

Special Needs Policy Years 7-12

Melba Copland Secondary School is an inclusive educational environment, with all students included in the planning and delivery of the pedagogical approaches that underpin International Baccalaureate Programmes. We believe that all students can “become active, compassionate and lifelong learners through adjusted curriculum”. MCSS provides support for all students to achieve their best educational outcomes, including extension for gifted and talented students and support for students with learning needs.

Teachers at Melba Copland aim to differentiate for the wide range of learning needs and styles of their students. Professional development is offered to support teachers to build skills in meeting the needs of all students. The use of Quality Teaching and the National Professional Standards for Teachers measure teachers’ performance in terms of differentiation and meeting student needs.

Students requiring learning support

Melba Copland Secondary School provides support for students with high learning needs in Years 7 to 10 within the Learning Centre where students receive individual and small group support to develop literacy and numeracy skills. Students in this program are identified in accordance with Education and Training Directorate policy. Students are integrated into mainstream classes for a wide range of elective options and Physical Education. Learning support teachers provide enhanced, scaffolded and enriched programs to meet the individual needs of students. This recognises that every student learns differently and that learning experiences can be tailored to meet individual needs. Student self-esteem and resilience is a focus in our special needs program. Outside agencies also offer support for the students. Access to the school nurse and youth workers provide expanded opportunities for students in health awareness and activities that build work and social skills

On the college site, MCSS meets the needs of students with learning disabilities through a Learning Support Unit and in the FLEX program. FLEX delivers programs for students with a range of learning, social and physical needs. Students have a common core programme which includes English, Maths, and Life Skills. Other courses include hospitality, business administration, woodwork, art, and IT and access to work experience. There is a focus on developing positive post school options for students.

At each campus, students are integrated into the school community. The physical environment provides wheel chair access to all levels within the school. Teachers are provided with training to cater for disabilities within their class, including strategies for differentiation and time within meetings to discuss support for students. Some students are supported with Learning Assistant aides and there is a formal policy of regular meetings with parents. Documentation of the strategies and outcomes of these meetings are made on Individual Learning Plans which are available to teachers.

Mainstream students with disabilities are supported within classes and a policy of differentiated teaching and learning strategies is encouraged. The Learning Support Centre provides specialised instruction in core subjects for students with intellectual disability. These students join mainstream subjects for elective and specialist subjects. With the provision of medical evidence, assessment may be varied using technology support, longer time in tests or provision of a scribe. Decisions to vary assessment conditions are made by the MCSS Student Services team in consultation with teachers and policies of the Directorate.

Gifted and Talented Students

Each subject area at MCSS provides opportunities for students to excel in their educational programme. Students may be extended through the inquiry approach to teaching and learning and also by opportunities to investigate areas of interest. This may be associated with assessed work, competitions, excursions and group activities. Our practice aligns to the Education and Training Directorate policy on Gifted and Talented students.

Resources for teachers

Melba Copland Secondary School Wellbeing Framework 2014-2016

Melba Copland Secondary Gifted and Talented Policy 2014-2016

Teachers of year 11 and 12 students should refer to BSSS publications

Equitable Assessment and Special Consideration in Assessment in Years 11 and 12:

Equitable Assessment and Special Consideration in Assessment in Years 11 and 12: Teacher Guide

Occ.ibo.org publications include:

Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes (occ.ibo.org)

Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom (occ.ibo.org)