

Inclusive Education Policy

1. Philosophy

- 1.1 Firbank Grammar School recognises that students learn in different ways and achieve at different rates.
- 1.2 Firbank Grammar School sets excellence as its standard when planning and evaluating its academic programs and outcomes. Excellence is accessible to all who aspire to be the best they can be.
- 1.3 In the publication *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes (2010)*, the IB states, "Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities."

2. Scope

- 2.1 Inclusion practices relate to all teaching staff from Early Childhood, through Junior School and Senior School levels.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework by which Firbank Grammar School adheres to the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#). These standards were developed under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and came into effect in August 2005.

4. Legal and Regulatory Basis for Compliance

- 4.1 The Disability Standards clarify the obligations of education and training providers and seek to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. More information about the Disability Standards can be found on the following website: <https://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005>
- 4.2 The Disability Discrimination Amendment (Education Standards) Act 2005 states that schools "must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to participate in the courses or programs provided by the educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination."
- 4.3 Firbank Grammar School's differentiated programs enable the staff to cater for a wide range of individual student needs. Staff use a variety of teaching strategies and resources to allow for students' full participation in the curriculum.

5. Descriptors of Individual Learning Needs

5.1 Students may present with **individual learning needs** due to **disability, Specific Learning Disorder/Difficulty (SLD) and/or giftedness and talent.**

5.2 Disability

a. Disability may include:

- Intellectual Disability
- Severe Language Disorder
- Severe Emotional Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Physical Disability / Chronic Health Impairment
- Vision Impairment
- Hearing Impairment

b. Disability can be identified through assessment done by the following:

- psychologists/psychiatrists
- medical specialists

5.3 Specific Learning Disorder/Difficulty (SLD)

a. Students with a SLD may have a discrepancy in their learning profiles which can inhibit their ability to achieve at their potential. Other students have conditions which may impact on their social and/or emotional development and can affect behaviours.

b. SLDs may include difficulties with:

- visual-spatial skills
- literacy and/or numeracy skills
- language development
- motor skills - fine and gross

c. SLDs can be identified through assessment done by the following:

- special education teachers
- educational psychologists
- occupational therapists
- audiologists
- speech and language therapists
- medical specialists

5.4 Giftedness and Talent

a. Giftedness refers to a student's outstanding natural abilities or aptitudes, located in one or more domains: intellectual, creative, social, perceptual or physical.

b. Talent refers to the outstanding performance or competency in one or more fields of human activity.

- c. Giftedness and Talent can be identified through formal assessment done by the following:
- class/subject teachers
 - special education teachers
 - educational psychologists

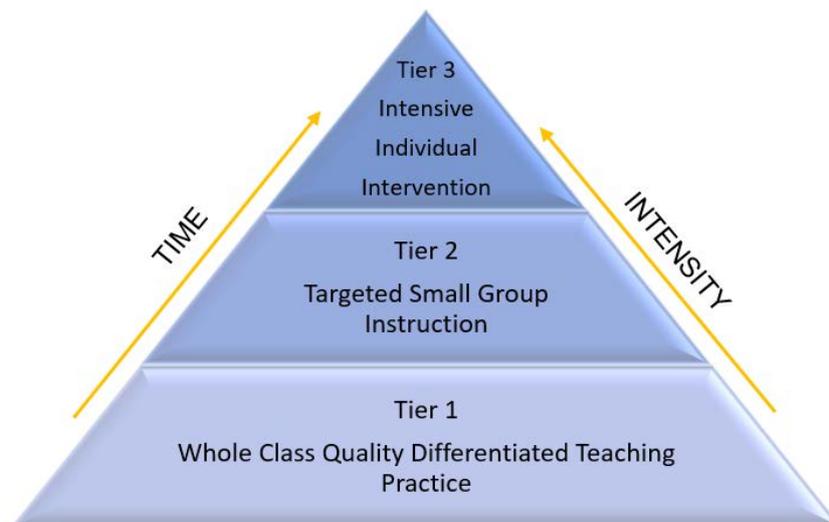
6. Identification of Students with Specific Learning Needs

- 6.1 Initially, students with specific learning needs are identified either by class or subject teachers.
- 6.2 When identifying students in need of differentiation, teachers consider differences in a student's ability, rate of learning, language proficiency, literacy and numeracy skills — and then use this knowledge to adapt the way they present the curriculum and learning activities.
- 6.3 These differences also determine the amount of additional support individual students may need. Therefore, an initial discussion may be held with Differentiated Education and/or Student Services regarding additional support. Teachers may then begin the process of Response to Intervention.

7. Response to Intervention

- 7.1 Response to Intervention (RTI) is a process that determines how well students respond to changes in instruction. It allows for early intervention by providing evidence-based instruction and offers a systematic approach to improving outcomes of students who may be at risk. The RTI process involves:
- early identification
 - using data to inform decisions
 - early intervention
 - a tiered teaching process, where students receive additional explicit teaching in their areas of need
- 7.2 Intervention is provided over a six-month period. If students have not responded to RTI and concerns are ongoing, a referral can be formally made to Differentiated Education and/or Student Services for further assessment. At the discretion of Student Services, referral may be fast-tracked on a basis of need.

7.3 The Firbank Grammar School Response to Intervention model:



8. Differentiation: Adjustments and Modification

- 8.1 Once a student has been referred to Differentiated Education, and either following the RTI process or if the student has an established SLD diagnosis, further action (**differentiation**) may be determined.
- 8.2 Differentiation can occur in terms of **adjustments** or **modification** to the following:
- teaching-learning process
 - outcomes of each teaching session
 - method of assessment
 - curriculum content (modification)
- 8.3 **Adjustments** (also sometimes referred to as **accommodations**) are provided when there is an assessed need at specific times to complement the strategies and resources already available within the school. Adjustments occur when the curriculum has the same content and conceptual difficulty but is presented differently. In addition, adjustments may be made to timetables, supervision and the physical environment. Adjustments give all students equal access to the curriculum.
- 8.4 **Modification** occurs when the curriculum content is changed. The students complete similar work, but what is expected of the students is different. It may be less work and/or simplified concepts. Modification gives students access to the curriculum, applicable to their level of cognitive/physical ability.
- 8.5 Parents are notified of any curriculum modification and signed parental permission is obtained. Parents and students are informed that modification may alter academic pathway options, particularly from Year 10 to Year 11.
- 8.6 Depending on the type of differentiation, an Individual Learning Plan may be required.

- 8.7 Differentiation is planned by the class/subject teacher, in consultation with parents, students (if appropriate), Differentiated Education and Student Services. Depending on the level of differentiation required, Differentiated Education may be involved in the process of delivering the curriculum.
- 8.8 The level of adjustment/modification varies according to student needs and can be divided into the following areas (terms used by NCCD (Nationally Consistent Collection of Data)):

DIFFERENTIATION: ADJUSTMENTS AND MODIFICATION	
TIME / INTENSITY / DIFFERENTIATED STAFF INVOLVEMENT 	<p>Support provided within Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice</p> <p>Students are below standard in one or more areas, but difficulties are not severe enough to be classified as a Specific Learning Difficulty or Disorder. There may be minor difficulties with behaviour, organisation and concentration.</p>
	<p>Supplementary Adjustments/Modifications</p> <p>Students are usually diagnosed with a difficulty or disorder and may be responsive to intervention. Program delivery may be tailored to accommodate some or multiple learning areas. Support may be provided for small group within or external to the classroom. Extra support may also be provided by an external agency. Separate supervision or extra time can be given for assessment tasks.</p>
	<p>Substantial Adjustments/Modifications</p> <p>Students have an identified/diagnosed disability or disorder that fits the criteria and makes them eligible for Commonwealth Funding. This condition may be lifelong/pervasive and will require a range of adjustments/modifications. Intensive instruction may be provided on an individual basis either within or external to the classroom.</p>
	<p>Extensive Adjustments/Modifications</p> <p>As for Substantial Adjustments, with more modification - usually to all courses, programs, assessments and school activities. These students may require almost constant supervision.</p>

9. Cognitive and Educational Assessment

- 9.1 A student may be referred to Student Services for cognitive and/or educational assessment. Within the school, all cognitive assessment is conducted by an Educational Psychologist or a provisional psychologist under the supervision of the Director of Student Services.
- 9.2 Information gained from this and/or other reports from outside agencies is used to determine further differentiation and/or action.

10. Program Support Group (PSG) Meetings

- 10.1 Program Support Group (PSG) meetings are conducted to gather information and develop a better understanding of students with specific learning needs. PSG meetings involve parents, class/subject teachers and Differentiated Education teachers. They may also involve Wellbeing Leaders, Student Services and other outside specialists who may be working with the students and families.
- 10.2 In the case of students on substantial adjustments/modifications, a Program Support Group (PSG) meeting should take place each term at which Individual Learning Plans are reviewed and updated.
- 10.3 In the case of students on all other adjustments/modifications, a Program Support Group (PSG) meeting should take place each semester.

11. Individual Learning Plans (ILP)

- 11.1 When concerns about a student are ongoing or a student is identified as needing a more individualised program, Individual Learning Plans (ILP) may be developed by the class teacher (Junior Schools) or subject teachers and Wellbeing Leader (Senior School) in collaboration with Differentiated Education and parents.
- 11.2 Following an ILP/PSG meeting, minutes are finalised and shared with parents as soon as possible, ideally within a week. An ILP is reviewed and updated at least each semester by the class teacher/subject teacher/Wellbeing Leader. PSG Meeting Minutes and ILP templates and an exemplar of an ILP are available from Differentiated Education.

12. Differentiation within the Senior School

- 12.1 English Language Studies (ELS) classes are offered to students in Years 7-10 with specific learning difficulties. These classes operate within the structure of the timetable for Years 7-11 and on a more informal basis in Year 12. To be eligible for inclusion in ELS classes, students must have undergone cognitive and educational assessment to identify the students' specific learning needs.
- 12.2 Modified programs are devised through consultation between Heads of Departments and each student's subject teachers. In some situations, only certain courses may need to be modified. Parents are involved in this process and are required to give formal consent. Modifications made to a students' programs will be recorded by the Head of Department at the end of each year on Synergetic. Modified programs are reflected in students' reports. The possibility of modification altering academic pathways is discussed with students and their parents.

13. Special Provision for VCE

- 13.1 Students with specific learning needs may be eligible for some form of special provision for their VCE examinations. It is important therefore, that both the school and students' parents retain reports from all agencies involved with students over their learning journeys. These reports may be from Educational Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists and/or medical specialists.
- 13.2 Schools are required to have documentation outlining the interventions they have put in place for students when making an application to VCAA.

14. Gifted and Talented Students

- 14.1 Firbank Grammar School recognises that appropriate support is necessary for students to develop their gifts or high abilities into talents and/or high achievements.
- 14.2 **Giftedness** refers to students' outstanding natural abilities or aptitudes, located in one or more domains: intellectual, creative, social, perceptual or physical, placing students in the top 10% of age peers.
- 14.3 **Talent** refers to the outstanding performance or competency in one or more fields of human activity that places students in the top 10% of age peers in that field. Talent emerges from giftedness through a complex developmental process and via a number of influences, including the teaching and learning opportunities.

15. Enrichment

- 15.1 Firbank Grammar School offers a variety of learning enrichment opportunities in which students may participate, depending on their abilities and/or learning requirements.
- 15.2 Enrichment opportunities offered within the Senior School may include: Book Club, Chess Club, Creative Writers Club, Debating and Philosophy Colloquiums.
- 15.3 Enrichment opportunities offered within the Junior Schools may include: Chess Club, Maths Olympiad, Maths Talent Quest, Community Problem Solving, Destination Imagination, Future Problem-solving Program and Writers Club.

16. Acceleration

- 16.1 There are a relatively small number of exceptionally capable students who need a more extensive form of curriculum modification. For these students, whole year-level acceleration might be the most effective form of intervention. There are potential benefits to accelerating such selected students carefully; however, it must not be assumed that all intellectually gifted students will benefit from acceleration.

16.2 A student may be considered a suitable candidate for whole year-level acceleration when:

- the student demonstrates advanced cognitive abilities and scores well above the gifted range (i.e., IQ 130+) on a standardised individual intelligence test
- the student demonstrates exceptional academic achievement when compared with their same-age peers
- the student demonstrates an exceptional level of academic aptitude on above-level academic measures at least two years beyond their current grade-for-age, which suggests they could capably manage and operate above the average of the year level into which they would be advanced
- the student is consistently and significantly 'pulling away' from their current peers/cohort and are without other 'like-minded peers' and/or peers of similar ability, (such that the only way to appropriately cater for their individual learning needs is through acceleration)
- the student is open and positive about acceleration and is eager to move ahead

17. Annual Transition Communication

17.1 Each year, students transition to a new year level and new teacher/s. Prior to the beginning of Term 1, pertinent information will be relayed to future teaching staff to ensure all educators are aware of current students' specific educational needs.

18. Responsibilities

18.1 Differentiated Education and Students Services provides information to class and subject teachers about students' specific learning needs. However, it is the responsibility of the class and subject teachers to read assessment reports and make their own notes.

18.2 Teachers should take into consideration the recommendations of Differentiated Education, Student Services and visiting specialists.

18.3 Differentiated Education and Students Services are available to provide ongoing consultation to class/subject teachers.

19. Policy Review

19.1 The governing board will review the Inclusive Education Policy in accordance to the School Review cycle of five years.

19.2 The governing board will require the Principal to report on the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy as part of the Board's discussion of its Annual Report to the School Community.