

## Inclusion and Diversity Policy

### Introduction

*Man cannot live without hope; and, education generates hope. In fact, education gives birth; it helps growth; it is part of the dynamics of giving life. – Pope Francis*

*Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good. Edmund Rice Education Touchstones: Inclusive Community*

As a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, St Kevin's College is dedicated to creating an environment that is both diverse and inclusive. By living out the Gospel values in our everyday lives at school, one of the College's chief privileges is to be able to help its students to establish and to sustain positive and productive relationships with all others, whether they be in our Melbourne, Victorian, Australian or global communities whose backgrounds or lifestyles might not be considered *mainstream* by others. In order for the College's students to be leaders in our communities beyond their school experience, they must be exposed to the marginalised, the disadvantaged and the disenfranchised, embracing their lives to make them richer and more hope-filled.

For our students to be able to lead, to support and to give hope to others, the College will always do its very best to lift them up through their own education.

This policy emerges out of our Edmund Rice heritage, our College's tradition as a school to educate Catholic students in Melbourne towards successful post-school opportunities, and our links to Catholic Education Melbourne, whose *Embracing Difference and Diversity Policy* invites our College community to ensure an appropriate and quality education is afforded to all its students.

### Identifying Diversity and Difference in our Student Population

All students at St Kevin's College are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their individual, academic capabilities in each semester of their schooling. On entry to the College, families share with the College all previous school reports and NAPLAN reports (where students are in Year 3 or older). Where students have specific learning needs, families also share reports from psychologists, counsellors and other health professionals so that the College can accommodate for their educational and/or emotional requirements. At St Kevin's College, classroom teachers monitor all of their students' academic and emotional progress to identify any changes in educational outcomes and/or behavioural characteristics so that families and students can be referred to the relevant members of the College personnel to advise them of options, strategies and plans to support the students' educational and/or emotional needs. While evidence-based data will inform the College's identification of students with diversity and difference among its population, it is the classroom teachers who will, through their observations of the students they teach, identify emotional and/or behavioural concerns of students from ELC to Year 12.



## Planning Programs of Work for Students with Diversity and Difference

At Glendalough, Waterford and Heyington, the College's Educational Support staff work closely with classroom teachers, Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators, Heads of Faculty and Department, Curriculum Co-ordinators and the relevant Heads of Year, Dean of Campus and Directors of Glendalough, Students and Studies to ensure programs of work are modified to meet the specific learning needs of students with diversity and difference. Where students – at no matter what Year Level – have been identified as requiring educational support, especially through Catholic Education Melbourne as being a (funded) student with a disability (SWD), extra and more individualised support will be provided for his educational needs. This support can be realised in a range of appropriate ways, according to the type of diversity and difference of each student:

- Integration Aide inside the classroom
- Integration Aide beyond the classroom
- Withdrawal from the classroom to work in small groups of students on literacy and/or numeracy
- Modified programs of work
- Intensified scaffolding of informal assessment instruments within programs of work
- Educational equipment to support hearing or visual impairments for relevant students
- Alterations to the plant and facility to accommodate students with physical impairments
- Invitation to the Academic Review Program
- Invitation to the After-School Study Program
- Visits to the College by Catholic Education Melbourne speech pathologist/s
- Visits to the College by Catholic Education Melbourne support teachers
- External tutoring for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island students as funded by Catholic Education Melbourne
- Student Wellbeing intervention, as required
- Parent Support Group meetings on a termly basis for all (funded) students with a disability
- Personalised Learning Plans for identified students with diversity and difference

Students whose diversity and difference means that they require educational support of some sort will always study the same programs of work in each of their subject areas. The programs of work, however, might often require modification so that students will be working at a level that is different from other students and that is commensurate with their individual diversity and difference. Goals for these students will be established at the PSG meetings. Educational Support staff will liaise with classroom teachers to ensure they are aware of the students' academic and learning goals, ensuring that these goals – and the necessary steps to achieving them as successfully as possible – will be monitored throughout the term.

## Assessing Students with Diversity and Difference

Where students with modified programs of work are concerned, it might be the case that they are assessed in different ways from the other students in their Year Level and subject cohorts. Working in conjunction with the Educational Support staff, Heads of Faculty/Department and classroom teachers will modify assessment to meet the needs of students with diversity and difference. Assessment will be modified depending on the individual student/s. For students with severe learning disabilities or whose English language



skills are not at the same standard as the other students in their Year Level of subject cohort, the modifications to assessment might be considerable: in these circumstances, the students in question might not complete the same number of assessment instruments or complete them under the same conditions as the other students. In all cases, the assessment instruments will be scaffolded so that the students will be able to work their way (systematically) through the task design. Students with significantly modified programs of work and assessment instruments will not have their achievement measured against the other students in the Year Level of subject cohort; instead, their achievement will be measured against the academic and learning goals that were established at the PSG meeting, as well as the appropriate standard for the learning area as outlined by the Victorian Curriculum Standards (formerly AusVELS).

Students whose programs of work do not require modification might still be assessed in a slightly modified way. Such modification will depend on the needs of the individual student/s, and will be determined by the staff of the Educational Support Department who will liaise closely with key staff whose role it is to administer assessment from P to 12. Where students have documented emotional differences, they will be afforded Special Provisions when they are assessed under examination conditions. These students' assessment instruments will not be modified; however, they will be able to complete their examination-style tasks in a separate room, with a scribe, using a laptop, with the assistance of a clarifier or with rest breaks built in to the timing of the assessment instrument.

#### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

Whether our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students come from Melbourne or remote communities in Australia, they will always be eligible for external tutoring that comes with funding from Catholic Education Melbourne. This is particularly important for their achievement in literacy and numeracy. Where our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students do come from remote communities, English is (often) their second, third or fourth language. With the assistance of the Educational Support staff, these students will work at different levels from other students, and will be immersed in the Reading Recovery program so that their English language will become more proficient. Except for when the remote community Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are withdrawn from their LOTE classes, they will remain in their core and elective classes with their peers; however, they will work on modified programs for each of their subject areas. As the years progress, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be given opportunities to work closely with our staff from the Careers Department to organise the best pathways for their futures.

#### Refugee Support Program and New Arrivals

St Kevin's welcomes students whose families have sought refuge in Australia. These students are included in all the College offers, in terms of its spiritual, academic, cultural, sporting and social justice programs. Any new arrival students are tested in terms of their literacy and numeracy on their arrival at the College so that their individual academic differences can be taken into account when establishing what programs of work they will complete. Depending on the academic needs each individual new arrival student, PSG meetings will be arranged between the College and the student's family, and modified programs of work will be offered to them, where the student shows that he is not *at standard*, according to the Victorian Curriculum Standards in the key learning areas. Where new arrival students require Reading Recovery, this literacy support program will be offered to them. Pathways



for new arrival students will be discussed at the appropriate age level with our staff from the Careers Department.

#### Professional Learning & Staff Development

All academic staff at St Kevin's College undergo professional learning and development in relation to teaching students with difference and diversity. Any such staff learning and development is carried out with the assistance and liaison of our staff from the Educational Support Department. On many occasions, professional learning and staff development will be internal – delivered by our Educational Support staff. On other occasions, teachers will be afforded opportunities to attend workshops and lectures run and delivered by external providers who will come to the College to support teachers in their understanding of how best to teach, and to write programs of work for, students with difference and diversity. Classroom teachers who have particular responsibility for the teaching and monitoring of student progress and achievement will be invited to meetings and workshops with our Educational Support staff on a term-by-term basis.

#### Policy Review

This policy was approved in May 2017 and will be reviewed no later than two years from that date.

