

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

OF MONTFORT SCHOOL, AGARTALA

PURPOSE

This policy provides information and procedures concerning the identification of and support provisions for students with disabilities and students not achieving or at risk of not achieving an appropriate standard. For these students who require learning support it is crucial that we are a 'community, which welcomes and acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual so that our students will feel secure and know that they are valued'. Our Catholic ethos requires that all students have a right to an inclusive education.

POLICY

Montfort School (a unit of Institute of the Brothers of St. Gabriel Society, N E Province) provides a welcoming environment that values diversity, is faithful to gospel values and ensures that all students can access school programs and participate in the curriculum with their peers.

To achieve this, the School seeks to create a school-wide culture that:

- nurtures and accepts diversity in a safe and happy environment
- provides equal opportunities for all students
- makes adjustments to the curriculum, school activities and environment to ensure access and participation for all students
- consults with and works in partnership with parents
- provides students with support networks
- shares the responsibility for meeting the needs of all students
- Includes parents, students and staff in planning and decision-making processes.
- Makes the school campus accessible for all.

DEFINITIONS

Inclusion

"Staud and Peck (1995:36) have defined inclusion as '...the full-time placement of children with mild, moderate and severe disabilities in regular classrooms.' This definition assumes that regular class placement is a relevant option for all children, regardless of the degree of severity of their disabilities. However, the writers state their definition does not preclude the use of withdrawal services or instruction in a self-contained setting when necessary. There are many other definitions of inclusion, but all focus on the rights of students with disabilities to be educated in regular schools." (Peter Westwood 1996)

The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. As an inclusive school Montfort recognises and responds to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their

communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school. (Salamanca Statement 1997)

Student with Disability (SWD)

A Student with a Disability is defined as having one or more sensory, physical psychological or intellectual impairment, which causes significant loss or reduction of the ability to participate in a regular educational program. A SWD has a validated diagnosis.

Adjustments/Adaptation

Adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that enable a student with special education needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. The types of adjustments made will vary according to the needs of the individual student.

Life Skills Courses – Years 7 to 10

A range of curriculum adjustments should be explored before a decision is made to access Life Skills outcomes and content. These adjustments will vary according to the needs of the individual student.

Learning Difficulty

Learning difficulties [is] a generic term that refers to children and adolescents who exhibit delays in developmental and academic skills. These difficulties are considered to result from one or more of the following factors: intellectual disability, physical and sensory defects, emotional difficulties, inadequate environmental experiences, lack of appropriate educational opportunities.

Differentiated Curriculum

The principle of differentiation in education programming applies quite as much to addressing the characteristics and needs of gifted and talented students as it does to meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

Students who are Gifted and Talented

This definition of giftedness and talent is based on Gagne's (2003) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent.

- Gifted students are those whose potential is distinctly above average (in the top 10%) in one or more of the following domains of human ability: intellectual, creative, social and physical.
- Talented students are those whose skills are distinctly above average (in the top 10%) in one or more areas of human performance (Gagne 2003). Talent emerges from ability as a consequence of the student's learning experience (Gagne 1985).

PROCEDURES

Identification and Support

The Montfortian education is to improve learning outcomes for students with educational disadvantage. Priorities are given for the following categories:

- SWD (Students with Disabilities)
- LNSC (Literacy & Numeracy Support & Challenge)
- IEA (Inclusive Education Assistant)
- IET (Inclusive Education Teacher)

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT (VISION): Vision Assessment indicating a permanent Vision Loss of 6/24 or less in the better eye corrected, or less than 20% field of vision with a resultant impact on the student's ACCESS and PARTICIPATION.

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT (HEARING): Audiogram and hearing report indicating a Permanent (sensory-neural/conductive) hearing loss of 30+ decibels with resultant communication difficulties with a resultant impact on the student's ACCESS and PARTICIPATION

COGNITIVE DELAY: A Psychometric Assessment report indicating a Full-scale IQ score of 70 \pm 5 with a resultant impact on the student's ACCESS and PARTICIPATION. (ABAS forms need to be completed for disability criteria to be confirmed)

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE: Speech and Language assessment identifying a Receptive, Expressive or Core Language Score of 70 or below with a resultant impact on the student's ACCESS and PARTICIPATION. (Report are valid for a 12-month period and need to reviewed annually)

PDD Diagnosis indicating a pervasive development disorder (e.g. Autism) affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction that significantly affects their ability to learn. Diagnosis must also include a clinically significant adaptive behavioural delay.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY: Specialist report that indicates an on-going physical condition that significantly limits functioning and independence and where the student is highly dependent on others for ACCESS to and PARTICIPATION in learning.

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER: Report from a psychiatrist/psychologist indicating mental health disorder at a level of frequency, duration and intensity that requires ongoing health specialist intervention with a resultant impact on students ACCESS and PARTICIPATION.

SWD funding is targeted for students with validated disabilities. It is designed to maximise opportunities for these students who are enrolled in regular classes and to encourage their full participation in the range of programs offered by their school. Students must have educational needs that are directly related to their identified disability and that cannot be met within the full range of resources already available from the school. These resources include those provided under Base Staffing. School inclusive education teams incorporate the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion when managing these resources.

To be supported as Students with Disabilities, students must be enrolled and attending regular classes. They must have an identified disability that has been validated. Students supported under Students with Disabilities are required to have:

- An Inclusion and Wellbeing Matrix
- An on-line Individual Plan (including SMART Goals)
- Evidence of adjustments made within teaching and learning programs.

Life Skills - Years 7 to 10 When a student with special education needs requires significant support and/or adjustments to teaching and learning activities and/or assessment, these should be recorded as evidence to support the decision to implement Life Skills outcomes and content. Refer to Life Skills 7-10 Agreed Practice.

LNSC (Literacy & Numeracy Support & Challenge)

The purpose of the Literacy, Numeracy and Challenge program is to improve literacy and numeracy performance outcomes of all students. Students not achieving or at risk of not achieving an appropriate standard of achievement, requiring additional assistance to reach a standard of achievement based on their potential ability.

Literacy, Numeracy and Challenge is targeted to support students with access and participation needs, but do not meet the disability validation criteria.

Resources provided under Literacy, Numeracy and Challenge address the learning needs of students in the classroom through explicit quality teaching practice and differentiated work creating an inclusive learning environment.

Inclusive Education Assistant (IEA)

IEA support is an allocation to support teachers of students with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The IEA staffing provision is used to meet the specific needs of the school in improving student outcomes.

Inclusive Education Teacher (IET)

Teaching Support allows schools to appoint a teacher to the specialist role of Inclusive Education Teacher to support classroom teachers in catering for students with complex learning needs and those with disabilities. The purpose of Teaching Support is to provide accountable and effective leadership to ensure that students and teachers receive quality support.

Enrolment of Students with Disabilities

The Principal who will engage in the following process will conduct enrolment meetings for SWDs:

- a. When the parent indicates a desire to enrol their child with a disability, the Principal requests all documentation from the parents that could support the enrolment as a SWD.
- b. The Principal and IET confirm that the documentation validates the student has a disability.

- c. Each report or piece of evidence provided to support the student's case must be attached in the individual file.
- d. A learning support officer will contact the principal to discuss the reports and any implications for the enrolment meeting
- e. The Principal conducts the enrolment meeting and completes the Montfortian Education Enrolment Considerations for Students with Disabilities with the student and their parents.

Assessment Requests and Validation

All requests for cognitive assessments and validation of external reports will be processed when sent to Catholic Education electronically. The following guidelines are provided to ensure timely processing:

- a. All documentation is to be kept safely and confidentiality should be maintained.
- b. The 'subject' line of each file needs to specify the disability identified in the documentation e.g. subject- Cognitive Assessment, student's name and school.
- c. Attach all reports, Supplementary Form, Student Matrix, Summary of the interventions used (in and out of the classroom), and a sample of the students handwriting as separate documents.
- d. The Principal – signature to be included on the Supplementary Form, must approve the application.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Principal:

- Assumes the major responsibility at school level for ensuring the effective planning and program delivery for all students. All school staff are responsible in the first instance to the Principal.
- Inform parents of the Inclusive Education Policy when taking new enrolments.
- Follows enrolment processes as required by Montfortian Education guidelines.
- Leads and services the school community in responding to all students' needs and provides and promotes an inclusive, safe, just and welcoming learning environment to all.
- Ensures that varying degrees of disclosure of information to staff about students is sufficient to ensure that appropriate duty of care is in place always. Not all staff members need to be privy to all the details about every student's disability and/or special needs.

Parents

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that parents are an integral part of the team and are consulted on matters of significance.

- Parents have a particularly important part to play in the educating community; since it is to them that primary and natural responsibility for their children's education belongs.
- Parents are required to inform the school about any conditions that may impact on the learning and wellbeing of their child and that may have an impact on the school.
- Parents are key team members in the education of their children in an inclusive school and are partners in decision-making about their child's learning and personal development.
- The class teacher is the person responsible first and foremost for the development of the student in the classroom, and as such is the first point of communication for the parents.

Class Teacher

The basis of the model of inclusion in Montfort School is that the class teacher is responsible, at school level, first and foremost, for meeting the needs of all students in the class. The Inclusive Education Teacher and Inclusive Education Assistants support the teacher in this responsibility.

- Class teachers are responsible for informing parents when a student is referred to the Inclusive Education Teacher for intervention.
- Class teachers are responsible for participating in professional learning opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of a particular disability and/or learning difficulty. Attending in-services, professional reading and visiting other schools can achieve professional learning. Funds for professional learning are available to encourage and support teachers in their professional learning. The Inclusive Education Teacher will make recommendations to support teachers in this matter.
- The class teacher is responsible for providing information about students with special needs in the class relief folder.
- The class teacher's teaching and learning program is the key document to guide teaching and learning experiences for all students in a classroom. This planning tool allows teachers to record the adjustments they need to make in assessment and teaching and learning activities in any Key Learning Area for a student with differential needs. The classroom program is designed to meet the needs of the whole class with adjustments (content, process and product) where necessary to ensure access and participation in the curriculum and school activities. It is an agreed practice at Montfort that programs demonstrate differentiated curriculum. Support in programming adjustments is offered by the Inclusive Education Teacher.
- Teachers are to ensure that the adjustments in the Personalised Plan (PP) are documented clearly in the teaching and learning programs.

Inclusive Education Teacher (IET)

The Inclusive Education Teacher (IET) is an essential member of Montfort's teaching and learning team and is responsible to the Principal. The IET's role is to ensure that the classroom teachers access effective support so that all students with special needs achieve their learning potential. The IET is part of a small school-based team that takes responsibility for the provision of learning support services in the school and has specific responsibility for the effective inclusion of students with special needs. This support is delivered by working collaboratively with the Principal, teachers, students, parents, Inclusive Education Assistants, service providers and the society.

Support for Principal

Ensure that all Montfortian Education priorities and procedures to meet student needs are followed:

- Development of Personalised Plans.
- Enrolment screening (discernment and information gathering) for processing students with special needs

- Formal referral processes on behalf of students
- Formal assessment processes and resultant collaboration with parents and teachers
- Funding and accountability processes

Support for Teachers and Inclusive Education Assistants

- The Inclusive Education Teacher is responsible for updating and ensuring that data and adjustments are current in the student's file.
- SMART Goals for the PP are developed and reviewed at PP meetings in consultation with the student (if required), parents, class teacher / Pastoral Care Advisor and IET.
- A PP, an Inclusive and Wellbeing Matrix are paramount to Montfort's response to meeting the specific needs of students with disabilities or students with significant learning difficulties. A Safety/Behaviour Plan or a Medical/Dietary Plan may also be required. Student (if required), parents, class teacher/Pastoral Care Advisor and IET are responsible for providing input into these documents.
- The IET works collaboratively with teachers and Pastoral Care Advisors when preparing a student's application for a cognitive assessment. This includes the development of the Supplementary Form, intervention plan and Inclusion and Wellbeing matrix.
- Support teachers in the classroom, as determined by the principal, to address the needs of all students through differentiated curriculum.
- Meet school requirements for Collection of Data for Students with Disability.
- Implement effective practices and structures required for collaboration between the student, parents, teachers and the school leadership team.
- Provide advice to school leadership team around the individual needs of students with complex learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Identify, assess and monitor students with complex learning needs.
- Provide current/evidence based professional learning to teachers.
- Provide appropriate updated student information to class teachers, RFF teachers, librarian, Inclusive Education Assistants and relief staff.
- Organise resources (Inclusive Education budget) for teachers with students who have special needs.
- Timetable Inclusive Education Assistants' allocated hours.
- Organise and supervise Inclusive Education Assistants' duties and student programs.
- Ensure that SWD and NCCD student files are kept up to date.
- Visit preschools or schools to view special needs students enrolling at Montfort, if required.
- Work closely with secondary schools where students with special needs is enrolled to support a smooth transition.
- Coordinate the provision of specialised services e.g. Speech Pathology, Occupational therapy, Physiotherapy.
- Ensure consultation with SWD or student with significant learning needs when developing on-line Individual Plan.
- Work directly with students in partnership with their teachers and within the parameters of the teacher's program and the learning needs of the student. This can be done in the classroom or in the Inclusive Education room with 1:1 or small group teaching.

- Collaborate with teachers on behalf of the student when difficulties are encountered.
- Collaborate as needed with the school counsellor.

Support for Parents

- Mediate with parents about their child's special needs.
- Inform parents of information sessions, workshops or courses related to their child's needs.
- Work with parents of SWD to encourage the provision of appropriate support at home.
- Inform parents when their child refuses support from IET or IEA.
- Participate in Parent information meetings that promote literacy awareness.

Inclusive Education Assistant (IEA)

The Inclusive Education Assistant (IEA) is an essential member of the school team. The pivotal role of the IEA is to provide support for classroom teachers so that all students with disabilities achieve to their learning potential.

The IEA is responsible to the Principal. At Montfort the Principal delegates the responsibility of overall supervision of the IEA to the Inclusive Education Teacher.

The IEA is required to provide effective support for the classroom teacher by:

- a. Supporting the Catholic ethos of Montfort School.
- b. Working with groups of children in or out of the classroom as directed by the teacher. Not just students with disabilities but other groups so that the class teacher is able to work with all students.
- c. Planning collaboratively with class teacher to implement effective programs.
- d. Reporting relevant aspects of student progress to the teacher and the other members of the Inclusive Education Team and contributing to the discussions. This can be achieved through recording, charting, observing and reporting back on student achievement e.g. development of social skills.
- e. Preparing specialised materials as directed by the teacher and as required to implement the class teacher's program.
- f. Supporting students by listening, directing, explaining, reassuring, encouraging, re-directing and reinforcing.
- g. Supervising and monitoring the use of specialised equipment and resources.
- h. Helping the teacher with classroom management issues when appropriate.
- i. Providing specific support to other members of the Inclusive Education Team.
- j. Providing some clerical support for teachers.
- k. To support the general student management and pastoral approach in the school.
- l. To carry out duties for school activities involving active participation.
- m. Providing personal care and hygiene support.
- n. To provide student supervision in appropriate situations when directed by the teacher.
- o. Be informed of any pastoral care issues that may affect a student.
- p. Work collaboratively with external agencies under the guidance of the IET.
- q. Where appropriate provide input into student's reports and IP's.

- r. When required provide supervision and special provisions for internal exams and assessment tasks.
- s. Be aware of duty of care, confidentiality and professional obligations.

Process for Developing a Personalised Plan (PP)

1. PP meetings are held twice a year; - Mid to end of Term 1 to review adjustments and SMART Goals from the previous year - Start of Term 4 to review and develop SMART goals for the new school year
2. The IET organises appointments with parents for PP meetings.
3. Assistant Principal organises a relief teacher to cover classes and duties while teachers attend PP Meetings.
4. The IET notifies teachers/Pastoral Care Advisors, IEAs (if required), Principal and Assistant Principal of appointment times and preparation required.
5. Teachers are required to report on achievement of SMART goals at PP meetings
6. The IET chairs the PP meeting and updates a paper copy of the PP. This is updated electronically after the meeting.
7. The PP is printed for the Principal to read and sign. The class teacher/Pastoral Care Advisor and IET sign the PP.

Students Identified as requiring support

Students requiring support in their learning are identified through the following assessments and processes:

- Referrals from class teachers
- Diagnostic and standardised testing
- Psychometric Assessment
- Speech and Language Assessment – Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF 4)
- Occupational Therapy Assessment
- Behaviour checklists – Special Needs Learning Outcomes Program (SLOP Folder)
- School Counsellor
- Enrolment information e.g. ESL language background, specific learning disabilities, medical problems and disorders
- Student's instructional reading level is below the class average as per Catholic Education Benchmark in Read On.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment

Adjustments to assessment tasks may need to be considered for Students with Disabilities and for students with significant learning needs. Assessment procedures for these students will be determined collaboratively with the student's teacher and the Inclusive Education Teacher.

Reporting

Students with a Disability (SWD) and students with learning difficulties will receive an A-E graded report in Years 1 to 10. Teachers will include in the comment sections any adjustments that have been made for the student to allow their access and participation in the learning activities and assessments.

Students who are completing Life Skills courses will receive a report addressing the Life Skills outcomes and content. The following descriptors: With Support and independently are used to describe the student's level of achievement.

Transition

At Montfort we are mindful that students with special needs require extra support to ensure for a successful transition as they move from:

- Preschool to Kindergarten
- From one-year level to the next
- Primary school into Secondary school
- From Secondary to a new school

Support can be given in the following ways:

- Observations in the previous setting
- Discussion with the previous teacher
- Handover meeting between teacher, IET and IEA
- Provide matrix, Safety /Behaviour plan.
- Access to assessment records and specialist reports
- Extra Kindergarten orientation with an IEA, if required
- Social scripts/stories
- Prepare students for welcoming a new student with a disability
- An awareness of the students who have special needs and the considerations that they require
- Information from parents and suggested strategies to assist student
- Explicit information about disability
- Access to the Catholic Education specialist Transition officer

Retention Teachers who are concerned about the progression of a student into the next year level must discuss their concerns with the Principal and the Inclusive Education Teacher prior to any discussion with the parents.

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