



Disability Discrimination Policy

Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia – Victorian Schools Limited (EREA-VSL), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA-VSL schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students*.

*Student includes any person enrolled in the College, either as a day pupil or as a boarder.

Disability Discrimination

Disability discrimination occurs when a person with a disability is treated less favourably than a person without a disability, in the same or similar circumstances.

The definition of disability includes a wide range of impairments including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities. It also covers discrimination against a person because of a physical disfigurement or a disease (e.g. Human Immunodeficiency Virus – HIV).

St Patrick's College's Policy

St Patrick's College is committed to providing a safe and educationally supportive environment that values and encourages participation by all students and workers, including those with disabilities.

It is our policy that:

- students with disabilities can participate in education and training without discrimination;
- students with disabilities have opportunities to access the College curriculum and achieve educational outcomes, in the same manner as students without disabilities;
- reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary, to ensure students with disabilities are able to participate in all activities available to students without disabilities;
- individualised programs will be developed for students with disabilities in consultation with parents/carers and relevant experts;
- all processes are accessible and transparent;
- disability discrimination prevention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

St Patrick's College does not tolerate discrimination, harassment and victimisation of any type including disability discrimination.

This is achieved by:

- informing all staff and students that disability discrimination is not acceptable;
- providing information and training concerning non-discriminatory methods of teaching;
- ensuring staff and students are aware of appropriate actions to be taken if harassment or victimisation occurs;
- establishing strategies and programs to prevent harassment and victimisation of persons with a disability;
- ensuring strategies and programs extend to not only students but also to their parents/carers, who may experience discrimination as a result of their support role to a person with a disability, or who may have a disability themselves.

'Same Basis' Opportunities

The fundamental concept in operation at St Patrick's College to prevent disability discrimination is the 'same basis' concept. This means treatment of students with a disability must be on the 'same basis' as students without a disability, when presented with opportunities and choices offered to students without disabilities.

Reasonable Adjustments

St Patrick's College will provide reasonable adjustments upon consultation with the prospective student with a disability and their parents/carers to assist the student undertake education offered.

Whether an adjustment is reasonable will depend on balancing the student's learning needs with the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with a disability, the College, staff and other students.

Depending on the needs of the student, adjustments may include modifications to College facilities, procedures, staff and resources.

Modifications to enable student access to College facilities and participate in everyday College life include adjustments to teacher microphones and sound amplification systems, toilets, ramps, safety railings, the gymnasium, computer rooms and laboratories to ensure students with disabilities can access these facilities safely.

St Patrick's College is not required to provide adjustments where doing so would cause unjustifiable hardship to the College.

All processes for adjustments within the College, including review and grievance procedures, will be transparent. All decisions will be made in a timely way that optimises the student's participation in education and training.

Unjustifiable hardship is determined via an individual assessment of the prospective student's needs balanced with the costs associated with additional staffing, the provision of special resources or modifications and health and safety and duty of care requirements.

Disability Information

Information obtained in relation to the student's disability will remain confidential and will only be disclosed for the purposes of making adjustments or in accordance with a lawful requirement.

Complaints

Complaints of unlawful discrimination should be made to the College.

Complaints will be properly and effectively dealt with using the College's complaint procedures, including conciliation in the first instance.

Staff Responsibility

All staff must follow the guidelines set out in this Policy.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- staff training to equip staff with knowledge, skills and understanding to enable students with disabilities to participate in the full range of educational programmes or services, on the same basis and to the same extent as students without disabilities;
- student and parent/carer education and information;
- effective management of the enrolment and accommodation of students with disabilities;
- the development of an 'anti-discriminatory' culture within the College community;
- the development of a culture that maintains the disabled student's dignity and privacy;
- the establishment of processes for ongoing evaluation, monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the management of students with disabilities;
- effective communication and incident notification procedures;
- effective record keeping procedures;
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Documentation

The College maintains records of all reasonable adjustments that have been made for students with a disability.

These records are maintained by the Enhanced Learning Facilitators and are stored in the Enhanced Learning Shared Drive (with relevant, limited accessibility).

Discipline for Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this policy St Patrick's College may take disciplinary action.

Key Reference

This policy has been developed having regard to the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).

Status of Policy

This policy has been downloaded from CompliSpace, is endorsed by EREA-VSL and is reviewed annually.

Policy owner	St Patrick's College - Ballarat
Approving authority	Principal
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Risk rating	HIGH
Date of next review	Jan 2027
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POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION

Assigned TERE Board Framework	Child Safety
Related policies	-

