



# ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY AND COMPLEX EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS PROCEDURE

## RATIONALE

Mercedes College commits to make school education available to all Catholic children, as far as resources allow. Mercedes College has at its heart a distinctive spirituality and commit themselves to living Mercy values of compassion, justice, excellence, integrity, hope and service. Inspired by the practical example of Catherine McAuley, our lives are centres in God. Mercedes College strives to be the living proof of social consciousness.

## CONTEXT

Mercedes College has a proud history of educating children with learning and social emotional needs. We acknowledge that during the enrolment application process, careful priority and consideration needs to be given to the provision of learning and wellbeing support through reasonable adjustments.

At Mercedes College we recognise our legal obligation to ensure the ongoing health and safety of students and staff, including the student seeking enrolment. It is therefore important to consider conducting and documenting risk assessments where required.

This particularly applies if a student's history indicates any references to suspension or exclusion from school because of violent or other challenging behaviour. Information from previous educational institutions and professionals may prove to be a critical aspect in the development of an effective risk assessment.

Since the enrolment process relies on full and accurate disclosure of information, any misleading or false testament, which includes omission of relevant information, may lead to an offer of enrolment being withdrawn.

At Mercedes College we are prepared to provide reasonable adjustments to the enrolment process as an obligatory element of the Disability Discrimination Standards for Education (2005).

This procedure is designed to address situations where a student has a disability and/or complex educational, social or emotional needs. As the needs of each such student will differ, the College reserves the right to amend this procedure as it is applied to an individual student's circumstances to ensure the health and safety of staff, students and other members of the school community.

## PRINCIPLES

- i. Mercedes College commits to providing a distinctly Catholic and Mercy education for all enrolled students
- ii. Mercedes College recognises the uniqueness of each student
- iii. Mercedes College has a preferential option for the poor and marginalised
- iv. Mercedes College fulfils its mission in partnership with parents who are the first educators of their children
- v. At Mercedes College, all curriculum programs are designed to meet the needs and capabilities of students
- vi. There is recognition at Mercedes College that all students have specific learning needs
- vii. Mercedes College accepts all applications for enrolment. A subsequent offer of enrolment may be contingent upon the interview process and the ability of the College to accommodate the student's needs

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## PROCEDURES

### 1. Application for new enrolment at Mercedes College

Process where a student's disability and / or complex social and emotional needs are disclosed at time of enrolment

#### 1.1 Gathering Data

During the enrolment application process, parents supply all diagnostic and clinical documentation related to the student's disability and learning and wellbeing needs. The Principal reserves the right to:

- liaise with all treating professionals as required
- be provided with all updated assessments and relevant clinical information throughout the student's time at the school
- communicate with personnel at the student's most recent educational setting
- be provided with all recent school reports (including performance and wellbeing matters)

#### 1.2 Consultation

Depending on the nature and complexity of needs, the Principal might seek guidance from AISWA Consultant - Inclusive Education, Mercy Education Limited (MEL) and Deputy Principals.

#### 1.3 Discernment

If deemed necessary, key stakeholders are contacted to:

- determine the nature and complexity of the needs and potential adjustments required
- explore educational options and services available within Perth Archdiocesan Catholic schools.

#### 1.4 Communication of Outcome

Acceptance	Non-Acceptance
If after discernment the Principal decides reasonable adjustments can be provided, an enrolment offer is made and key personnel informed. This acceptance is conditional upon the student's family understanding the College's right to determine the learning pathway for the student including but not limited to the assistance of our Educational Support.	If after comprehensive review (including a risk assessment were necessary), it is apparent that required adjustments would be unreasonable and beyond the capacity of the school, the Principal informs outcome to parents/carers and the Principal offers to explore alternative options. The AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education may be made available to assist parents if appropriate.

#### 1.5 Transition Planning

If the enrolment proceeds, appropriate levels of adjustment are negotiated with the parents and key stakeholders through an Individual Education Planning process (including a Positive Behaviour Plan, Mental Health and Health Care Plan as required). If options at Mercedes College or alternative Catholic schools prove inappropriate, the Principal will assist parents to explore options external to Perth Archdiocesan Catholic schools.

### 2. Active Enrolment within Mercedes College

Procedure when indications of disability and/or complex social and emotional needs emerge or there is a significant deterioration in the student's functioning/behaviour.

#### 2.1 Gathering Data

The Principal consults parents about the observations of the student's functioning. Parents will be required to provide the school with additional or updated assessments within an agreed period of the request. If in the reasonable opinion of the Principal the health and safety of staff, students or other members of the school community are at risk during this interim period while assessments are obtained, the Principal reserves the right to suspend the student's attendance at the College.

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Additional adjustments will then be negotiated with parents/guardians with reference to the student's Individual Education Plan/s. A timeframe for reviewing the effectiveness of the adjustment is agreed upon. The College reserves the right to update the IEP as required. A risk assessment may be required.

Consultation with AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education, Mercedes College wellbeing staff and the inclusive education team may occur.

## 2.2 Discernment

Consultation with key stakeholders may occur depending on the degree and complexity of change in the student's functioning.

<b>Communication of Discernment (continuing enrolment approved)</b>	<b>Communication of Discernment (alternative enrolment sought)</b>
<p>Mercedes College's staff may consult internally or with the AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education, to implement the required level of adjustments. These changes are conditional upon the student's family understanding the College's right to determine the learning pathway for the student including but not limited to the assistance of our Educational Support.</p> <p>The student's progress is continually monitored and reviewed through an Individual Education Plan/s and communicated to parents/caregivers</p>	<p>If after comprehensive investigation (including risk assessment if necessary) it is the view of key stakeholders that the required adjustments are beyond the capacity of the School, the Principal will assist parents/caregivers in seeking an alternative educational placement – initially within Catholic Schools but beyond the Catholic schools should the individual's needs demand it</p>

## 3. Application for Enrolment at Mercedes College – Disclosure Withheld

Procedure when parents/caregivers conceal or are unwilling to supply relevant diagnostic/clinical documentation.

### 3.1 Consultation

Principal contacts and consults the AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education.

### 3.2 Discernment

After consultation with key stakeholders, parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide all relevant diagnostic/clinical documentation to assist the College in considering its capacity to provide reasonable educational and wellbeing adjustments.

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<b>Enrolment Process Continues</b>	<b>Enrolment Process Suspended</b>
Parents/Caregivers offer all relevant documentation and work in partnership with the school. Adjustments are negotiated through the Individual Education Plan/s processes and then documented in the student's Personalised Plan	Parents/caregivers refuse to provide all relevant documentation/fail to approve contact with treating professionals or fail to permit observation of student, the enrolment process is suspended, and parents are again requested to comply with data and observation requests
Outcome Communicated (enrolment accepted)	Outcome Communicated (enrolment does not proceed)
Offer of enrolment is made and parents/caregivers are reminded that the school requires regular information and updated assessments in relation to the student's disability/wellbeing needs in order that reasonable adjustments can be made. This commitment is part of the parents' signed enrolment application.	If parents/caregivers continue to withhold documentation, refuse access to treating professionals or deny the Principal access to student observation, then the AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education will be consulted. Whilst this is occurring, the enrolment does not proceed. The Principal, with support of the AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education, inform the parents that the enrolment will not be accepted.

#### 4. Active Enrolment Mercedes College – Disclosure Withheld

Procedure when parents/caregivers of a current student conceal or are unwilling to supply relevant diagnostic/clinical documentation.

##### 4.1 Consultation

Principal contacts the AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education.

##### 4.2 Discernment

After consultation with key stakeholders, parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide all relevant diagnostic/clinical documentation to assist the College in considering its capacity to provide reasonable educational and wellbeing adjustments.

If in the reasonable opinion of the Principal, the student's ongoing attendance at the College creates a risk to the health and safety of staff, students or other members of the school community, the student's enrolment may be suspended during the discernment process.

<b>Communication of Discernment (continuing enrolment approved)</b>	<b>Communication of Discernment (alternative enrolment sought)</b>
Parents/Caregivers offer all relevant documentation and work in partnership with the school. Adjustments are negotiated through the Individual Education Plan/s processes and then documented in the student's Personalised Plan	If after comprehensive investigation (including risk assessment) it is the view of key stakeholders that the required adjustments are beyond the capacity of the School, the Principal will assist parents/caregivers in seeking an alternative educational placement – initially within Catholic Schools but beyond the Catholic system should the individual's needs demand it.
Deputy Principal consult with Wellbeing Staff or AISWA Consultant – Inclusive Education to implement the required level of adjustments	
These changes are conditional upon the student's family understanding the College's right to determine the learning pathway for the student including but not limited to the assistance of our Educational Support and or Diversity provision	

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The student's enrolment continues, and progress is continually monitored and reviewed through an Individual Education Plan/s and communicated to parents/caregivers



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## REFERENCES

### Legislation and Other Guidelines

School Education Act (1999)  
Disability Discrimination Act (1992)  
Disability Discrimination Standards for Education (2005)



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