

Special Education Unit

Welcome to Caboolture East State School Special Education Program. This special education program is part of the whole school and provides programs for young children 0-4 years and students in Preparatory year to Year 7. The school is a Queensland Government state school which commenced in 1978. In addition to the class teachers, special education teachers and special education teacher aides lead and support learning programs for students with disabilities. Programs are provided for students who are verified in the following categories: intellectual impairment, autistic spectrum disorder, speech language impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment and vision impairment. Education Queensland and this school seek to deliver special education in a framework founded on socially just principles. The following diagram illustrates this framework and how there has been a shift towards acceptance, dignity and empowerment in the delivery of special education for students with disabilities:

PREVIOUS APPROACH

CURRENT APPROACH

Segregation

- segregated school settings were the only option for most students with disabilities.

Acceptance

- a range of school options for students with disabilities

Treatment

- specialised settings for treatment and remediation

Dignity

- recognition of individual needs through individualised plans to enhance skills

Expertise

- professionals using their expertise to solve problems and develop interventions

Empowerment

- professionals promoting choice and personal decision making for people with disabilities

Inclusive education in Queensland:

- fosters a learning community that questions disadvantage and challenges social injustice
- maximises the educational and social outcomes of all students through the identification and reduction of barriers to learning, especially for those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion
- ensures all students understand and value diversity so that they have the knowledge and skills for positive participation

in a just, equitable and democratic global society.

Inclusive education ensures that schools are supportive and engaging places for all students, parents and caregivers. It is about building communities that value, celebrate and respond to diversity. It is underpinned by respectful relationships between learners, teachers and caregivers. It is supported by collaborative relationships with communities and governments. It is about shaping the society in which we live and the type of society to which we aspire.

Source: Inclusive Education Statement-2005, Education Queensland.

Research by world-leading practitioners on inclusive education state that:

“We have focused our professional and much of our personal lives on working with educators, parents, and students to restructure schools so that all children may be educated together. History is at a point when inclusive education is no longer an idealistic vision but a reality and obligation. In our collective years of work, we discovered that a critical element for successful academic and social development and inclusion of students with disabilities is for students to support other students. Furthermore, we learned to broaden our discussions to include all students, rather than focusing only on a subset of the school population (e.g., “special” education, “general” education.)

Thousand, Villa and Nevin (2002): Creative and Collaborative Learning: The Practical Guide to Empowering Students, Teachers and Families.

The following statement by an Australian researcher articulates the need for educational sites such as ours to reconceptualise the allocation methodology of special education resources:

“One of the prime motives for the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools has been to return them to the community to which they belong. Their individualised education placement in regular schools may lead, ironically, to segregation from the main body of students and fail to provide the socially just and equitable education that was sought. It is proposed that a shift in emphasis is required, from educating individuals who compete for scarce resources, to improving the quality of education for all students, including those with disabilities. This is a key feature of the alternative inclusive schools model.”

Jenkins, H. (2002). A Continuum-Based Approach to Inclusive Policy and Practice in Regular Schools.

We aspire to these ideals and look forward to the opportunity of working with you.

Caboolture East Special Education Unit