

# Policy



**Catholic  
Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

*Learning with Faith and Vision*

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## Inclusive Practices

### Purpose

This policy provides direction to Catholic schools regarding the establishment and maintenance of inclusive practices to meet the diverse needs of students. Inclusive practices are supportive of Church teaching and in accordance with legislative requirements under the Education General Provisions Act (2006), Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and Disability Standards for Education (2005).

### Policy

Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns has a strong commitment to respecting and valuing student diversity, inclusion and wellbeing, catering for students with a range of attributes and experiences. These may include ability, culture, race, socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Our diverse student population enriches the communal life of Catholic schools.

### Rationale

Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns is committed to “The Wellbeing and Learning for ALL students”.

“An education in the fullness of humanity should be the defining feature of Catholic schools” (1)

For the purpose of this policy the term ‘inclusive practices’ is defined as the provision of a safe, supportive and collaborative learning environment responsive to the needs of all students. The learning environment should enable all students to access education that is appropriate, equitable and empowering (in alignment with standards outlined in the DSE, 2005). Such environments ensure that students can engage with the daily life of the school and curriculum, demonstrating their knowledge and strengths, and maximising participation through quality learning opportunities.

Inclusive practices are fundamental to the ethos of Catholic schools and form part of the pastoral, spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural and social development of all students.

The principles of inclusion endorse:

- Practice that is informed by Catholic social teaching, legislative requirements, educational philosophy and societal expectations.
- The uniqueness and the diversity of students as children of God.
- The need for belonging within a community underpinned by respectful relationships.
- A whole school approach to planning, curriculum development and school organisation.
- Access to differentiated resources and learning opportunities, and reasonable adjustments that enable all students to engage purposefully and experience learning success.

## Consequences

Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns advocates that Catholic schools establish appropriate procedures and practices that:

- Adhere to Diocesan enrolment policy and guidelines regarding enrolment applications from families “who identify with and seek the values of Christ” (Catholic Schools for the 21st Century, 2001).
- Comply with legal and moral imperatives to be non-discriminatory in practice.
- Commit to working towards meeting the needs of all students in the Catholic education community, drawing on shared knowledge and skills relating to all facets of education.
- Encourage collaborative planning and decision making which includes students, families and educators as integral members of the school community.
- Encourage collaborative partnerships and service agreements with agencies beyond the school to support the particular needs of students.
- Promote the professional development of all staff to support the equitable participation of all students.
- Provide physical environments that are accessible, stimulating, safe, respectful and welcoming.
- Provide flexible system approaches, school structures, procedures and curriculum that facilitates options and pathways for students.
- Develop cultures of reflection and ongoing evaluation to ensure inclusive practices are meeting the needs of all students.

## Reflection

1. Pope Francis, *Address to Association of Catholic School parents*, Vatican, December 7, 2015

## See also (Related Policies and Guidelines)

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Enrolment of Students in Catholic Schools Policy
- Enrolment of Students Substantially Below or Above Year Level Expectations Policy
- First Nations Education Policy
- Gifted and Talented Education Policy
- International Education Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Student Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Enrolment Application Support Procedure/Guideline
- Student Bullying: Prevention and Responses in Schools Guideline
- Student Physical Restraint Guideline