



SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

POLICY

**APPROVAL
TO
PUBLISH**

This policy is approved for publication by the Concordia Lutheran College Council having considered relevant legislation dates and/or implementation requirement of users.

EFFECTIVE
26 June 2014

**Next Scheduled
Review Date**

All procedures have an automatic review date as specified. Review dates cannot be greater than 2 years following implementation date

REVIEW
2 YEARS

**Access and
Availability**

All sections of procedure will be visible on the Concordia Lutheran College intranet and published in staff handbook.

Availability for public access?

Yes

Yes

RECOMMENDATION

Head of College

26 / 06 / 2014

APPROVAL

Chairman of College Council

26 / 06 / 2014

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, visitors, parents and caregivers.

Supporting Students with Different Needs

Legislation	Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) Disability Standards for Education (Commonwealth) Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Queensland) Anti-Discrimination Regulation 2005 (Queensland) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Queensland) Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 (Queensland) Privacy Act (1988) Privacy Amendment (enhancing privacy protection) Act 2012
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1.0 Lutheran Education Ethos

As central to our mission and ministry, Concordia Lutheran College seeks to nurture individuals who are aware of their humanity, open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and growing in and living according to a cohesive world view. All students are encouraged and supported to develop their God-given talents so that, in turn they may shape and enrich their world (*A Vision for Learners and Learning in Lutheran Schools*, LEA, 2005). Our understanding of the identity of each person before God motivates us to create worthwhile learning contexts for all students. A holistic, positive approach is applied to learning and there is a learner-centred focus that moves beyond clinical labels. We seek to create a community where individuals have a clear sense of personal identity and integrity. They are encouraged to display resilience, inner peace and respect for themselves and for others.

2.0 Rationale

Learning Support/Special Needs at Concordia Lutheran College is defined as the provision of extra assistance, adjusted programs or learning environments, special equipment or materials to support students in accessing the curriculum in a range of settings.

Learning Support/Special Needs includes students with disabilities impacting on learning, learning difficulties and those who are gifted and talented. It may also include students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) and those where medical conditions impact on short term or long term learning.

The Philosophy Statement of Concordia Lutheran College states:

At Concordia each individual is valued. Consequently we seek to develop the whole person socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically as well as cognitively, through a broad range of educational opportunities and unique learning environments. Our vision is that students would become life-long learners and proactive citizens of the global community, utilising their God-given gifts and talents for the benefit of others.

The Philosophy Statement of Concordia Lutheran College defines the ethos of the College. Everything that occurs is informed by the Philosophy Statement and this ethos, which is in accordance with the stated aims of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Lutheran Schools are concerned with the whole person: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual.

Being God-centred and acknowledging each individual as a child of God is the basis from which the quality of relationships and the care for individuals flow. It reflects the concern the College has that each individual belongs to the College community and has the fullest possible opportunity for spiritual, personal, social, physical and academic growth.

3.0 Vision

Concordia Lutheran College values the diversity brought by all students including those with special learning needs.

Concordia Lutheran College aims to achieve a successful inclusive education system that provides learning opportunities of equal quality for all students. This policy is consistent with National Educational Goals and shaped to ensure that all students have fair access to a quality education environment to enable them to learn successfully and participate in society.

Concordia Lutheran College will assist the full participation of students with special learning needs in order to maximize their potential. The key objectives of Learning Support/Special Needs at Concordia Lutheran College are to:

- Improve educational opportunities and outcomes for all students with special learning needs across all sectors of the school
- Individually consider each student's needs and meet the full range of all students' needs across all sectors
- Ensure that there is a clear, consistent and sustainable resourcing framework for special needs and
- Provide equitable resourcing for those with special individual needs.

4.0 Guiding Principles

1. ***Students with special learning needs have the same rights to a high quality education as people of the same age who do not have special learning needs.***

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- Students with special learning needs have access to the same range of age appropriate educational settings as their peers. Refer to flowchart – Appendix 1
- There is recognition of the legal right of students with special learning needs to enrol and attend school on the same basis as other students
- There is provision of a supportive climate, which meets the educational needs of all individual students
- All students are valued as individuals
- Educators have the skills and confidence to assist students who have a broad range of needs and abilities
- Education of the highest quality is provided to all students enrolled
- Transport assistance is provided between home and the education setting where a need is clearly established for students with special learning needs meeting the criteria for additional government funding and resourcing
- The rights of students with special learning needs, and their families, to confidentiality and other protections afforded by the Privacy Act 1988, Privacy Amendment (enhancing privacy protection) Act 2012 are respected

2. ***The primary focus of Learning Support/Special Needs is to meet the individual learning and developmental needs of the student.***

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- Services are available to ensure the earliest possible identification of and support for students with special learning needs. (Refer to the Flowchart at Appendix 1)
- The Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Support Plan (SP) is the basis of programs for students with disability who meet the criteria for additional government funding and resourcing
- Training is provided through Professional Learning opportunities for all teachers and teacher aides to ensure they meet the educational needs of all their students
- External specialist support and advisory services are available locally within the region, and on the State and/or National level to individuals, families and schools in relation to students with special needs
- All students are supported to ensure they achieve their full potential
- Programs are adjusted so that students with special learning needs are included

- The curriculum is inclusive of the educational needs, experiences, interests and values of all students.

3. *All students with identified special needs have access to a fair share of the available special needs resources.*

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- Special needs resources are distributed fairly to meet identified special learning needs within the school sector in which the student participates
- Decisions regarding individual resource needs are based on valid, fair and culturally appropriate assessment practices
- Any special needs resources are retained primarily for special needs purposes but may be used for general learning
- Regular reviews of all special needs resources are undertaken to ensure that resource needs and resource allocation are well matched
- There is an ongoing awareness of available external resources and support services, which are accessed when required.

4. *Partnerships between students' families and education providers are essential in overcoming barriers to learning.*

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- Information about the barriers to learning and the provision of resources is shared between families and the education provider – Concordia Lutheran College
- Full information is provided to families to enable them to make sound educational choices and to participate fully in the enrolment, assessment, planning, programming, placement and monitoring of their child's progress
- Families share in the responsibility for ensuring the maximum benefit from the resources provided
- Student placement and other decisions can be reviewed upon request of either the family or the education provider – Concordia Lutheran College
- Families may choose to be supported by an advocate in assessment, planning, placement, review and appeal processes.

5. *All special needs resources are used in the most effective and efficient way possible, taking into account parent choice and the needs of the student.*

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- The Leadership Team and Special Student Needs Coordinator are accountable for the efficient and effective use of resources for special learning needs
- Staff responsible for special needs across the College, effectively coordinate their services with the various providers of external services, including specialist therapists and agencies

- Services for special needs are coordinated with regular education needs and with other relevant services e.g. health and welfare agencies
- Wherever possible, decisions are made collaboratively by those closest to the student.

6. *A student's language and culture comprise a vital context for learning and development and are taken into consideration in planning all learning experiences.*

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- The special learning needs of students from different ethnic groups are met in culturally appropriate ways
- The special needs of students with disability are met in ways that reflect any culture or identity associated with their disability group.

7. *Students with special learning needs have access to a seamless education from the time that their needs are identified, through to post school options.*

At Concordia Lutheran College:

- Admission and transition procedures enable students to move successfully from one education setting to another and / or to a workplace.

5.0 Procedures to support the implementation of the Special Needs Policy include:

Enrolment

At Concordia Lutheran College, the Enrolment Policy is inclusive of **all** students. The criteria for enrolment are set out in the Application for Enrolment form. Assistance in understanding enrolment policies and procedures is facilitated by the College Registrar.

It is important that we can meet the educational needs of each child. For this reason, all parents are required to accurately complete the 'Student Needs Profile' section of the enrolment form, thereby enabling the College to determine the likely resources required to meet each individual student's needs. Disclosure of disability on the form, and inclusion of any specialist reports, is encouraged.

If a child has previously identified special needs, parents/care-givers authorise permission in the 'Student Needs Profile' section of the Application for Enrolment allowing the College to collect information from the child's previous school.

Ongoing consultation between the parents/caregivers and College personnel continue during the enrolment process. Consultation during the enrolment process considers the impact of the disability for the student as well as the adjustments that need to be made for the student and whether these adjustments are reasonable within the context of the

College. As part of this process, information is gathered by the site-based special needs/support teacher and may also be gathered from specialist personnel, such as advisory visiting teachers, who have information to assist in meeting the child's needs. Specialist personnel may also include the disability agencies and medical and allied health professionals. An advocate and/or interpreter may also be involved in the consultation process.

Records are kept of each consultation including details of adjustments needed to be put in place.

The collection, use and disclosure of information about a child is protected by the provisions of the College's Privacy Policy.

Identification

Through consultation and the collection of information, the type and level of adjustments required by the student are determined. Adjustments may be required in areas such as physical access, personal care, health care management, emergency procedures, communication, curriculum and specific teaching strategies.

Based on the information gathered, the Head of College or delegated staff member will make a preliminary assessment and then promptly meet with the parents/care-givers to discuss the outcomes. This meeting may include:

- The student if appropriate
- Other special education advisers / agency representatives
- Therapists, counsellors, other professionals
- An advocate and/or interpreter

It is possible at this time that the enrolment will not proceed because parents form the view that the College cannot meet their child's needs or the College can demonstrate that the enrolment will cause unjustifiable hardship or that no reasonable adjustments can be made.

Education Program

On confirmation of enrolment, parents will receive an outline of the support the College can offer the student in order to access the curriculum successfully. The type and level of specialist educational support required by the student with disability will then be outlined in the student's Support Plan (SP)/Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Health Care Plan. The SP/IEP will also include such matters as: impacts of the disability; health and safety information; aspirations and targeted learning outcomes; and adjustments required to enable learning and demonstration of learning on the same basis as other students. Resource requirements and additional staff support may be included. Other plans such as Manual Handling Plans, Individual Social/Emotional Plans and Individual Behaviour Management Plans may also be developed.

The SP/IEP will be reviewed at a designated period each year. At this time, consultation will occur between the parents/care-givers and the Head of College or delegated representative in order to discuss the child's progress and inform planning. Following

parental approval, and where subjects have been significantly modified to meet specific learning needs, adjustments made by teachers will be clearly indicated on the student's College report. Students will be assessed against appropriate, pre-determined standards.

Appendix 1 – The Learning Support /Special Needs Process at Concordia Lutheran College

