during the NAPLAN testing period. From 2022, NAPLAN tests will be conducted on-line. This format will enable various adjustments to be provided at a school-based level without the need to apply to the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority [QCAA] for approval. Students requiring additional time will still need approval.

## 6.3 QCAA AARA [Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustments] – Senior School

The QCAA's [Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority] AARA Policy, states students whose permanent disability, long-term impairment, learning difficulty, temporary illness, intermittent medical condition, or other circumstance that may affect their ability to access, respond to, or participate in external assessment, are eligible to apply for an AARA.

The AARA application process entails:

- Consultation with Head of Faculty - Education Support to determine eligibility;
- Application forms for every subject requesting identified adjustments, is completed and parental approval sought;
- An up-to-date Confidential Medical is completed by a Health Specialist that identifies the reasons for the application, as well as a description of the functional impact of the circumstance on the student during assessment time\*\*;
- The Medical Form and the subject application forms are processed and approved by the Director of Curriculum;
- A School Statement is generated;
- A completed application to the QCAA is submitted on the student's behalf.

The School will receive acknowledgement of applications and approval details from the QCAA. Students will be advised of the outcome.

\*\*For students seeking an AARA on social/emotional grounds, a Confidential Medical Form must be dated no earlier than 30 April in Year 12.

For further information, refer to Section 6 of the QCE and QCIA Handbook available at Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA) | [Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority](https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/resources-for-schools/access-and-reasonable-adjustments)

## 6.4 International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate's Access and Inclusion Policy 2022, states that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Inclusive access arrangements may be necessary due to:

- long-term learning support requirements

- temporary medical conditions
- additional language learning.

The underpinning principle is that assessment is part of learning and teaching and access arrangements must not only apply to students during summative IB assessments but also be available throughout the course of study.

The application process entails:

- Consultation with IB Coordinator and Head of Faculty - Educational Support to determine eligibility;
- Subject application forms completed, identifying access arrangements and approval sought from the Director of Curriculum;
- Relevant documentation is generated to support an application;
- A completed application to IB is submitted using the online application in IBIS.

It is a requirement to register a candidate before submitting requests for inclusive access arrangements.

The School will receive acknowledgement of applications and approval details from the IB. Students will be advised of the outcome.

The IB Access and Inclusion Policy does not cover adverse circumstances that could affect a candidate either during the preparation of work for assessment or during examinations. Medical conditions that occur within the three-month period before the examinations would be covered under adverse circumstances.

For further information, refer to IB Co-ordinator.

## 6.5 NCCD [Nationally Consistent Collection of Data]

All government and non-government schools in Australia are required to participate in the annual Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability census. The NCCD collects information about students with disability across Australia in a consistent, reliable and systematic way. It counts the number of school students with disability receiving educational adjustments to allow them to participate in education on the same basis as their peers.

The NCCD reinforces the existing obligations that schools have towards students under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005). The NCCD model relies on the professional judgement of teachers about their students. Teachers undertake mandatory training each year in NCCD processes and procedures. It requires teachers and schools to make evidence-based decisions about:

- students with disability who are receiving reasonable adjustments to access education (consistent with the obligations under the DSE);
- the level of adjustment being provided; and
- the broad category of disability that underlines the need for adjustments.

A student must be counted in the NCCD when all the following conditions are met:

- The student has been counted in the school's August Census for 2025.
- The student has a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).
- The school has evidence that the student has been provided with an adjustment(s) for a minimum of 10 weeks of school education in the 12 months preceding the 2025 Census Day to address the functional impact of a disability.

## Administering the NCCD

There are 8 key steps in administering the NCCD:

- Step 1: Prepare your school and school community
- Step 2: Provide adjustment(s)
- Step 3: Determine the level of adjustment(s)
- Step 4: Determine the category of disability
- Step 5: Record and retain evidence of adjustment(s)
- Step 6: Quality assurance
- Step 7: Approve the data
- Step 8: Submit the data

Students who do not meet these requirements must not be counted in the NCCD. The NCCD process is co-ordinated by the Heads of Faculty - Educational Support (North Ward Campus and Junior School Campuses). The Principal is responsible for endorsement of the data.

## 7 DEFINITIONS

