

# Disability Policy

## Purpose

Carrum Downs Secondary College is committed to the safety of all children and young people. Carrum Downs Secondary College values the diversity of students including those with special educational needs and recognises the right of all students to attend a mainstream school and participate equitably in the curriculum. Carrum Downs Secondary College supports the learning of students who are funded through the **Program for Students with Disabilities and Impairments** by providing an inclusive curriculum which aims to meet the learning needs of all students, by acknowledging the diversity of experiences and learning styles that groups, students and individuals bring to their learning.

## Aim

- To provide all students, funded and non-funded, with learning opportunities that cater for their diverse, special, individual needs and interests.
- To ensure that the school provides individualised programs and learning experiences that will tailor programs which accommodate the special requirements of those students who are funded under the PSD (Program for Students with Disabilities and Impairments) and to ensure that these students are well supported by college teaching staff and the Integration Team.
- To develop and foster effective relationships between the school, parents, caregivers and outside support agencies for students with disabilities and impairments.

**Disability** is a very broad definition and can include:

- Loss of physical or mental functions (eg. a person who has epilepsy or a hearing impairment)
- Loss of part of the body (eg. a person with an amputation).
- Infectious and non-infectious diseases and illnesses (eg. a person with allergies)
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body (eg. a person with asthma, diabetes, a birthmark or scar)
- A condition which means a person learns differently from other people (eg. a person with autism, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder or an intellectual disability)
- Any condition which affects a person's thought processes, understanding of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour (eg. a person with a personality disorder).
- **Reasonable Adjustment** means changing some feature of the learning program and/or environment so that people with disabilities can operate effectively. It is not unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability if the adjustment imposes unjustifiable hardship on the College. However, the College must be able to prove that an adjustment would cause it unjustifiable hardship. Factors to be considered include the cost, any negative impact on staff or students and the benefit that the person with the disability would gain from the adjustment provided. The principle of reasonable adjustment affects decisions in all areas of employment and education. It encourages more flexible and creative ways of working and teaching and may assist in improving conditions for everyone by, for example, improving access to buildings and rooms.

## Implementation

- The Special Needs Co-ordinator will be responsible for overseeing the Disabilities Program for the College, including co-ordinating the applications for PSD funding, the co-ordination of Student Support Groups, the development and implementation of program budgets, co-ordination of staff professional development and all other issues related to students with disabilities and their respective program needs.

- The College will work in partnership with parents/caregivers by encouraging their active participation in the development of programs and support for special needs students.
- The College will ensure reasonable adjustment to College Programs and learning environments by complying with relevant legislation and DEECD policy.
- Resources required for the Program for Students with Disabilities and Impairments will be identified and allocated effectively and appropriately.
- Appropriate educational programs will be made available to students with disabilities and impairments. These programs may include, but are not limited to, adjustments to curriculum, and teaching strategies, resources and the environment to address the needs of individual students.
- The College will encourage active participation of parents/caregivers and community members by providing up to date and regular information about programs and procedures.
- An important priority of the College is to ensure that all staff are familiar with, fully understand and develop an awareness of how to address the obligations under this policy and relevant legislation.
- It is the responsibility of the College to ensure that relevant professional development and training be provided for all staff to support their work for students with a disability.
- The College will ensure that a supportive school environment will be fostered and maintained that will promote positive, accepting attitudes within the school community towards all students, including those with a disability and impairment.

## Links

- Disability Standards of Education 2005
- Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Development of State Disability Plan 2013 – 2016 is underway. Will be in place by 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2013. Draft will be coming out during 2012.
- Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide-  
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/curricman/support/3-11.pdf>  
<http://www.sofweb.vic.edu/wellbeing/disabil/index.htm>
- Carrum Downs Secondary College Student Code Of Conduct

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's review cycle.

**Related policies:** School Policy Advisory Guide – <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

*This policy was endorsed by the College Council in June, 2016*