Student diversity

Inclusive education

This video is available from www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/student-diversity/students-with-disability/inclusive-education.

What is inclusive education?

Dr Matthew Capp
Director of Capitalise Education

Inclusive education is the process by which schools put in supports, to support students with disability and diverse learning needs to overcome their barriers to the learning process. This is achieved by putting in place reasonable adjustments to the curriculum, to the instruction, and into the environment of the school and the classroom. This is achieved by collaboration between all stakeholders, taking into account their perspectives when discerning the adjustments put in place to address the functional impact of students with disability and diverse learning needs.

What do schools need to consider when creating an inclusive culture and policies?

Dr Matthew Capp
Director of Capitalise Education

When creating inclusive policies in a culture of inclusion, schools need to think about how they're going to support their educators to work collaboratively, because this builds capacity. Teachers then need to have a deep understanding of the approved curriculum, because research has shown that inappropriate use of the curriculum can be a barrier to the learning process. Educators also need to know their students' strengths and functional impact because any reasonable adjustment put in place that doesn't tie to the functional impact will have very little impact.

Educators also need to know about evidence-based practices. Hattie says that everything works but some things work better. The final thing that needs to be put in place is that leadership of a school, at the middle or senior level, need to be involved in the promotion and [involved] in the development of inclusion policies and supporting inclusive cultures.

What processes have been fundamental in creating an inclusive school culture?

Karla Pope
Deputy Principal of Inclusion and Wellbeing
Kenmore State High School

An inclusive school culture begins with a whole-school approach to building the capabilities of our teachers. So we really want our teachers to be confident that they can support students, and our real focus is on ensuring that we've got systems in place where they can collaborate together, and that any work that they do do — that we're then sharing that and storing that for future teachers.

What processes have you implemented that support teachers?

Kate Watts
Assistant Dean of Inclusive Practices
Ambrose Treacy College

Teacher support at our college can take a variety of approaches. It's good collaboration through weekly year level meetings, it could be student support meetings, or it may even [be] … as needed, one-to-one planning with teachers.

What collaborative processes have you implemented to support inclusive education?

Karla Pope
Deputy Principal of Inclusion and Wellbeing
Kenmore State High School

A collaborative process that we've implemented is co-teaching, and this is where the special education teachers work with the mainstream teacher, and together they co-plan for the class, they co-instruct for the class, and then they co-assess for the students in that class.

What collaborative processes have you implemented to support parents/carers?

Karla Pope
Deputy Principal of Inclusion and Wellbeing
Kenmore State High School

Regular communication between the school and the parents and families of students who require support — we find is really vital in students succeeding. Regular email communication, either fortnightly or weekly, where we focus on what's happening at school events, what's happening for the student in their classes, and what's happening for the student in terms of academic and assessments that are coming up is really important to keep that relationship going, so that parents know what they can do to support the student, and that the parents also know what we are doing to support their student.

What role can parents/carers have in creating an inclusive school culture?

Libby Scouller

Learning Enrichment Teacher
Concordia Lutheran College
Junior College

An inclusive school culture develops when a school and parents or carers work together to develop a relationship to support the child. As a school, we value parents' input, because we know that they understand and know their child the best, and that helps us put plans into place to support their student.

Why does inclusion matter for all students?

Dr Matthew Capp

Director of Capitalise Education

Inclusion matters for all students because research shows that evidence-based practices put in to harness students' strengths and support students' functional impacts can support all learners. There is a saying that what's good for students on the spectrum is good for all students. So inclusive education practices, put in place to address the diverse learners in a classroom, support all learners to become engaged and independent in their learning.