



Transition into Mainstream Settings

The policy outlines the commitment of JVS to people with disabilities, related education objectives based on the principle of “normalisation”, and the responsibilities of JVS.

It also articulates the rights of staff, parents, caregivers and students.

1.Objectives - Policy statement

1.1

JVS will assist students with disabilities to gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to successfully participate as citizens by working with its staff and families to achieve the following goals:

1.1.1

Students and staff will be provided with the same opportunities as other people to take advantage of the range of education, training and employment opportunities provided by JVS.

1.1.2

JVS will report on its progress in developing and implementing policies and practices to improve access, participation and outcomes for people with disabilities.

1.1.3

JVS will strengthen strategic alliances and have a coordinated approach to the delivery of services for people with disabilities through partnerships with businesses/organizations who are willing to provide learning opportunities for students.

1.1.4

JVS will improve educational, emotional/behavioural, and transitional (life skill) outcomes for students with disabilities by strengthening partnerships with parents/carers through such initiatives as Individual Education Plan meetings,

and when arranging work experience opportunities.

1.2

JVS will assist staff with disabilities to gain the knowledge, skills and understanding (through professional development and performance management) to successfully participate in staff operations and to complete their designated tasks. JVS aims to achieve such goals as:

1.2.1

JVS will strengthen working relationships with businesses as well as government organizations to help employees with physical or intellectual or other disability.

1.2.2

The JVS Staff will endeavor to support any staff member with disability and help to reduce 'barriers' that may prevent them from participating in the collegial and corporate life of the school.

2.Audience and applicability

2.1

This policy applies to all staff employed at JVS. It also applies to students who attend JVS and has implications for the school community including parents/carers and work experience opportunities for students.

3.Context

3.1

The policy complies with requirements of the NSW Government Disability Policy Framework (1998) and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA,1992) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

3.2

This policy has been developed to reflect commitments made by JVS to all staff, students and parents/carers with disabilities.

4.Responsibilities and delegations

4.1

Principal

4.1.1

Approval of policy documents

4.1.2

Publication and currency of the policy and support material

4.1.3

Notification to staff and parents of any changes to this policy

5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

5.1

The Principal will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report annually, or as required, to the Board of Directors.

5. TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS TO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS OR SETTINGS

1.1 RATIONALE

Part of the school's mission is for students enrolled at JVS to learn, develop, and achieve a level of self-control, emotional/behavioural stability, and resilience to be able to return to a mainstream school setting (with ongoing support), in order to experience a broader range of educational opportunities.

1.2 PRINCIPLES

This policy is consistent with the school's 'Commitment to Students with Disabilities' Policy (see above).

JVS is committed to the identification and removal of attitudinal, communication and physical barriers that stand in the way of entry and participation by people with disabilities in the education opportunities offered by the school.

Underlying this principle is a commitment to working in a systematic and collaborative way with families and personnel from other agencies involved with the education and development of the child, to ensure that high quality educational programs continue during the transition from early childhood settings to school.

JVS must include transition to JVS from a mainstream school, and transition from JVS to a mainstream school depending on the needs of the individual student. In both scenarios, the school follows a similar process.

1.3 Rationale

Beginning at a new school or starting school for the first time is a big step for all children and their families. This transition may present many challenges for a child who has a disability or significant difficulty in learning or behaviour, as well as for the child's family and teachers.

The speed and ease of adjustment for all concerned can be facilitated through careful planning and preparation.

This is addressed in these guidelines through the establishment of an 'Transition Program' which consists of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and

Risk Assessment Plan which includes strategies and timeframes, conducted by the school in consultation with the family and relevant professionals.

The guidelines presented here describe a systematic and coordinated process which may be adapted to suit the needs of individual families, schools and the range of professionals who may be involved.

1.4 Objectives

- To plan and promote successful transition for children with disabilities or significant difficulties in learning or behaviour to JVS or back into a mainstream school.
- To ensure that the families of children with disabilities or significant difficulties in learning or behaviour are provided with the necessary information, support and opportunities to participate as partners in planning their child's transition and educational future.
- To promote collaboration and communication among all key people in the transition process.
- To provide schools with adequate opportunity to plan for the provision of appropriate services.
- To ensure a continuum of learning experiences and programs to best meet the child's learning needs.

1.5 Flexibility

- The steps involved in the guidelines are designed to be followed for all children who have been identified as having special learning needs in any setting.
- Circumstances may arise which make it necessary to vary the suggested timelines and schedule procedures to occur at times other than those nominated. However, the sequence of procedures should be adhered to.
- Where a child has a physical disability which may require school building modifications, regardless of whether enrolling at JVS or transitioning to another school, a referral should be made at least 18 months prior to enrolment.
- Where personnel are not able to attend meetings, it may be more practical to exchange information via telephone, facsimile or written report (with parent's permission).

1.6 The individual family service plan

- When planning for transition to mainstream settings, it may be considered within the context of an individual family service plan that also targets specific values, skills, attitudes, priorities and knowledge that the target setting will require, if a successful integration or transition is to be made for the family and the individual child involved.

*Such a plan must target such information explicitly, and should be 'pre-taught' in a similar manner by The Joseph Varga School in order to help facilitate a sustainable transition, in so doing helping to guard against the child regressing, or in fact losing skills, so that a return to a special education service, may be necessary in the future.

- The plan is tailored collaboratively by the family and all the services

involved. It is based on comprehensive assessment and the needs and priorities of the family, and identifies the role and responsibilities of all the services involved.

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