



ENRICHMENT POLICY & PRACTICES

RATIONALE

All schools have a responsibility to identify and meet the educational needs of all students. As a Christian College, we see the delivery of services and support to students with a range of 'unique' needs as an integral part of our ministry.

This enrichment policy is inclusive of the following groups of students with particular needs:

- indigenous students
- students with an ESL background
- students with ascertained disabilities
- students requiring Learning Support
- students identified as Gifted and Talented
- Children in the care of the State (students on an ESP – Educational Support Plan)
- Students with other identified (special) needs, including diagnosed health needs

We consider that each student represented by these groups is faced with learning challenges from time to time. In some schooling systems these students are cared for by a Special Needs section. Our focus is to **enrich** the learning experiences for the whole range of students within their classroom setting. This will involve specialist support for each child from time to time, an assessment that is made case by case and reviewed systematically.

Targeted government funding support exists for students in any school who

- require learning support – as identified by poor scores in systemic testing
- have ascertained disabilities
- have English as a Second Language (ESL)
- who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Additionally at Staines we seek to support students with other needs including identified health needs.

BACKGROUND

Staines students are drawn from across the socio-economic spectrum though the majority come from lower income families. They represent the full range of intellectual and learning abilities as is typical of a non-academically selective school.

While contributing to the creation of a rich diversity within the school, the variety of backgrounds and competencies of the students also gives rise to special needs that it is the school's responsibility to meet.

Among these needs are those of students who experience difficulties with learning. These difficulties may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration. Students may experience difficulties with learning because of the ways in which they learn, or the rates at which they learn. Difficulties may also result from emotional, social and cultural factors.

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PRINCIPLES

Our policy for the Education of Students with Diverse Learning Needs (temporary and permanent) is based upon the principles outlined by the Queensland Government. These principles are as follows:

- The provision of appropriate education for students with learning difficulties is the direct responsibility of each individual teacher and of the school as a whole.
- Each teacher should provide learning opportunities at a pace and in a style appropriate for students experiencing difficulties and should ensure that all students can access tasks and experience success in the classroom environment.
- It is not generally desirable to separate students from their peers. Such a practice denies some students access to the full curriculum and is damaging both to their self-esteem and to their perceptions of themselves as learners.
- Self-identification

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Staines Memorial College is an inclusive educational setting. It is our goal to support all students with disabilities at an appropriate level of need. Class teachers need to adjust their programming, where required, to meet the needs of individuals, to allow them to access the curriculum at their level of ability. They are able to receive support from the Enrichment (Special Needs) staff to assist them in this process. We believe that all students should have the right to access the curriculum on offer at the school.

COMMUNICATION/REFERRAL

Communication concerning students with learning difficulties should operate on two levels

- within the school and
- with parents/guardians.

Where a student experiences difficulties in more than one subject, teachers should endeavour to consult with each other and with support staff to ensure concerted efforts. Parents are encouraged to speak to each of the subject teachers to get a complete picture. It is not unusual that student perform differently in different subjects.

Referral forms should be used by class teachers to communicate their concerns about student difficulties or refer students for assessment or support. These forms allow accurate information to be passed on to the appropriate personnel quickly.

No diagnostic assessments for support or support will be undertaken without the consent of parents. Communication with parents/guardians is essential so that their co-operation and support can be enlisted wherever possible.

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IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students may be eligible for ascertainment or EAP (Educational Adjustment Profiling) if they meet the criteria for one of the following disability categories:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Impairment
- Physical Impairment
- Speech Language Impairment
- Social Emotional Disorder
- Vision Impairment

These students are generally identified through the enrolment process, or may receive a diagnosis once they have begun at the College. These students are all placed on Individualised Educational Programs (IEPs) that focus on the development of specific skills and goals, relevant to their individual needs. This plan is devised by a team of relevant stakeholders, and may include: parents, class teachers, Enrichment staff, allied health professionals, outside medical personnel, etc.

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE LEARNING NEEDS

Identification may be initiated and/or facilitated by administration (particularly on enrolment), specialist personnel, by parents or by members of the medical and helping professions in the community. Because it is recognised that learning difficulties may arise at any time throughout a student's school life, teachers should regard the identification of students with learning difficulties as a continuing process. Staff identify students requiring possible support as a result of observations and testing and by seeking the counsel of one of the Enrichment Team. Subsequently, staff are required to complete a Referral form for students which is then considered by the Enrichment Team.

Referral forms, by which Class Teachers may communicate their concerns about student difficulties or refer students for assessment or support are available in the pigeon hole area. These forms allow accurate information to be passed on to the appropriate personnel quickly. No assessments or support will usually be undertaken without advising parents / carers. Communication with parents/guardians is essential so that their co-operation and support can be enlisted wherever possible.

Ongoing Identification

Students may be identified for support by the:

- Class Teacher
- Parents
- Standardised testing
- Support Teacher (Learning Difficulties)

NATURE OF SUPPORT - STRATEGIES

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Support for students with disabilities and identified learning needs (which includes ESL students, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, learning support students) arises from thorough development and evaluation of a range of plans. Such plans:

- build on information gained from identification and assessment of each student's learning needs;
- acknowledge that students with learning difficulties like all students, need to learn at a pace and in a style both appropriate and challenging for them;
- recognise that many learning difficulties may be overcome by only slight modifications to regular class programs while more complex problems will require comprehensive planning and provision;
- acknowledge the relationship between learning difficulties and other areas of stress or disability;
- provide for differences in the duration of programs depending on individual needs of the student;
- establish and continue to evaluate curriculum and programs.

Support for students with health needs is another component to the care we offer. Two examples of support provided by the College for students with medical conditions include: (1) taking action in support of students with known allergies. Being a peanut free school is a way of supporting students who have anaphylactic reactions to nut products. (2) Students with known stresses in their life due to family or personal circumstances are supported by the counsel and support by the Chaplain and prayers and counsel of the Chaplain and other staff.

ENRICHMENT ACTION TEAM

This team, made up of selected personnel, generally meets twice a month. The Teams role is to:

- Process all new referrals by identifying what action needs to be taken, assessments required, and to prioritise students for services.
- Share and disseminate information to relevant staff.
- Discuss complex student cases.
- Refer students to outside agencies or support personnel.
- To act as a means of accountability for all Enrichment staff.

ROLE OF PARENTS

Enrolment is conditional on our perceived ability to effectively support the needs of the student. We therefore require parents to provide as much information as possible so an informed decision can be made.

To ensure effective learning and growth, ongoing parental communication remains essential as learning needs can change subsequent to enrolment, particularly if circumstances in the child's life change. Such contact will usually be with the class teacher and enrichment teacher in the first instance.

Parents are required to work with the College teachers and enrichment staff so that a consistent approach to learning, expected behaviours and applied consequences result whether the student is at home or at school.



THE ROLE OF THE ENRICHMENT TEACHERS & AIDES

The Enrichment (sometimes called Special Needs) Teachers and Aides assist classroom teachers to cater for those students, in regular classes, who are experiencing difficulties in basic areas of learning. There should be regular and ongoing communication between the Enrichment Teachers and all staff. Although assistance in the junior years is most likely to be productive in the long term, students in the senior years should also be helped as required on the advice of class teachers. The Enrichment Teacher's timetable should be flexible and modifiable according to perceived needs as requested by class teachers. The work of the Enrichment Teachers may be summarised as follows:

- Assists in identification of students with difficulties in conjunction with class teachers, specialist personnel and parents;
- Assists in assessing student needs and responding individually to those needs;
- To act as a case manager for high needs students and to co-ordinate the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), assessments and ascertainment as required;
- Consults regularly with E.S.L staff and other professionals and refers students to them where appropriate;
- Since all students should have access to the full curriculum the Enrichment Teacher should use withdrawal sparingly and rather work primarily in a team teaching role with class teachers. This may take several forms, for example:
 - Working alongside the class teacher in the classroom;
 - Working with the student within the classroom;
 - Giving individual or group assistance outside the classroom if both Class Teacher and Enrichment Teacher feel this is necessary to reinforce/ practise/ revise aspects of curriculum; and
 - Consultation in planning programs, setting tests, finding resources, evaluating suitability of texts;
- Enrichment teachers should take initiative in informing staff of facilities/resources available and in liaising between teachers/faculties to encourage sharing of successful programs and strategies;
- Time should be allowed to assist students having difficulties with completing set work and assignments and Enrichment Teachers should help such students to learn how to go about such tasks, how to organise time, set priorities and develop independent study skills;
- Develop and assist implementation of modified, alternative, or individualised programs, as appropriate;
- Work with teachers to help build positive attitudes to school work and increase self-confidence;
- Advise teachers in selection of materials and tests;
- Communicate with and advise parents as required; and
- Attend appropriate meetings and in-services where possible.

NB Please refer to separate documents for a more complete description of position descriptions of staff.

The **Enrichment Coordinator** (Head of Enrichment) leads the Enrichment team and works closely with other members of the College Student Welfare Team.

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ROLE OF TEACHERS

It is the responsibility of all teachers to be familiar with the needs of the individual students in their classes and to adapt their teaching to enhance the learning opportunities and achievement of students with learning difficulties. These are as follows:

- Immersion in print medium (especially Subject Specific Vocabulary);
- Demonstration of how written medium is used;
- Positive expectations given by teacher to class;
- Responsibility for own learning;
- Approximation (encouraging students to "have a go");
- regular use for variety of purposes; and
- Response (feedback).

In selecting, adapting, devising and evaluating materials, techniques and programs suited to the needs of students with learning difficulties, teachers should take account of the importance of the following:

- Are skills well sequenced and logical?
- Are opportunities provided for practice?
- Is material clearly presented?
- Is subject specific vocabulary taught and revised throughout?
- Are activities appropriate?
- Is interest level adequate?
- Are revision items included? and
- Is language at an appropriate level?

Students with learning difficulties learn according to the same principles as everyone else but may learn more slowly (either because of pervasive slowness, or greater than normal intermittent periods of non-availability for learning) and may need to be taught systematically what other students learn incidentally. Therefore it will be necessary to break down the learning tasks into smaller "bites" and to isolate and specifically teach the skills required.

INFORMATION FOR CLASS TEACHER – Classroom practice and assessment

There is a wide range of techniques and procedures for assisting students with learning difficulties. The Enrichment team support the classroom teacher with resources and co-develop teaching units and assessment to assist students with needs. The level of support will vary according to the difficulties experienced by the child. The programs and nature of support are systematically reviewed twice a year but teachers are encouraged to make very regular habit of consultation.

An appendix at the end of this document provides some starting information for teachers.

There is a wide range of techniques and procedures for assessing students with learning difficulties. Although these may vary according to the difficulties experienced they should include skilled observation and application of appropriate test materials. The aim of assessment is to determine:

- What the students know or can do
- Where the students should be placed in a program
- Levels or groups in a classroom – so as to better tailor learning programs

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RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

For further information please refer to the

- Enrichment Referral Procedures
- Enrichment Referral Form
- Eligibility Criteria for Enrichment Candidates
- Enrolment Policy
- Enrichment staff Position Descriptions
- Inclusive Education Policy
- Anti-discrimination Policy
- Access & Equity Policy
- Special Considerations Processes (refer Student Assessment policy documents & procedures)

This policy version replaces the 2007-05 document.



Appendix – Beginning helps for teachers

Identifiers of students having learning challenges / difficulties

- Lack of interest in the work;
- Poor test/assignment results;
- Misbehaviour;
- Little or no preparation for lessons;
- Getting behind in practical work, book work;
- Work not handed in;
- Non-participation in class activities;
- Low self-esteem;
- Forgets quickly;
- Inability to transfer a learned skill or concept;
- Repeated complaints about work (e.g. 'boring', 'don't understand', 'why do we have to..
- Inattentiveness;
- Doesn't try - won't have a go; or
- Impulsive - doesn't stop to think.

What to consider when evaluating material for students having learning challenges / difficulties

- Are the skills well sequenced?;
- Is the material clearly presented?;
- Are enough opportunities provided for practice?;
- Is the level of interest adequate?;
- Is the language at an appropriate level?; and
- Is assessment built in?

General suggestions for teachers of L.D. students

- Tie in new content/concepts to what they already know - i.e., start from where they're at;
- Pre-teach vocabulary to be encountered in new units;
- In teaching new material, try to integrate all aspects of language - listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- Demonstrate (as opposed to telling) as often as possible. Provide concrete experience in teaching concepts;
- Work should be divided into limited objectives and should have a well-defined structure;
- Break work into smaller chunks;
- Written text should not be over-used and should be linked with visual material wherever possible;
- Ensure the student over learns, i.e. beyond the point of apparent success by additional practice and reinforcement/revision;
- Consider greater use of group work and allow groups to be fluid, not fixed;
- Give more examples than you think you need;
- Encourage students to monitor their own understanding and progress (eg, by checklist/ learning journal);
- Provide constant feedback - indicate success and reward learning;

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- Do NOT punish failure to learn;
- Use imaginative practical tasks to create involvement and help overcome weaknesses in understanding;
- Monitor pace of presentation - as a rule of thumb, the pace is about right if students can accurately identify 95% or more words in the text being used and can answer 80% of your questions. Below these figures you're going too fast or the material is too hard;
- Visual:
 - Use typed/word processed notes rather than handwriting;
 - Use LOWER case for body text - use caps only for emphasis;
 - Do NOT justify word processed notes;
 - Use a serif font rather than sans serif;
 - Use larger font size / fewer words on a page / increase line spacing;
 - Use cues to emphasize special features (eg, stars for starting points/arrows for directions, colour cues to stress differences and similarities);
 - Keep work sheets simple, clear and uncluttered; and
 - Always check, rather than assume, that 'hand-outs' are understood.
- Auditory:
 - Precede verbal instructions by cue words (eg, 'listen', 'ready now', ...);
 - Reduce your rate of oral presentation;
 - Allow students opportunities to discuss topic;
 - Avoid verbiage;
 - Stick to your main points; and
 - Keep your instructions clear and simple;
- Above all, TEACH MORE NOT LESS.